



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

DEVELOPMENT - In a meeting of the World Bank in Washington, the U.S. and Japan agreed to give up a share of their voting rights over the direction of the international lending institution in order to increase the authority of developing countries. The shift gives developing countries just over 47% of the vote and increases the vote share of countries such as China - which is now the World Bank's third most influential member. Ministers from South Africa and Brazil argued that the changes do not go far enough to increase the clout of economically vulnerable countries and that the shift of power toward China comes at the expense of diluting their own authority.

CLIMATE CHANGE - Environment ministers from Brazil, South Africa, India and China are sceptical that a legally-binding agreement on climate change will be reached in Cancun, Mexico in December.

CLIMATE CHANGE - Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano - unlike Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991, the 20th century's second largest eruption - will not contribute to climate change; on the contrary, by grounding flights over Europe for almost a week it helped saved thousands of tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

■AFRICA

BURUNDI - Returnees find a new place to call home - Just 2km from the Tanzanian border, the "integrated" rural village of Nyakazi in Kibago commune, Makamba Province, houses 198 families, 80 percent of whom are landless returnees. The village is one of several set up in the southern region of Burundi to help in the reintegration of thousands of 1972 civil war returnees.

SOUTH AFRICA - Once internationally criticized for ignoring HIV/AIDS, South Africa is ramping up provision of prevention and treatment services for the disease at a faster pace than ever attempted by a single country before, United Nations officials say. Authorities are training thousands of health care workers to test for HIV/AIDS and provide drug treatments at every one of the country's 4,333 clinics, and hope to get 1 million more people started on treatment over the next couple of years.

WEST AFRICA - The second three-day round of a synchronized campaign to vaccinate 77 million children against polio in 16 West African countries is now underway.

■ASIA

Asia Region - India and Pakistan are waging a proxy battle against one another in Afghanistan, where influence represents access, resources and security. Pakistan, which shares a religion and ethnic ties with Afghanistan, considers the country its natural ally - and abhors the thought of finding itself sandwiched between India and a pro-India Afghanistan. India's efforts to build roads and electrical infrastructure in western Afghanistan reflect its interest in opening new trade routes and energy corridors through Central Asia as well as expanding its regional influence.

AFGHANISTAN - Afghan authorities have accused insurgents of poisoning more than 80 schoolgirls in the northern Kunduz province to prevent them from attending classes. Provincial spokesman Mahbobullah Sayedi said that 13 girls became sick at school on Sunday. The day before 47 other girls had complained of dizziness and nausea, while a further 23 students had fallen ill on Wednesday, according to Sayedi. The schoolgirls reportedly noticed a strange smell in class before developing symptoms, which have not been serious so far. Health officials said they have launched an investigation to determine whether the girls had been poisoned by insurgents who oppose female education.

CAMBODIA - The number of malaria cases recorded in Cambodia has increased significantly, say health officials, citing several reasons, including better detection and reporting.

WFWO's Communications Team