



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - Five Afghan staff members of the United Nations Office of Project Services are missing and efforts are under way to determine their whereabouts, UN officials said. Afghanistan has seen a pattern of attacks on expatriate and local staff of UN agencies and NGOs in recent years.

ENVIRONMENT - The global environmental crisis requires replacing the existing capitalist model of production with one that promotes "selective degrowth" of the economy and the restricted and responsible exploitation of natural resources, according to European experts and activists.

ENVIRONMENT - A garbage patch of plastic debris is endangering marine life in the Atlantic Ocean and there is little possibility of removing the pollution, researchers warn, because much of the material is broken down into small particles. Researchers hope to use their findings to increase awareness around ocean pollution.

■AFRICA

D.R. CONGO - Hundreds of final year secondary school students have been unable to sit all their national exams due to fighting between a faction of the Mayi-Mayi militia and the army in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) territory of Fizi, South Kivu Province, say officials.

SOMALIA's government has asked the UNWFP to release food stocks in Mogadishu for distribution to hundreds of thousands of needy internally displaced persons, Interior Minister say.

■ASIA

AFGHANISTAN - A magnitude 5.3 earthquake at 00.58am local time on 19 April killed two people, injured six and destroyed dozens of houses in the northern province of Samangan, according to the Afghanistan National Disasters Management Authority.

BANGLADESH - Troops are guarding water pumps in parts of Dhaka as a severe water shortage grips the capital, causing a rise in water-borne diseases, officials say.

CHINA - With some 760 people dead and thousands more injured in China's Qinghai province as a result of a 6.9-magnitude earthquake, China is taking active steps to provide aid and relief to Tibetan quake victims. President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao flew to the Tibetan plateau to pledge support for the mostly impoverished of Yushu county. Chinese soldiers worked hand in hand with Tibetans, including Buddhist monks, to rescue survivors.

INDONESIA - Jakarta's slums struggle with sanitation - In Jakarta's northern Muara Angke coastal area, a lack of access to piped water has forced people to bathe and wash clothes using murky grey water from fish ponds.

PAKISTAN - Relief work suspended after dozens killed in IDP camp attack - Relief work has been suspended at the Kacha Pakha camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) on the outskirts of Kohat town in northwestern Pakistan after two bomb attacks killed at least 41 IDPs, according to officials and media reports.

■MIDDLE EAST

YEMEN - A 12-day measles and child polio vaccination campaign began on 17 April in parts of the troubled northern Yemeni governorate of Saada, targeting over 209,000 children, health officials say.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

BOLIVIA - At least 15,000 people from worldwide indigenous movements and civil-society groups and representatives from 90 governments are due to attend an alternative climate change summit this week in Bolivia. The World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth will take place in the city of Cochabamba from Monday to Thursday. The meeting is seen as a grassroots alternative to last December's United Nations climate change summit in Copenhagen. Bolivian president Evo Morales is expected to propose a global referendum during the summit which will seek to ask up to two billion people their views on how to tackle climate change. The summit will be used to present draft proposals to the UN climate change summit in Mexico later this year.

CHILE - Alongside crucial emergency relief efforts, numerous organisations are offering free movies, concerts, plays, comedy performances and other cultural events aimed at lifting the spirits of people suffering the after-effects of the earthquake and tsunami that struck central and southern Chile on Feb. 27.

WFWO's Communications Team