
ARCHIVES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

News from the Section on Archives and Human Rights
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Commentary. Apologies made, apologies needed: that seemed to be May's flavor.

*Mexico embarked on a year-long "sorry" program. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador issued an apology to the Maya people of Mexico "for what he described as five centuries of abuse committed by foreign and Mexican authorities and longstanding discrimination that continues to the present day;" later in the month he apologized for the 1911 massacre of 303 Chinese in the northern Mexican city of Torreon during the Mexican Revolution. <https://mexiconewsdaily.com/news/mx-apologizes-for-1911-killings/>

*Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau formally apologized "for the internment of Canadians of Italian descent during the Second World War." He said "31,000 Italian Canadians were labelled 'enemy aliens' and then fingerprinted, scrutinized and forced to report to local registrars once a month." <https://torontosun.com/news/national/trudeau-delivers-apology-to-italian-canadians-for-internment-during-second-world-war>

*Germany "formally recognized as genocide the crimes committed by its colonial troops at the beginning of the 20th century against the Herero and Nama people in what is now Namibia." When President Frank-Walter Steinmeier travels to Namibia later this year he will issue a formal apology. <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-officially-recognizes-colonial-era-namibia-genocide/a-57671070> ; <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/29698/germany-s-and-the-west-s-insufficient-reckoning-with-the-herero-genocide>

*In a phone call to Northern Ireland's first and deputy first ministers, U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson apologized for the "British army operation that resulted in the death of 10 innocent civilians in the est Belfast neighborhood of Ballymurphy in 1971." <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/may/12/boris-johnson-apologises-unreservedly-over-ballymurphy-deaths>

*And in Rwanda, French President Emmanuel Macron said, "I have to come to recognize our responsibilities" for the 1994 genocide, not quite an apology but Rwanda's President Paul Kagame said, "His words were something more valuable than an apology, they were the truth." <https://www.npr.org/2021/05/27/1000872505/frances-macron-admits-some-guilt-for-rwandas-genocide>

The German apology is part of the resolution, many years in the making, of claims against Germany by the victims, some of whom still were not satisfied. The U.K. apology came a day after an inquest in Northern Ireland "found the use of force had been unjustified" and the coroner delivered a "blistering report" rejecting army claims that "troops had opened fire only when they perceived they were under threat." The daughter of one of the victims said, "His apology means nothing. We need him to go back to the MoD [Ministry of Defense] and tell them to tell the truth, tell our legal team the names of the soldiers who murdered our loved ones and ask them why." The French move came after both an official French report and a Rwanda one laid out the French role in the leadup to and during the 1994 massacre. Pressure from civil society and, in the cases of Namibia and Rwanda, a country, created recognition by a government that acknowledgement and apology were part of the social justice that was required.

At the same time as these reparative acts were in the news, so too were signs that civil society was under threat. Across the world during the pandemic, CIVICUS Monitor "documented a range of restrictions on rights introduced by governments under the pretext of protecting people's health and lives." <https://monitor.civicus.org/COVID19May2021/>

*In Nicaragua, police raided the offices of the independent news outlets *Confidencial*, *Esta Semana*, and *Esta Noche*, facilities where, a police officer said, “the coup mongers meet and work.” The police briefly arrested two reporters and confiscated internal documents, personal possessions, and professional equipment. Nicaraguan prosecutors opened an investigation into “money laundering” against Cristiana Chamorro, the former head of the Violeta Barrios de Chamorro Foundation, a human rights organization that closed in February rather than register as a foreign agent; she is a presidential primary candidate and “anyone under criminal investigation cannot run for political office.”

<https://mailchi.mp/elfaro.net/el-faro-english-political-arrests-nicaragua-guatemala-6212872?e=b68035e8b1>;
<https://www.npr.org/2021/05/20/998795586/ortega-targets-opposition-figures-as-nicaraguan-elections-approach>

*In neighboring Guatemala, the Constitutional Court upheld a law that forces NGOs “to register, report their donations and allow their accounts to be inspected. Under certain circumstances, it would also allow NGOs to be dissolved, controlled and monitored.”

<https://kfgo.com/2021/05/12/guatemalas-top-court-backs-controversial-ngo-law-overturms-past-ruling/?emci=b8d1be8a-afb4-eb11-a7ad-0050f271b5d8&emdi=cabdda87-b0b4-eb11-a7ad-0050f271b5d8&ccid=4606001>; <https://mailchi.mp/dist/la-cidh-y-su-rele-rechazan-entrada-en-vigor-de-reformas-a-la-ley-de-organizaciones-no-gubernamentales-en-guatemala?e=bee49d752c>

*On April 29, the Venezuelan Ministry of Interior, Justice and Peace issued an ordinance requiring all non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the country to register with the national anti-terrorism office, implying a link between NGOs and terrorism. http://spgoin.imprentanacional.gob.ve/cgi-win/be_alex.cgi?Documento=T028700035845/0&Nombredb=spgoin&CodAsocDoc=2526&TipoDoc=GCTOF&t05=png&TSalida=I&Sesion=164964439&T05=PDF&T04=0&utm_source=WOLA+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=e489adbbfb-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_05_19_07_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_54f161a431-e489adbbfb-133911529

*On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, police in Belarus raided the office of the independent news site *TUT.BY* and the homes of several of its editors, some of whom were arrested, “accusing the organization of avoiding tax.” The Ministry of Information said the General Prosecutor’s office had “established numerous facts of violations of the law” by *TUT.BY* “in terms of posting prohibited information in a number of publications on the *TUT.BY* website” including content about the “unregistered” BYSOL foundation, which aims to support victims of repression in the country. “It is prohibited to disseminate information on Internet resources on behalf of organizations that have not undergone state registration in the prescribed manner,” the Ministry said.

<https://www.euronews.com/2021/05/18/tut-by-independent-belarus-media-website-blocked-after-series-of-raids>

*In Israel, the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders said Israel was acting to “delegitimize” human rights non-governmental organizations in Israel, the occupied West Bank, and the Syrian Golan. “The strategy put in place by the Israeli Government is threefold: one, delegitimizing civil society critical voices through ‘naming and shaming’ and associating them with terrorists or anti-Semites; two, pressuring any one giving a platform for their discourse; three, lobbying actively to cut their sources of funding. . . . These trends have reached alarming proportions, and significantly undermine the ability of human rights defenders and NGOs to carry out their legitimate and crucial work.” https://target-locked-obs-defenders.org/IMG/pdf/obs_palestine2021ang-1.pdf

Without the pressure of civil society, without the work of NGOs, the apologies would not have happened. The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted in 1998, affirmed, “Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to solicit, receive and utilize resources for the express purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms through peaceful means.” <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/SRHRDefenders/Pages/Translation.aspx> The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, concerned about the Guatemala NGO law, pointed out “the free and full enjoyment of freedom of association imposes on states the duty to create legal and factual conditions through which human rights defenders, media and journalists can freely exercise their work.” <https://www.oas.org/en/IACHR/jsForm/?File=/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2021/128.asp>

Raids on offices, seizures of computers and documents, onerous compulsory registrations, complex permits required for public gathering: documentation of all these show the limits on the right of association promoted by repressive states. Preserving these documents, by nongovernmental bodies, individuals, and, yes, the states themselves, can lead the way to a future date in which the state says, “We were wrong. We apologize.”

