

NEWS IN BRIEF

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JAPAN

ON SEPT. 20, JAPAN EVACUATED OVER 1.2 MILLION CITIZENS IN A PREVENTATIVE MEASURE AS TYPHOON ROKE APPROACHED ITS SHORES. According to the Washington Post, the typhoon, which has been measured with sustained winds of 89 mph, has prompted concerns of flooding and landslides. The weather agency reports that Japan could suffer as much as two inches of rain per hour, and western and central Japan are most vulnerable, after having suffered Typhoon Talas earlier this month, which was reported to kill over 67 people.



BRAZIL

AS BRAZIL PREPARES FOR THE 2014 WORLD CUP, THE GOVERNMENT IS BALANCING OUT CELEBRATIONS WITH INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIRS. On Sept. 16, President Dilma Rousseff, accompanied by soccer star Pele, launched a celebratory event at the Belo Horizonte stadium. According to BBC, Rousseff also addressed concerns regarding Brazilian infrastructure. "Investing in infrastructure is a way of saying no to the international crisis affecting countries in the Eurozone and the U.S.," Rousseff said to CBS News. As Brazil sets up for the World Cup, it is also looking forward to hosting the 2016 Olympic Games. Brazil is currently viewed as a rising global economic power, and the coming tournaments will showcase their new role in the international community.



SWITZERLAND

A RECENT CASE OF FRAUD HAS OPENED UP UBS, A MAJOR BANK IN SWITZERLAND, TO AN ESTIMATED LOSS OF \$2.3 BILLION, according to BBC News. The loss has been charged to trader Kweku Adoboli, who was pressured into admitting to the losses on Sept. 15. According to a hearing on Sept. 22, Adoboli admitted to filing false accounts from October 2008 to September 2011. These findings have led to more intensive investigations within the bank's personnel, according to Teresa Nielsen, analyst at the Swiss bank Vontobel. "We believe that yesterday's event could have personnel consequences on senior management level, which in turn could lead to adjustments to UBS' business portfolio," said Nielsen to the BBC.



INDIA

ON SEPT. 18, AN EARTHQUAKE OF MAGNITUDE 6.9 HIT NORTHEAST INDIA, SENDING DEVASTATING SHOCK-WAVES ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS. At this point the death toll has reached 81, but as rescue operations develop, authorities fear the confirmed death toll could rise significantly, CBS News reports. Due to the isolated nature of the area surrounding the epicenter, many communities remain cut off from support, and Indian military helicopters have begun dropping food and humanitarian supplies to Sikkim, the worst-hit Indian state. Following the initial quake, many residents have fled their homes and taken shelter in neighboring villages, sleeping outside in the cold.

Pakistan in state of emergency after flooding disaster

By Casey Horgan
STAFF WRITER

When it rains, it pours.

Recent floods in Pakistan have caused massive amounts of damage, and over 350 people have died. Five million people have been directly affected, 1.7 million acres of farmland have been inundated with floodwater, and 1.2 million homes have been washed away, according to the country's National Disaster Management Authority.

Upwards of four million people have become homeless as a result of the recent rains, reports Pakistan's local TV channel Express.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani was quoted as saying that the recent rains in the country's southern Sindh province were 142 percent above normal in the area. He said that 4,000 medical camps have been set up, which can accommodate 150,000 of the four million displaced people.

"While the government had mobilized all national resources, the severity and magnitude of the floods had created a humanitarian emergency requiring

support from the international community," Pakistan's Foreign Office said in a statement.

Despite the enormity of the flooding, international assistance is only trickling in.

"The level of international aid is pitiful, even measured against the limited assistance donated in other recent disasters," said Irfan Mufti, a reporter in Islamabad.

However several countries have responded to Gillani's appeal for aid.

The U.S., China, Iran, and even Japan — still reeling from its own natural disaster — have pledged support. So have the U.N., the European Union, and several non-government agencies.

"There are several reasons why the international community might have acted slower than it should have," Assistant Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies Amal Khoury said in an email interview.

"The challenge to reach those people in the affected areas" plays a role, said Khoury, adding that additional factors include "the existence of a fatigue syndrome after they have assisted the victims in the 2005 earthquake and the 2010 floods, and lack of trust in the Pakistani government."

Currently, the military is working alongside the government to organize relief efforts, with few external agencies providing any assistance.

"The cold response comes not from donor fatigue," say observers, "but from questions being raised over the government's ability to raise a portion of the funds," The Express Tribune reported.

In addition, aid agency Oxfam accused Pakistan's government of failing to invest in prevention measures after severe floods affected over 20 million people last year.

All of these factors have contributed to the limited aid that Pakistan has received. Monsoon rains continue, destroyed railway and road networks impede relief efforts, and a lack of funds has left many without assistance.

But in addition to the destruction, Pakistanis now have to worry about dengue fever, a water-borne illness spread by mosquitoes.

"Property damage is catastrophic," said Angie Moore, associate professor of geology. "But many times, particularly with countries without established sanitation systems, the most harmful things to come out of a flood of this magnitude can be a

lack of safe drinking water and a surge of water-borne diseases."

Mosquitoes proliferate in standing water and Pakistan has seen an outbreak of fatal dengue disease in the wake of the flood. More than 5,000 people have been infected, and the disease has claimed at least 36 lives, according to Islamabad's provincial health department.

The unprecedented rain spells that have caused the flooding and dengue outbreak are caused by climatic changes and will only continue, according to Prime Minister Gillani.

Moore agrees.

"Data sets show that natural disasters are occurring with higher frequency and intensity," she said.

While Pakistan works to rebuild its infrastructure and clean up after the floods, the country also must prepare for food scarcity and a major setback of its economy. Flooding has destroyed farmland, orchards, cattle, and major cash crops.

As a result, even if the country manages to raise enough capital for immediate rescue and response, it faces a looming economic crisis once the floods recede.