



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

DEVELOPMENT - The U.S. has found unexpected allies in developing countries Brazil and India in its efforts to pressure China into allowing its currency to appreciate. Presidents of central banks from India and Brazil spoke at a meeting of the Group of 20, saying that China's currency policy was imposing costs on developing countries and causing distortions in the global economy. Singapore echoed their sentiments and added that it would fall within China's best interests to allow the renminbi to appreciate.

CLIMATE CHANGE - Participants at an alternative climate change summit in Bolivia have called for the creation of an international environmental justice court to penalise countries that do not reduce their emissions. The People's World Conference on Climate Change and Mother Earth Rights was held in Cochabamba this week. The meeting was seen as a grassroots alternative to last December's United Nations climate change summit in Copenhagen. Activists at the conference argued that an international court is needed to tackle the impunity enjoyed by major carbon emitters. Participants also demanded 300 billion US dollars a year from rich nations to compensate for global warming and a 5 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

DISARMAMENT - Human rights groups are urging the French government to adopt a law that would ban the financing of companies that produce cluster munitions, the deadly bombs that have killed or maimed thousands of civilians in the past 40 years.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world not on track to meet the target of reducing poverty by half by 2015, according to the World Bank. The bank's World Development Indicators 2010 report, released on Wednesday, assesses progress towards the eight Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations. Fifty countries around the world have already met the target of educating every child at least through primary school, according to the report. However, sub-Saharan Africa lags behind in all eight MDG targets, the report said.

ETHIOPIA - A report claims that increasingly unpredictable weather attributed to climate change is affecting the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Ethiopia. An international development agency launched a new report on Wednesday detailing how climate change is worsening the living conditions of poor Ethiopians. The country has long suffered from inconsistent weather, but increased unpredictability due to climate change is boosting poverty, water scarcity and food insecurity, the report claims.

LESOTHO - The Lesotho Highlands Water Project will move into its second phase in 2010. The first phase has been praised as a shining example of transboundary water sharing in Africa, but community dissatisfaction may mean a rough ride for its extension.

MOZAMBIQUE - April signals the tail end of the flood season in Mozambique. The country's water managers will soon be able to appraise the effects of changing policies.

TANZANIA - Zanzibar's sewage disposal challenge - Zanzibar's rudimentary waste management and sanitation facilities are nowhere near keeping pace with the increase in the Tanzanian island's population, according to officials.

■ASIA

CHINA - Chinese authorities have ordered Tibetan monks to leave areas affected by the April 14 earthquake, in a move widely seen as an attempt to minimize positive characterizations of their efforts. Monks rushed into the remote area to erect tents, search for survivors and deliver relief supplies.

WFWO's Communications Team