SAHR News. The premiere First Tuesday Talk was held June 1, with Mariana Nazar talking on archives for truth and justice in Argentina and the question of archival provenance. The next First Tuesday Talk will be August 3 with Graham Dominy discussing the complications the National Archives of South Africa faced when accessioning and managing the records of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The talk will be in English.

The general meeting of the Section will be held June 30 at 16:00 hours Western European time. Persons who wish to attend as observers but are not members of the Section should contact Antonio Gonzalez Quintana agquintana@gmail.com.

International news.

European Court of Human Rights. The European Court of Human Rights ruled that the U.K. government violated the freedom of the press by its mass spying program and must seek permission "from an impartial decision-making body" to access any confidential journalistic material, even if they find the information accidentally, *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism* reported. The protection applies to "all confidential material collected by journalists in their reporting not just the identity of sources. The judgment covers state authorities across Europe, including intelligence agencies, government departments and the police." <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2021-05-25/bureau-victory-protecting-journalists-from-mass-surveillance>

International Labor Organization and World Health Organization. The ILO and WHO published the "first global analysis of the loss of life and health associated with working long hours," estimating that "in 2016, 398,000 people died from stroke and 347,000 from heart disease as a result of having worked at least 55 hours a week." The study, covering global, regional and national levels, "was based on data from more than 2300 surveys collected in 154 countries from 1970-2018." <https://www.who.int/news/item/17-05-2021-long-working-hours-increasing-deaths-from-heart-disease-and-stroke-who-ilo>

Interpol. Interpol announced the release of a specialized app called ID-Art, which enables users ranging from law enforcement to the general public to get access to the Interpol database of stolen works of art, create an inventory of private art collections and report cultural sites potentially at risk. Using "cutting-edge image-recognition software, ID-Art is free to download and available in the Apple app store as well as the Google or Android play stores," *Eurasia Review* reported. Interpol, Europol and the World Customs Organization also announced the result of their 2020 "Pandora operation targeting the illicit trafficking of cultural goods" in Europe, which seized 56,400 items. Among the seizures in Spain were "archives of sound, film and photography." https://www.eurasiareview.com/12052021-interpol-more-than-56400-cultural-goods-seized-67-arrested/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29

United Nations. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) issued a report on "new and emerging technologies in humanitarian action." While explaining that these tools can enable "earlier, faster and potentially more effective humanitarian action," the report exposed "an array of complex challenges and risk. Inadequate data protection can cause harm, intensify insecurities and hinder the principled delivery of humanitarian assistance." After noting that "incomplete datasets about affected people can lead to digital discrimination," OCHA declared, "technology's potential is only ever as strong as its underlying data set, decision-making process, user distribution, and political buy-in." Among the two dozen recommendations is, "Protect against data use for non-humanitarian purposes." This seems to militate against archival preservation and future research use of the data. <https://www.unocha.org/story/ocha-launches-report-new-and-emerging-technologies-humanitarian-action>

The head of OCHA, and the president of The Rockefeller Foundation published an essay "Investing in Data Saves Lives." The two organizations worked together to develop a model to use data to predict COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan; it has now been used in other crisis areas. They argued that using predictive modelling "could lead to better humanitarian outcomes," but there are also "significant data challenges, regarding both gaps and quality" that limit the accuracy of the model. "Globally, we are still missing about 50% of the data needed to respond effectively in countries experiencing humanitarian

emergencies.” <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/data-investments-save-lives-in-poorest-countries-by-mark-lowcock-and-rajiv-shah-1-2021-06>

Also on the data theme, the UN Environmental Programme and the Convention on Biological Diversity issued a report warning that “the world is still living unsustainably and biodiversity loss and climate change have continued to deteriorate.” The report “reviews data and information about the environmental aspects” of each of the UN Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 agenda, and “found there has been an increase in downward trends among more indicators when compared with the previous progress report published in 2019.” The researchers used “an analytical approach driven by data,” and they called for improved data: “gaps were identified in the diversity and use of environmental data and statistics to inform government policies.” <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1092532>

UNICEF. UNICEF issued “The Case for Better Governance of Children’s Data: A Manifesto.” It “worked with 17 global experts” to develop a “vision for a better approach to children’s data.” UNICEF explained, “Children are more vulnerable than adults and are less able to understand the long-term implications of consenting to their data collection. For these reason, children’s data deserve to be treated differently.” <https://www.unicef.org/globalinsight/reports/better-governance-childrens-data-manifesto>

World Health Organization (WHO). The Swiss government and WHO announced the launch of a “BioHub facility for the sharing of data on viruses and other emerging pathogens that could lead to future outbreaks,” *Geneva Solutions* reported. A spokesman for the Swiss lab said the facility will need “close international collaboration to ensure a timely and transparent sharing of epidemiological and clinical data including biological samples of pathogens.” It will also need a robust archives program. https://genevasolutions.news/global-health/high-level-security-lab-in-switzerland-steps-up-global-fight-against-covid-and-other-dangerous-pathogens?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email

AP investigated allegations that WHO staffers assigned to the Congo during the Ebola crisis in 2018-2019 abused women. It found “that despite its public denial of knowledge, senior WHO management was not only informed of alleged sexual misconduct in 2019 but was asked how to handle it.” The investigation “was based on interviews with dozens of WHO staffers, Ebola officials in Congo, private emails, legal documents and recordings of internal meetings.” Among the most shocking items found was a notarized contract between a doctor on contract to WHO and a woman he impregnated “in which he agreed to pay her \$100 a month until her baby was delivered, to provide all necessary health care, and to buy her a plot of land in Beni. Four witnesses signed the document, including two from WHO.” https://apnews.com/article/united-nations-europe-ebola-virus-entertainment-coronavirus-pandemic-d14715ba3653753d7c1f122f8aea79de?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=May12_MorningWire&utm_term=Morning%20Wire%20Subscribers

World/general news.

