

Somalis Flee Capital

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Somalis Flee Capital Mogadishu/Nairobi , July 23 (qna) - Somalis Are Still Streaming Out Of The Violent Capital Mogadishu, With The Amount Of Those Fleeing Outnumbering The Ones Returning, The Un's Refugee Agency Said Monday, , As Daily Attacks Continue To Convulse The City Of 1 Million.

Up To 400,000 People Fled Bloody Clashes Between February And May Creating What The Un Called A Looming Humanitarian Catastrophe, But Only 125,000 Of Them Have Returned, The Unhcr Said.

In June And July, 20,000 People Returned To Mogadishu But Nearly 21,000 People Left. Some 10,000 People Fled The City In The Last Week, The Un Said. .

"at Any Moment, A Tragedy Might Happen To You," Unhcr Quoted A Local Aid Worker As Saying. "even At Night There Is No Respite As Despite The Curfew, You Can Hear Automatic Gun Fire As Well As Explosions." Meanwhile Fresh Violence At The Weekend Saw At Least 13 People Killed And 20 Wounded, Somali News Agency Shabelle Reported, As A Reconciliation Conference Seen As The Last Best Hope To Pull Somalia From The Brink Of Another Collapse Continued.

Mogadishu Has Not Known Peace Since The 1991 Ouster Of Dictator Mohammed Siad Barre By Us-backed Warlords, Except For A Six-month Period Last Year When A Popular Islamist Group Brought Some Stability To The Chaotic City.

Assassination Attempts, Suicide Bombings And Mortar Shelling Have Plagued The Capital Since The New Year, When Ethiopian-backed Government Troops Ousted The Islamists But Ignited An Iraq-style Insurgency Which Has Seen At Least 1,300 People Killed In Months Of Fighting.

The Insurgents, Believed To Be Remnants Of The Islamist Group And Members Of Mogadishu's Dominant Hawiye Clan, Have Vowed To Disrupt The Reconciliation Conference By Any Means And Managed To Punctuate Its Opening On July 15 With Mortar Attacks.

The Internationally-backed Transitional Government Of President Abdullahi Yusuf Is The 14th Attempt At Cementing Central Rule In Anarchic Somalia And Is Set To Hold Elections In 2009. qna 1248 Gmt 2007/07/23<