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Media Monitoring Report

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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

The Campaign Trail

Opposition parties to launch protest march to NEC today

Opposition parties are launching a march today to the NEC premises to protest regulations governing elections campaigning despite reports that the NEC informed them late last night that it can only receive their petition this coming Sunday, reports **Al-Ayyam**. Kamal Omar, the Political Secretary at the Popular Congress Party (PCP) lashed out saying that the NEC excuse for not being able to receive the petition today is an “escape” from responsibility.

“We will hand the petition to anyone we find at the NEC premises,” he said.

The NEC had informed the parties that it would only be able to receive their petition next Sunday because it was busy conducting elections-related workshops and conferences.

In a related development, a Spokesperson for the Police has warned that the police would take action against such a march of protest from the Juba Group if the march is deemed “illegal”. He said that the protestors would need a permit for such a march in accordance with the relevant regulations.

NEC commends role played by national election committees

Sudan News Agency (SUNA) Khartoum, 03/03/10 - NEC Chairman Abel Alier has commended the performance of the various higher election committees and their efforts to overcome the difficulties they have encountered, stressing the vital role played by the civil society organizations in sharing their expertise and provision of financial assistance to the election process.

Addressing the second conference of the higher elections commissions held in the Salaam Rotana Hotel yesterday, Alier pointed out the members of the committees should benefit from the experience of experts in the electoral process.

The representative of the civil society organizations (Chief Electoral Affairs Division, UNMIS) Roy Kennedy commended the role played by the international organizations and UN bodies on the electoral process.

Kiir forms caretaker south Sudan Government after cabinet shuffle

Sudantribune.com Juba, 04/03/10 – GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit has issued a presidential decree relieving all his ministers and re-appointing them as caretakers with limited powers in their respective ministries. This, according to the decree, is to make the elections free and fair as polling day is only five weeks away.

The decree, which came into force on Tuesday, 2nd March, and publicly announced on Wednesday, only left untouched the President and the Vice President in the executive organ.

The caretaker ministers are given limited responsibilities by the accompanying order until the next Government is formed. This also applies to the state caretaker governors, state ministers and county commissioners.

In the guidelines ordered by the President, all the caretaker ministers are not permitted to initiate programs that would have long term effect, make changes in the ministries, sign any new contract or make any ad-hoc appointments, etc.

Any action needed on such issues is first to be consulted with the Presidency by the caretakers or referred to the Council of [caretaker] Ministers of the government.

The ministers and governors are also warned against any intimidation of political parties' members or contesting candidates. They are also warned not to use the army to intimidate others and not to use public resources during the electioneering work.

Governors and county commissioners in particular are directed by the presidential order to give equal treatment to all political parties members without any exception in areas under their respective administrative jurisdictions. Police personnel are to give adequate protection to the campaigning members from all the political parties.

The order, among many others, also stipulates that no single political party should monopolize the state media or public guest houses in various locations in the region during the elections.

The order will remain into force until the next Government is formed in accordance with the outcome of the elections.

Arman to withdraw from race in favour of National Umma's Al-Mahdi

Al-Wifaq reports that SPLM presidential aspirant Yassir Arman may withdraw from the electoral race in favour of the National Umma Party candidate's Sadig Al-Mahdi in accordance to a "secret deal" the two sides struck. The source said that PCP's Dr. Hassan Turabi is opposed to such a move.

SPLM's Arman pledges to uphold women's rights

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 03/03/10 – SPLM candidate for president, Yassir Arman, has said his government will uphold women's rights saying violence against women is the most blatant form of discrimination and violation of human rights.

"This is why I accepted to be arrested by security forces when we took to the streets demanding democratic reform laws to the national constitution," he said. He urged women to vote for him saying he will try by all means to address the vexing problem of violence against women.

The national figure, who draws on diverse support from the southern region as well as in his native northern Sudan, was making reference to when he was arrested and beaten at a protest in front of the National Parliament building in December 2009.

Arman was speaking at the opening meeting of the SPLM Northern Sector Student Women's League held at its headquarters in Mogran, north of Khartoum.

He said there is a link between women's issues and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and any setback in addressing gender issues would affect achieving of the MDGs in Sudan.

Therefore, Sudan needs a government that will immediately remove all laws which promote discrimination against women, he said, stressing that the most pressing form of violence against women is sexual violence, particularly in Darfur.