Business records. Members of the U.S. Congress and 68 Nobel prize winners urged the U.S. Department of Justice to review the prosecution of human rights attorney Steven Donziger, who has been targeted for harassment by the global oil company Chevron since Donziger “won a multibillion dollar judgement against the oil giant in 2011 for polluting the Eucadorian Amazon,” *Common Dreams* reported. Donziger was held in contempt of court in July 2019 “for refusing to disclose privileged client information to the fossil fuel company.” For background, see *HRWG News* 2019-03, 04. <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2021/05/04/68-nobel-laureates-demand-doj-probe-chevrans-prosecution-steven-donziger>

A case by 71 claimants alleging serious human rights abuses by security personnel “employed or contracted by the Williamson Diamond Mine and by police who work at and around” the Tanzanian mine was settled, the plaintiffs’ law firm reported. As part of the settlement Williamson and its parent company Petra Diamonds Limited “will disclose to complainants and their legal advisors all documents held in relation to their cases, including medical records stored at Mwaduui Hospital” in Tanzania. For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-09. <https://www.leighday.co.uk/latest-updates/news/2021-news/settlement-agreed-with-petra-diamonds-limited-following-claims-of-serious-human-rights-abuses/>

Two researchers analyzed the rhetoric that ExxonMobil, the global oil company, used in 180 “climate change communications, including peer-reviewed publications, internal company documents, and

advertorials in *The New York Times*,” they reported in *One Earth*. They found ExxonMobil “used rhetoric of climate ‘risk’ and consumer energy ‘demand’ to construct a ‘Fossil Fuel Savior’ (FFS) frame that downplays the reality and seriousness of climate change, normalizes fossil fuel lock-in, and individualizes responsibility.” [https://www.cell.com/one-earth/fulltext/S2590-3322\(21\)00233-5?mbid=&utm_source=nl&utm_brand=tny&utm_mailing=TNY_Climate_051921&utm_campaign=aud-dev&utm_medium=email&bxid=5c48efcf2dd9c4807adf975&endid=53684912&hasha=8fed7efd9e9d6389b9f914ad34a5948d&hashb=be86af3880f5d49a71f804266e79b70bb4fa408d&hashc=f553fa26cd5d27697a335ab74e22a11c9b48c47784712d14145ae3c0ed4aad10&esrc=&utm_term=TNY_ClimateCrisis](https://www.cell.com/one-earth/fulltext/S2590-3322(21)00233-5?mbid=&utm_source=nl&utm_brand=tny&utm_mailing=TNY_Climate_051921&utm_campaign=aud-dev&utm_medium=email&bxid=5c48efcf2dd9c4807adf975&endid=53684912&hasha=8fed7efd9e9d6389b9f914ad34a5948d&hashb=be86af3880f5d49a71f804266e79b70bb4fa408d&hashc=f553fa26cd5d27697a335ab74e22a11c9b48c47784712d14145ae3c0ed4aad10&esrc=&utm_term=TNY_ClimateCrisis)

A French court dismissed a complaint lodged by a French-Vietnamese woman against “14 chemical giants, including Bayer, Monsanto and Dow Chemicals” for her illnesses and the genetic abnormalities of her children which she linked to exposure to Agent Orange during the war in Vietnam in the 1970s. *France 24* reported that the court said the companies that manufactured Agent Orange “were acting ‘on the orders’ of the U.S. government, which was engaged in a ‘sovereign act’.” Military veterans of the war from the U.S., Australia and Korea have won compensation for the after-effects of Agent Orange. For background, see *HRWG News* 2019-07, *SAHR News* 2020-08. <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20210510-french-court-dismisses-landmark-agent-orange-complaint>

A French appeals court ruled that “German firm TUV Rheinland was negligent in awarding safety certificates” for breast implants made with “cheap, industrial-grade silicone not cleared for human use” and that “thousands of victims of defective breast implants made in France should receive compensation,” *AAP* reported. TUV Rheinland is a privately held product safety and quality assurance testing firm; PIP, which made the implants, went out of business in 2010, and its founder “told the police investigation his employees would remove evidence of the industrial silicone gel before TUV Rheinland made its annual inspections.” <https://thenewdaily.com.au/life/wellbeing/2021/05/20/french-court-orders-breast-implant-damages-against-tuv-rheinland/>

The founder and director of Huawei, the Chinese telecommunications giant, advised his employees both to reduce email and destroy more: “besides saving legal materials and important company documents with a longer validity period, useless historical materials must be automatically sunsetted,” the *Washington Post* reported. He made the statement in a 15 April speech posted on Huawei’s employee online forum. What about the corporate archives? <https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2021/05/10/huawei-tells-staff-to-keep-fewer-records>

A court in The Hague, Netherlands, ordered Royal Dutch Shell (RDS) “to cut its global carbon emissions by 45% by the end of 2030 compared with 2019 levels.” In the English text of the decision, paragraph 4.4.20, the court wrote, “RDS has for a long time known of the dangerous consequences of CO2 emissions and the risks of climate change to Dutch residents and the inhabitants of the Wadden region. RDS also knows the amount of CO2 emissions of the Shell group it has reported on the volume of CO2 emissions . . . [it] follows that RDS regularly monitors and assesses the climate-related risks of its business activities and those of its business relations.” Shell said it would appeal. According to the Carbon Majors database, Shell was the ninth biggest polluter in the world in 1988-2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/may/26/court-orders-royal-dutch-shell-to-cut-carbon-emissions-by-45-by-2030>; for the decision <https://uitspraken.rechtspraak.nl/inziendocument?id=ECLI:NL:RBDHA:2021:5339>

Climate change. “Using data from 732 locations in 43 countries around the world,” researchers at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and the University of Bern determined that “between 1991 and 2018, more than a third of all deaths in which heat played a role were attributable to human-induced global warming.” According to the study, published in *Nature Climate Change*, the percentage of such heat-related deaths was highest in Central and South America and South-East Asia, but the study did not include “large parts of Africa and South Asia—due to a lack of empirical data.” <https://phys.org/news/2021-05-global-responsible-heat-related-deaths.html>

Environment. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) released a report showing that “over the last 30 years, countries have been more prone to conflict when natural resources like agricultural land and water become scarce or degraded, such as in areas where droughts are frequent,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. The report said “conflicts are less frequent within the boundaries of protected natural areas, which account for an estimated 15% of land but overlap with only 3% of the more than 85,000 conflicts analyzed from the past three decades.” The report was written by 27

specialists who used data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program and “knowledge products built on IUCN standards (such as the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas and the World Database on Protected Areas) as well as external data where appropriate, across the widely-used State-Pressure-Response-Benefits framework.”

