



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - Government security forces in south Kyrgyzstan may have used torture, illegal arrests and ill-treatment to obtain forced confessions from detainees, according to the United Nations. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, said that her staff in the country had received information about abuses from authorities following the eruption of ethnic violence in June, in which up to 2,000 people were killed and a further 400,000 displaced. Ms. Pillay said more than 1,000 people have been arrested in the cities of Osh and Jalalabad since the unrest, mostly young ethnic Uzbek men. She called for an international inquiry into June's violence and for continuing independent human rights monitoring in the region.

HEALTH - In the face of diminished aid as a result of the global financial crisis, former US President Bill Clinton pleaded with donors at the International AIDS Conference to continue funding research and relief efforts. Clinton said that researchers were two to three months away from a potentially viable HIV vaccine, presuming that researchers could continue following through on new breakthroughs. Scientists hope to mass-produce so-called "broadly neutralizing" antibodies in order to prevent most strains of HIV altogether.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - Discordant couples, in which one partner is HIV-positive and the other HIV-negative, are increasingly common in African countries with high prevalence, but there is often little support to help them navigate the complexities that the virus adds to a relationship.

MOZAMBIQUE - The Mozambican government has adopted various policies to address climate change, with a focus on women.

NIGER - Millions in Niger face immediate food and aid needs as drought continues to destroy crops and kill livestock across the country, the UNWFP warns. The UN agency issued a call for immediate donations to fund plans to scale up aid deliveries.

SOMALIA - As Islamist insurgents battle it out with government troops backed by African Union forces in Somalia's capital, civilians face continuous danger from above in the form of the mortar shells used by most parties to the conflict.

ZIMBABWE - A resurgence of interest in dried traditional vegetables has opened up a market opportunity for women entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe's second city, Bulawayo. Urban consumers, who previously shunned dried vegetables as a culinary preference of unsophisticated rural people now view them as an affordable, nutritious convenience food.

■ASIA

CHINA - Chinese authorities have instituted a program of "sealed management" to cope with influxes of migrant workers and manage crime in China's cities. Around Beijing, tens of thousands of migrants live in 16 gated communities, where authorities seal the gates at night and enforce a curfew. Residents complained when authorities installed the gates as emblematic of widespread discrimination against migrants.

TAJIKISTAN - The drive to eradicate polio has suffered new setbacks such as an ongoing outbreak in Tajikistan and the emergence of cases caused by mutated polio vaccines. Live vaccine virus mutations have cropped up in Africa, Asia and the Americas over the past few years.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

MEXICO - Turtles, frogs, toads and many kinds of birds are imported into Mexico as pets by the thousands every year, but they constitute an environmental and economic threat when they are invasive exotic species.

WFWO's Communications Team