<https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/NGW-001-En.pdf>

On 5 May, a dozen companies, including such big names as Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury, and Skandia Swedbank, sent an open letter to the Deputies and Senators of the National Congress of Brazil expressing concern over “extremely high levels of forest fires and deforestation in Brazil.” The signatories said that if proposed laws that undermine existing protections for the Amazon are enacted “we will have no choice but to reconsider our support and use of the Brazilian commodity supply chain.” Two weeks later the *Bureau of Investigative Journalism, Unearthed* and *Reporter Brasil* “used satellite images and enforcement records to uncover how soya [bean] was illegally planted on land that had previously been placed under embargo.” They discovered that three of the world’s biggest food businesses—Cargill, Bunge and Cofeo—“have purchased soya from companies whose supply chains have been the subject of concerns over links to illegal deforestation and forest fires in the Brazilian Amazon”—Chinese-owned Fiagril and multinational Alianca Agricola do Cerrado. The situation is complicated by the “complex web of land registrations” by soya farmers. https://www.retailsoygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Letter-from-Business-on-Amazon_2021.pdf; <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2021-05-19/loophole-lets-soya-farmers-tear-down-the-amazon>

Internally displaced persons. The NGO Internal Displacement Monitoring Center published data for 2020, showing “storms, floods, wildfires—and to a lesser degree, conflict—uprooted 40.5 million people around the world,” the largest number in more than a decade. <https://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>

Medical records. Ransomware attacks against health records were big news in May. *STAT* reported that in the U.S. Scripps Health was hit, forcing its staff “to divert critical care patients to nearby hospitals and revert to pen-and-paper recordkeeping.” In Finland, a breach of the electronic record system of the largest network of private mental-health providers, Vastaamo (now out of business), led to ransom demands to about 30,000 people, demanding Bitcoin to delete the patient’s information from the hackers’ servers, *WIRED* reported. Ireland’s health system was paralyzed for a week, “cutting off access to patient records, delaying Covid-19 testing and forcing cancellations of medical appointments,” the *New York Times* reported. The health service shut down its entire information technology system and built a new one; the government said it would not pay ransom. And “AXA, the French insurance giant, said . . . it would no longer cover ransom payments.” https://www.wired.com/story/vastaamo-psychotherapy-patients-hack-data-breach/?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=bcae402a7a-MR_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-bcae402a7a-149736437; https://www.statnews.com/2021/05/21/ransomware-hospitals-cybersecurity-health-records/?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=adca6e1b7a-MR_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-adca6e1b7a-149736437; <https://newsweek365.com/2021/05/20/irish-hospitals-are-latest-to-be-hit-by-ransomware-attacks/>

Using clinical data collected voluntarily by Stone Mountain Health Services which provides “medical, behavioral, and legal services for active and former coal miners” in the U.S. Appalachian area, a research team “abstracted” clinical, physiologic, and radiographic data and found that 883 of 2364 patients with complete data “reported symptoms consistent with major depressive disorder,” they reported in *JAMA Network*. This “far exceeded the prevalence of depression” among other people in the area; further studies are needed to look at risk factors such as economic security, substance use disorders, and workplace safety. “Studies outside of the United States have found a high risk of mental illness among coal miners,” but the U.S. rate “far exceeded those documented in coal mining populations internationally.”

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2780138?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=a215ae7f46-MR_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-a215ae7f46-149736437

Epic, a company marketing electronic health records systems, offers “a clinical prediction tool called the Deterioration Index” that uses artificial intelligence “to help physicians decide when to move a patient into or out of intensive care.” The “core assumption” is that traditional triage (determining how sick a patient is and therefore the priority of care) “can be augmented, or perhaps replaced entirely, by machine learning and big data.” Two doctors, writing in *Undark*, pointed out that the algorithms used to

evaluate the raw data leading to conclusions are proprietary and not available to doctors, and without access to the underlying system “it is impossible to know whether the index incorporates . . . race-adjusted sources in its own algorithm, potentially propagating biases.” <https://undark.org/2021/05/27/health-care-algorithm-promise-peril/>

The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington (U.S. State) explained its approach to estimating global mortality from Covid-19 infections, based on data from “all locations where weekly or monthly all-cause mortality has been reported since the start of the pandemic.” Its analysis estimated that “by May 13, 2021, the total number of COVID-19 deaths was 7.1 million, a figure that is more than two times higher than the reported number of deaths of 3.33 million.” http://www.healthdata.org/special-analysis/estimation-excess-mortality-due-covid-19-and-scalars-reported-covid-19-deaths?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=6f702c3197-MR_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-6f702c3197-149736437

Slavery. In May 2020 the Future Society and Walk Free, both NGOs, launched Project AMS (Artificial Intelligence against Modern Slavery). Its first phase is “accessing, gathering and structuring” the data from “statements produced under the UK Modern Slavery Act” to build “the largest publicly available text corpus of modern slavery statements.” Next AMS will to assign labels to the data and then use “supervised machine learning methods to create a document classifier” to assess the statements against 18 metrics “that follow the UK Home Office guidance.” Disturbingly, of the approximately 17,000 unique statement URLs stored in the Modern Slavery Registry of the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre “just 12,005 could be accessed.” <https://cdn.walkfree.org/content/uploads/2021/05/05173207/20210428-digital-insights-into-modern-slavery.pdf>

Technology. The European Union is installing and testing “a vast array of physical and experimental new digital barriers” to stop people from entering the Union illegally, *AP* reported. “AI-powered lie detectors and virtual border-guard interview bots have been piloted, as well as efforts to integrate satellite data with footage from drones on land, air, sea and underwater. Palm scanners record the unique vein pattern in a person’s hand to use as a biometric identifier, and the makers of live camera reconstruction technology promise to erase foliage virtually, exposing people hiding near border areas.” A member of the digital rights NGO EDRi said the EU is adopting “techno-isolationism” and is sidelining “moral considerations in dealing with the complex issue of migration.” Managing all this data, appraising it, and preserving it will be a major archival challenge. https://apnews.com/article/middle-east-europe-migration-technology-health-c23251bec65ba45205a0851fab07e9b6?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Monday_Morning_Wire&utm_term=Morning%20Wire%20Subscribers

World War II. The Arolsen Archive in Germany is trying to trace relatives of 20 prisoners from the Neuengamme camp near Hamburg, Germany, to return personal items taken from the prisoners by the Nazis. “After being arrested, the Germans took all personal belongings from prisoners,” *The First News* explained. “These were placed in an envelope called an Effekten. This would follow a prisoner to each camp they went to.” So far six of the twenty families have been located. <https://www.thefirstnews.com/article/holocaust-archive-launches-appeal-to-find-family-of-concentration-camp-victim-so-it-can-return-personal-items-stolen-by-the-nazis-21889>

Bilateral and multilateral news.

Armenia/Azerbaijan. Soviet-era maps are “in conflict with one another” concerning the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, said an essay published by *Eurasia Review*. A “Soviet-era military map assigns territory to Azerbaijan that a Soviet topographic map says belongs to Armenia,” and as a result “some of the supposed violations Armenia has claimed . . . may not have looked like violations to Azerbaijani forces.” https://www.eurasiareview.com/17052021-soviet-era-maps-in-conflict-with-one-another-concerning-armenian-azerbaijani-border-oped/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29

Azerbaijan’s human rights commissioner asked the Council of Europe’s human rights commissioner “to call on Armenia to provide Azerbaijan with minefield maps” to prevent further loss of life and to allow internally displaced persons to safely return to their homes,” *Azernews* reported. <https://www.azernews.az/karabakh/178518.html>

Trend reported that a joint commission between Azerbaijan and Turkey has been established “to investigate the war crimes of Armenia in Karabakh” during the war from late September to early November 2020. <https://www.azernews.az/karabakh/178515.html>

Balkan wars. Bosnia’s prosecutor “has begun a probe after media in the country published video from a documentary film made in 1992 by French journalist Philippe Buffon about snipers operating in Sarajevo during the siege of the city,” *BIRN* reported. The prosecution said that “the available recordings and photos have been collected and the Special War Crimes Section has established a case.” No indictments “have ever been filed against the direct perpetrators of sniper attacks on Sarajevo during the siege, despite the fact that the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague has significant evidence including military reports and orders.” <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/05/21/bosnia-probes-video-of-sarajevo-siege-snipers/>

The Humanitarian Law Center (HLC) presented a dossier on the VRS 43rd Motorised Brigade in Prijedor. It provides “insights into the structure and operations” of the Brigade, a unit of the 1st Krajina Corps of the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) that, with other units, during the summer of 1992 “carried out attacks on numerous villages and settlements in Prijedor municipality inhabited predominantly by Bosniaks and Croats.” More than 3,000 civilians from Prijedor municipality were killed. “In the documents of the VRS and the Ministry of the Interior (MUP) of the Republika Srpska, combat operations in the Prijedor municipality were referred to as “cleansing operations” and actions aimed to crush extremist groups. However, as established in several judgments of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), these operations involved the systematic killings, abuses, arrests and detention of non-Serbs, as well as the destruction and looting of their property.” To date, no commander of a brigade that participated in the operations in Prijedor has been held to account for the crimes committed there. <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=38006&lang=de>

France/Rwanda. “The French prosecutor’s department . . . said that there were no grounds to pursue legal claims that France bore responsibility for enabling the 1994 genocide,” *CNN* reported, despite an official report in March by French researchers that said France was not complicit in the genocide but bore “heavy and overwhelming” responsibility for events leading up to it and for actions that were too slow in response to the killings. For background, see *SAHR News* 2021-04.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/05/03/europe/rwanda-france-genocide-legal-intl/index.html>;
<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/report-coming-french-role-1994-rwandan-genocide-76705415>

Israel/Palestine. Following a one-day special session on the “grave human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,” the UN Human Rights Council established “an international commission of inquiry to investigate violations of international humanitarian law and all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up to and since 13 April 2021 and all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions.” The commission is to “collect, consolidate and analyse evidence of such violations and abuses of crimes perpetrated, and systematically record and preserve all information, documentation and evidence, including interviews, witness testimony and forensic materials, in accordance with international law standards, in order to maximize the possibility of its admissibility in legal proceedings.” https://www.unitad.un.org/sites/www.unitad.un.org/files/general/s.2021.419_-_sixth_unitad_report_en.pdf

Lebanon/Syria. *Syria Direct* reported on bribes being offered to Syrians living in Lebanon in exchange for handing over identification documents that would allow the holder to vote for Bashar al-Assad in the Syrian election. The NGO Access Center for Human Rights said it received “numerous complaints and reports from Syrian refugees in Lebanon who have been threatened;” threats included “withdrawing identification documents, deportation, eviction and expulsion from work.” https://syriadirect.org/assad-pursues-syrians-in-lebanon-to-legitimize-his-fourth-re-election/?utm_source=SJAC+Weekly+Update&utm_campaign=a38bb13c96-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_01_10_02_56_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0a7405c641-a38bb13c96-90540617

Mideast wars. The head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant presented his sixth report to the UN Security Council. He said the investigations “established clear and convincing evidence that genocide was committed by ISIL against the Yazidi as a religious group” and that predominantly “Shia unarmed air cadets and personnel from Tikrit Air Academy” were captured, tortured, and executed. The report

also said that ISIL “developed toxic lethal compounds including thallium and nicotine that were tested on live prisoners, leading to death.” The report includes a long section on the collection and storage of evidentiary material, including the team’s use of “internal ISIL documentation extracted from former ISIL digital devices.”

https://www.unitad.un.org/sites/www.unitad.un.org/files/general/sa_khan_6th_briefing_sc_as_prepared_en_0.pdf;

https://www.unitad.un.org/sites/www.unitad.un.org/files/general/s.2021.419_-_sixth_unitad_report_en.pdf

Amy Austin Holmes and research assistants downloaded data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) on conflict events 2017-2020 on the Turkish-Syrian border. They found the number of attacks “from Turkey or Turkish-backed forces targeting civilians or the SDF [Syrian Democratic Forces]” was 3,319, while they could “credibly account” for only 12 incidents of attacks from the Syrian side of the border into Turkey and those “all occurred after Turkey launched” its cross-border invasion in October 2019. Another 10 attacks from Syria into Turkey were reported but the team was unable to verify them with independent sources. In the paper on the research, Holmes wrote, “Although Turkish officials claim their intervention and occupation of Syrian territory was in response to cross-border attacks from the SDF, the data does not substantiate these claims.”

https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/threats-perceived-and-real-new-data-and-need-new-approach-turkish-sdf-border-conflict?utm_medium=email&utm_source=update&utm_campaign=mep&emci=68f68401-05bf-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&emdi=a8d2fd4a-d9c2-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&ceid=29308

National news.

Argentina. Argentina’s government “sent hundreds of DNA testing kits to its consulates around the world in a groundbreaking effort to put names to unidentified victims murdered in the ‘Dirty War’ waged by the brutal military dictatorship four decades ago,” the *Guardian* reported. An estimated 30,000 people, “almost all of them civilian, unarmed non-combatants,” were “disappeared” and murdered during the dictatorship, and Argentina is committed to “putting a name to every woman, man and child killed by the junta.” <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/may/28/argentina-sends-dna-test-kits-embassies-find-juntas-disappeared-victims?emci=1a1c483b-bbbf-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&emdi=2fe84991-bcbf-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&ceid=4606001>

Human rights advocates presented a petition to the Inspector General of the Federal Intelligence Agency, demanding the opening of the opening of archives for the period 1974-1983. Thanks to Mariana Nazar for the link. http://www.laretaguardia.com.ar/2021/05/reunion-AFI-archivos.html?fbclid=IwAR39zLlivKtvW_xD3QF8hOJi-H9IZrXLXPvpWE0oqdNHc5RI_icEDJPDUse

Belarus. Belarus ordered a Ryanair flight to land in Minsk, the capitol, saying Belarus had received an email from the Palestinian militant group Hamas saying a bomb was on board the flight. *The Daily Beast* and the Dossier Center obtained a copy of the “Hamas” email; its timestamp shows it was sent 24 minutes after the plane was ordered to land. Upon landing the journalist Roman Protasevich, who was on board, was arrested. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/bomb-threat-cited-in-belarus-hijacking-came-24-minutes-after>

Bolivia. Bolivia’s prosecutor announced “there was excessive use of force during the police operation carried out in Sacaba to halt protests against the 2019 coup d’etat,” *teleSUR* reported. Ten demonstrators died and dozens were injured during the event. For background, see *SAHR News* 2020-03, 11. https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Bolivian-Justice-Finds-Excessive-Use-Of-Force-In-Sacaba-Raid-20210511-0007.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=10

Brazil. “The Karipuna Indigenous People filed a lawsuit against Brazil and the province of Rondonia for allowing illegally registered private land plots inside their protected Indigenous land,” the NGO Greenpeace International announced. “An analysis by Greenpeace Brazil and Brazilian NGO Indigenist Missionary Council (CIMI), using publicly available data, shows that there are currently 31 land registries fully or partly overlapping the borders of the protected lands of the Karipuna Indigenous People. The forest areas registered by individuals vary from one to 200 hectares. In many cases, illegal logging has already happened inside these claimed land plots.” <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/47430/karipuna-indigenous-people-sue-brazilian-state-for-allowing-land-grabs-in-their-home/>

Canada. The press release read: “It is with a heavy heart that Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc Kukpi7 (Chief) Rosanne Casimir confirms an unthinkable loss that was spoken about but never documented by the

Kamloops Indian Residential School. This past weekend [22-23 May], with the help of a ground penetrating radar specialist, the stark truth of the preliminary findings came to light – the confirmation of the remains of 215 children who were students of the Kamloops Indian Residential School.” The school, operated by the Catholic Church, began in 1890 and had as many as 500 students at its peak; the federal government took over the school in 1969 and it closed in 1978. Chief Casimir said the next steps would include “engaging with the coroner; reaching out to the home communities who had children who attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School; and taking measures to ensure that the locations of the remains are protected,” while the “Secwépemc Museum Archivist is working with the Royal British Columbia Museum, amongst others, to seek out any existing records of these deaths.” <https://tkemlups.ca/wp-content/uploads/05-May-27-2021-TteS-MEDIA-RELEASE.pdf>

Central African Republic. UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told a press conference that CAR’s minister of justice and human rights “issued an order establishing a Special Commission of Inquiry to investigate serious crimes, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, allegedly committed by national security forces and their allies” between December 2020 and the end of April 2021. The order was the result of the UN mission’s report “to the country’s authorities of a list of human rights violations allegedly committed.” <https://www.urdupoint.com/en/world/car-to-form-commission-of-inquiry-to-probe-wa-1243483.html>

Chile. The Supreme Court upheld the conviction of former military officers for the killing of the Mapuche community member Camilo Catrillanca on 14 November 2018, *teleSUR* reported. For background, see *SAHR News* 2021-01. https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Chile-Supreme-Court-Holds-Convictions-Of-Catrillancas-Killers-20210506-0004.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=11

China. “Chinese state media have published dozens of . . . videos praising the Communist Party and showing Uyghurs angrily denouncing former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for declaring a genocide in the . . . Xinjiang region,” *AP* reported. *AP* received a text, sent to government offices in the city of Karamay, instructing each office to find Uyghurs to film the videos. The man who “sent a screenshot of the text to the *AP*” was arrested; the Xinjiang government said he was “fabricating and posting fake information.” https://apnews.com/article/asia-pacific-technology-f6ffda9288b1671da741c07d8f4f8afc?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=May20_MorningWire&utm_term=Morning%20Wire%20Subscribers

Colombia. In Colombia, the headquarters of the Medellin Human Rights Ombudsman was vandalized with the attack “directed at files related to the follow-up of cases of human rights violations in Antioquia.” All computer equipment was either destroyed or stolen, *Radio Nacional* reported. Thanks to Antonio Gonzalez Quintana for the link. <https://www.radionacional.co/noticia/actualidad/vandalizan-personeria-medellin-oficina-derechos-humanos>

The UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2574 (2021), deciding that the UN Verification Mission in Colombia will verify the execution and implementation of the sentences issued by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to individuals who acknowledge truth and responsibility for crimes committed during the 50-year conflict. [https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/s/res/2574\(2021\)](https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/s/res/2574(2021))

Eight ex-commanders of the former guerrilla group FARC released a 300 page “joint declaration stating they accept the accusations against them in full by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) court,” *Al Jazeera* reported. The group “admitted to accusations of kidnappings as a policy within their ranks” and to charges of cruel treatment, sexual abuse and murder. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/30/colombias-ex-farc-leaders-admit-kidnapping-and-other-crimes>

The United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) reported that Colombia’s Attorney General’s office “recorded over 94,000 cases of missing people; however, CED warned about ‘the absence of clear and reliable data’,” *teleSUR* reported. CED also said Columbia has “over 24,000 unidentified corpses buried in public cemeteries.” Human rights defenders reported 548 people missing between 28 April, when major protests against the government began, and 11 May. https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Enforced-Disappearances-Continue-in-Colombia-UN-Warns-20210511-0006.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=12

An “avalanche of videos” document the protests that began on April 28, the *Washington Post* reported. The *Post* examined video footage involving deaths of four of the protesters; it said the videos show “how Colombian police appear to have crossed a lethal line.” Police officers have been indicted in three of the four cases the *Post* examined. “Authorities have been most active in cases in which videos have been the clearest and most widely shared,” underscoring “the power of viral images to hold officials to account.” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/interactive/investigations/2021/colombia-protests-deaths-police/>

El Salvador. At the trial on the December 1981 massacre of nearly 1,000 civilians at El Mozote, an expert witness testified that “a new military document showed Operation Rescate, the army’s official name for what occurred in December 1981, was ordered by high-level officials,” *Al Jazeera* reported. “This detail was especially revealing as the army has refused to comply with a judicial order to allow the judge in the case to review military archives.” For background, see *SAHR News* 2021-04. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/2/victims-renew-calls-justice-el-mozote-trial-moves-ahead-el-salvador>

Ethiopia. To look at the impact of the war on the Tigray region, an inventive team of geographers in Belgium used satellite photographs of fields being plowed to ready them for planting. About three quarters of the active Tigray population are farmers. Using data on rainfall, the researchers determined that May 2021 and May 2018 had similar rain conditions. Comparing the photographs from those dates, they found that in “early May 2021 . . . very few croplands had been ploughed, as compared to the situation in previous years.” Interviews with local witnesses confirmed that “the lack of ploughing is most likely a direct consequence of the war.” According to WHO, people are already dying of hunger in the region; a lack of farm crops would exacerbate the already dire situation.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351516150_Ploughing_in_the_Tigray_War;
<https://search.aol.com/click/?vlt=AwrE1xgyS7pgdNgAfThpCWVH:ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEEcG9zAzEEdnRpZAMEc2VjA3Ny/RV=2/RE=1622850482/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fwww.aljazeera.com%2fnews%2f2021%2f5%2f18%2fstarvation-stalks-ethiopia-tigray-as-war-dragson/RK=0/RS=nH0gHKvayFiCVj3evrycAgoLr8s->

Germany. Hate crimes against LGBT+ people increased by 36% in 2020, and data released by the Federal Criminal Police Office also showed an 8.54% rise in politically motivated crimes, *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. However, the figures on LGBT+ hate crimes “did not include the killing last year of a gay man in Dresden and another in Altenburg because they were classified as murders.” <https://news.trust.org/item/20210504154706-vs3yc/>

Guatemala. Twelve people were arrested, accused of abductions, torture, rape and killings based on evidence from the “Military Diary” (Diario Militar) that was smuggled out of Guatemala and given to the U.S. NGO National Security Archive in 1999. *AP* broke the story, and the Archive followed with additional information and clarifications. “Entries in the logbook describe the capture by security forces of 183 men, women and several children, and contain photographs of the victims, the dates and locations of their seizure, their alleged connection to guerrilla groups, and in half of the cases codified references to their secret executions.” <https://apnews.com/article/caribbean-guatemala-7243fa5ec0830080bee87c9d509a5b90?emci=1a1c483b-bbbf-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&emdi=2fe84991-bcbf-eb11-a7ad-501ac57b8fa7&ceid=4606001>; <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/news/guatemala/2021-06-04/diario-militar?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=f24bb304-48d3-45e9-81af-31406c732703>

India. “A group of archivists, scholars, historians, students, among others from across the world has called for transparency in the proposed demolition of annexes which form part of the National Archives of India (NAI) in order to make way for the Central Vista project,” *The Wire* reported. The government said the historic building of the National Archives will be preserved, but the annexes will be destroyed. The protesters pointed out “the historical, archival materials of the National Archives are kept substantially in the annexe buildings – and these buildings are slated for demolition soon.” They argued, “Given that state capacity is stretched due to the ongoing pandemic, the best option would be to abandon the demolition of the National Archives at this stage. Should the government not be inclined to do so, then we urge for transparency in the process, and a clear, professional approach to ensure safety of materials and unhindered access to these invaluable records.” <https://thewire.in/rights/central-vista-plea-to-stop-the-demolition-of-national-archives-of-indias-buildings>

Indonesia. An e-KTP identity document is needed for everything from getting basic public health care to applying for a bank account. Required to get a card at age 17, the person must bring a variety of documents to the civil registry office to prove identity, including a “Family Card, a document issued to

the so-called ‘head of the family’—typically the eldest male—which lists all of their family members.” A 2017 study by a human rights group found that roughly 34% of transgender women had no documents. “*Rest of World* spoke to around a dozen trans women in Jakarta and Surabaya who have been unable to get e-KTPs for similar reasons; almost all fled their homes as a result of domestic violence” and have no means to obtain a Family Card. They become invisible people.

https://restofworld.org/2021/indonesias-invisible-people-face-discrimination-and-sometimes-death-by-database/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=editorial&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=210505

Israel. The Ben-Gurion Research Institute released additional parts of David Ben-Gurion’s diary for the period 1948-1953 (Ben-Gurion was the first Prime Minister of Israel). Among the released information is a list of “targets surveilled by the intelligence agencies” in 1949; they included “secessionists,” “Mizrahi Jews,” “political parties” and the Israeli Communist Party, *Haaretz* reported. Thanks to Lior Yavne for the link. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.HIGHLIGHT.MAGAZINE-ben-gurion-s-uncensored-diary-revealed-pesther-the-refugees-to-move-eastward-1.9781021>

Italy. The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) said the language and arguments used by the Florence Court of Appeal in the case of a woman who said she had been gang raped “conveyed prejudices existing in Italian society regarding the role of women.” ECHR said “reference to the woman’s red underwear were unjustified, as were comments regarding her bisexuality, her relationships and casual sexual relations,” violating her right to privacy and “revictimizing” her. The state was ordered to pay damages, *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. <https://news.trust.org/item/20210527140212-v8buw/>

Libya. In a statement to the UN Security Council on the situation in Libya, International Criminal Court Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said, “Members of my Office have travelled to Libya, interviewed witnesses and received essential documents and materials from various sources, including individuals, NGOs, and representatives of victims organisations within and outside Libya. In particular, my Libya team has continued to constructively engage with relevant Libyan national authorities following the discovery of multiple mass graves in the city of Tarhuna.” She also stated, “We have collected credible information and evidence on serious crimes allegedly committed in official and unofficial detention facilities in Libya. In particular, the Office received information on the Mitiga Prison controlled by the Special Deterrence Force and the Gernada and Al-Kuweifiya detention facilities controlled by the militia known as the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, previously called the Libya National Army or LNA, and its associated forces. These crimes, which include large-scale torture, sexual violence, inhumane treatment, and arbitrary detention have been reported for years but regrettably to date, the perpetrators have not been held accountable.” <https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?name=210517-otp-statement-unscl-libya>

As mass graves are unearthed around the town of Tarhuna, with 120 bodies recovered so far, and as more than 350 families reported missing relatives to the head of the General Authority for Search and Identifying Missing Persons, the crimes of the Kaniyat militia that controlled the area from the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in October 2011 to 2020 are apparent, the *Washington Post* reported. The mayor said that many families had been afraid to report disappearances, although some did file official complaints with the general prosecutor’s office. A former UN investigator in Libya said that government officials “absolutely knew” about the Kaniyat abuses but the Government of National Accord, which was installed in Tripoli in 2016, “did not keep records of the Kaniyat’s crimes because they made the government ‘look bad’.” <https://en.minbarlibya.org/2021/05/10/mass-murder-and-the-sin-of-silence-1/>

Myanmar. Using data from the Humanitarian Data Exchange, a team from the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition announced that between 11 February and 12 April there were 109 documented incidents of violence against health care, ranging from hospitals occupied and ambulances shot at, health workers arrested, injured and shot at, medical equipment and supplies raided, and “in some cases CCTV records were erased.” On 9 April, during a televised news conference, the military junta announced that “all health workers participating in CDM [Civil Disobedience Movement] protests would be considered to be committing genocide.” Further restricting care, “private clinics and hospitals across the country were issued with official directives mandating that injured civilians could not be seen or treated without first notifying the military.” <https://phr.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Violence-Against-Health-Care-in-Myanmar-11-February-and-12-April-2021-PHR-update.pdf>

Niger. Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a copy of a letter it sent to the new government's justice and defense ministers, informing them that HRW "has collected the names of 178 people who were allegedly unlawfully killed or forcibly disappeared and 7 who were allegedly tortured by Nigerien security forces between October 2019 and May 2020." HRW urged the government to investigate and "appropriately" prosecute the perpetrators. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/05/05/niger-new-government-should-investigate-massacres>

Peru. Amnesty International issued a report on the "health emergency in Indigenous peoples of Espinar, Peru." Espinar's Indigenous communities located near mining operations requested Amnesty to develop "rigorous and independent scientific evidence on the exposure of the population to metals and toxic substances and the quality of the water they consume." During 2019 and 2020 water samples were taken from 292 locations, blood and urine samples from 150 volunteers, 134 surveys of individual study participants were made and individual interviews were conducted. Analysis of the blood and urine samples found "worrying levels of metals and toxic substances" in bodies and 151 water samples showed water unsafe for human consumption. The records provide an important baseline against which to measure future remedial actions by the government. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/05/peru-crisis-de-salud-metales-toxicos-espinar/>

Serbia. The mayor of Presevo, an Albanian majority municipality in south Serbia, said Serbian authorities "deleted numerous addresses of Albanians from Presevo and two other nearby municipalities" in what she said is "ethnic cleansing . . . being done by the deactivation of addresses. The aim is to remove Presevo valley citizens from their places." For background, see *SAHR News* 2021-01. <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/05/27/kosovo-serbia-dialogue-must-include-presevo-valley-mayor-says/>

Spain. Starting May 1 "each newborn is now being individually registered online, and all the facts relating to their identity and civil status will be recorded in the same file over the course of their life," *El Pais* explained. Existing family record books (Libro de Familia) will "continue to be valid temporarily during a transition period while their contents are converted into the new format." The change shifts the nature of registration from the collective family to the individual. <https://english.elpais.com/society/2021-05-05/ditching-century-old-family-book-spain-adopts-individual-digital-records.html>

Syria. The MENA Prison Forum, an NGO based in Lebanon, interviewed Mariam Alhallak, the director of the Caesar Families Association, an organization comprised of individuals who have identified relatives and loved ones in the so-called "Caesar photos" that were revealed in January 2014. She urged a victim-centered approach to Syria's detained, missing and forcibly disappeared. Among her remarks, she said there is "no credibility" in the 1,700 death certificates issued by the Syrian government in 2018: "My son's death certificate, for example, cites cardiac arrest and respiratory failure. And this is supposedly what happened to all of the detainees—all of them supposedly died of cardiac arrest." https://menaprisonforum.org/observer_detail/6/

United Kingdom. Using the Freedom of Information Act, the *Bureau of Investigative Journalism* gathered data from "CQC [Care Quality Commission], England's care regulator, and its equivalent in Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, and compared this to 2019 data published by the ONS [Office for National Statistics]." The figures "suggest that the pandemic has taken a great toll on a stretched and unequal system of home care, with reported deaths in England increasing by nearly 50% between April 2020 and March 2021 and in Scotland of 70%." Curiously, "the data suggests only 8.7% were Covid-19 related," pointing to disruptions in care or, perhaps, a more diligent reporting of deaths as the pandemic raged. The United Kingdom Homecare Association said the *Bureau's* work "highlights the lack of publicly available, complete and consistent data sets related to homecare" and urged the government to "consider the data it collects." <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2021-05-10/revealed-thousands-of-pandemic-deaths-in-home-care>

United States. The American Medical Association (AMA), the powerful medical organization founded in 1847, issued an 83-page report on racial justice and health equity, acknowledging "many of the ways it has excluded Black, brown, and Native physicians, espoused racism, and harmed people of color." It acknowledged a past "rooted in white patriarchy and affluent supremacy" and pledged to ground all future work on racial justice. The report "includes a long list of troubling actions taken by the AMA that

were unearthed by its archives team,” some revealed publicly for the first time. “The report also calls out the AMA’s ‘longstanding archival silence,’ a willful disregard of the organization’s documented history that result in an inaccurate representation of its past.” https://www.statnews.com/2021/05/11/ama-acknowledging-white-patriarchy-and-racist-past-pledges-to-dismantle-causes-of-health-inequities/?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=0da8763904-MR_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-0da8763904-149736437

Many media reported on the 100th anniversary of the 1921 Tulsa, Oklahoma, race riot that destroyed the black neighborhood of Greenwood. An unknown number of people were murdered, with a Red Cross report suggesting 800 wounded and 300 dead, while the state vital statistics bureau recorded 36 dead. An investigation into locating and exhuming remains from mass graves believed to contain bodies of the massacre victims began in 2018, with committees for physical investigation, for historical accounts, and for public oversight directing the process, *Science News* reported. More than 300 people provided tips or sat for interviews; “a retired Tulsa police officer recalled seeing a photograph of bodies piled in a trench, which he found in the 1970s among boxes of images confiscated from photo studios after the massacre.” An investigation using “newspaper accounts and funeral home records” identified a mass grave, which is in the process of being exhumed. <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/tulsa-1921-race-massacre-mass-grave-greenwood-archaeology-dna>
<https://news.trust.org/item/20210526075134-xmcf9/>

A research team investigated socioeconomic disparities in respiratory health from 1959 to 2018. They used the “nationally representative National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys . . . and predecessor surveys” that included 215,399 participants aged 6 to 74 years old. Sadly, “income- and education-based disparities in respiratory symptoms persisted or worsened from 1959 to 2018.” Disparities in smoking widened; “asthma prevalence rose for all children after 1980, but more sharply among poorer children;” and income-based disparities in “diagnosed COPD” (a restriction in lung capacity) also widened. https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/article-abstract/2780281?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=bc8fefa7e5-MR_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-bc8fefa7e5-149736437

Babuk, a group of Russian hackers, broke into, stole and held for ransom documents from the U.S. District of Columbia police. When negotiations stalled, the group began releasing data, which included information about police personnel, gangs and their members, and identities of confidential informants. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2021/may/11/washington-police-hack-russian-speaking-babuk-gang?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other

Uruguay. Files “containing intelligence reports and orders from the Information and Defense Service (SID) and the Coordinating Body for Anti-Subversive Operations (COCA), which were two repressive institutions before and after the 1973 military coup,” were found in a building of Artillery Group number 5 located in Montevideo, reported *teleSUR*. Desaparecidos, the organization of mothers and relatives of detained and disappeared people, said the discovery of the archives made it evident that the Armed Forces “sustained lies” when they said there was a “lack of information over their criminal acts” and demanded the release of other hidden documents. https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Uruguay-Military-Withheld-Information-on-Dictatorship-Crimes-20210513-0009.html?utm_source=planisys&utm_medium=NewsletterIngles&utm_campaign=NewsletterIngles&utm_content=10

Good reads. Will Hughes, George David Dickinson, Luca Plantan, “DNA ‘Lite-Brite’ is a promising way to archive data for decades or longer,” *The Conversation*: https://theconversation.com/dna-lite-brite-is-a-promising-way-to-archive-data-for-decades-or-longer-157856?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Science%20Weekly%20%20May%2012%202021%20-%201945519049&utm_content=Science%20Weekly%20%20May%2012%202021%20-%201945519049+CID_432ef5c3399fc2e77fd4187437dd001&utm_source=campaign_monitor_us&utm_term=DNA%20Lite-Brite%20is%20a%20promising%20way%20to%20archive%20data%20for%20decades%20or%20long_er

Daniel Kling, Christopher Phillips, Debbie Kennett, Andreas Tillmar, “Investigative genetic genealogy: Current methods, knowledge and practice,” *Forensic Science International: Genetics*: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1872497321000132>

Robyn Dixon, “In Russia, a great-grandson’s search for truth brings trouble,” *Washington Post*: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-stalin-history-family-execution/2021/05/07/0c296b28-8c0e-11eb-a33e-da28941cb9ac_story.html

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