He said that progress in addressing gender issues is closely linked to economic and social growth at national and global levels.

North should separate religion from state for unity – SPLM

SPLM candidate for Khartoum State Governor, Edward Lino, says the north should separate religion from state if it seeks unity with southern Sudan, reports *Al-Intibaha*.

"... but the NCP does not want to do that and insists on governing an Islamic country because it does not want Sudan to be a state where all citizens enjoy equal rights and fundamental freedoms," he added.

Of the referendum for southern Sudan self-determination, he said that the south would not

accept a delay in the referendum because it is a right provided for by the CPA.

SPLM-DC's Lam Akol promises to investigate graft in southern Sudan

SPLM-DC leader and aspirant for the GoSS presidency, Lam Akol, has lashed out at the GoSS under the incumbent Salva Kiir Mayardit's leadership and has accused it of complicity in corruption, reports *Al-Rai Al-Aam*. Speaking to reporters at Juba Airport yesterday, Akol described the GoSS performance for the last five years as a "failure", pointing out that the GoSS received during this time over \$10 billion worth of oil revenue but has not provided tangible services to the people. He said that 80% of the people in southern Sudan are facing an uncertain future because of misappropriation of public funds.

He promised, if elected GoSS President, to investigate graft, rehabilitate the SPLA and ensure they get paid in time, seek alternate sources of income and slash down on the number of cabinet ministers "because the south does not need more than 18 cabinet ministers".

Parties accuse Western Equatoria governor of using state resources

Sudantribune.com Yambio, 03/03/10 - A number of smaller opposition parties in Western Equatoria state have accused the caretaker governor of massive utilization of government resources and assets during campaign rallies.

The Western Equatoria caretaker governor, Jemma Nunu Kumba, also doubles as SPLM flag bearer for the Western Equatoria gubernatorial contest. During the launch of the SPLM campaign in this agriculturally rich state, over 50 government vehicles were used to transport civilians to make the launching colourful and famous.

Concern about this has been raised by WES gubernatorial independent candidate Joseph Bakosoro: "It is deplorable to witness the excessive use of government resources by one candidate, given the fact that the resources are under the government which is composed of other parties."

Two days ago, a double cabin Land Cruiser (plate GOSS WES – 0017C) overturned and left the driver dead and many others wounded. The vehicle had left Source Yubu for Yambio, after the agents of the caretaker governor were chased in Source Yubu where they had gone to campaign for the caretaker governor.

Political parties and independents have been banned from using Yambio FM, which is the only medium of reaching the grassroots.

"Nobody apart from the caretaker governor should talk over FM concerning the election," one of his aides was quoted as whispering to Yambio FM Interim administration.

There are also some fears of intimidation. It was reported that the incumbent governor urged foreign community leaders to convince their people to vote for her in the coming general elections, or else face deportation.

It was also said that two days ago the Office Manager of Ibba County Commissioner was caught red handed advising one SPLA soldier of Battalion 137 that, "nobody should campaign in Ibba county for governorship except Nunu."

National Umma's Mahdi refuses to alter speech for state radio

AFP Khartoum, 03/03/10 – National Umma Party candidate for president, Sadig Al-Mahdi, refused yesterday to alter a speech that National Radio judged "unacceptable," his party said.

He had recorded a 20-minute speech for broadcast on National Radio, but the radio's director

said the speech raised several points that were considered "unacceptable."

He asked Mahdi to make some changes, but the veteran politician refused, Umma said in a statement seen by **AFP**.

In his speech, the former premier referred to such thorny issues as Darfur, the International Criminal Court's indictment of Al-Bashir last year and the possible secession of southern Sudan.

Sudan's "Pharaoh" set up spy services to spread lies – PCP's Al-Turabi

Addressing his Popular Congress Party campaign rally yesterday, Hassan Al-Turabi called on President Al-Bashir to "do something good in his twilight days" such as releasing the PCP leaders who are currently in detentions, **Rai Al-Shaab** reports.

"The pharaoh of Sudan (Al-Bashir) has hijacked the media and set up spy network to compile reports about the sons of the country not the enemies," he said.

Finance worries southern Sudanese parties

The Citizen reports that southern Sudanese political parties that signed last Tuesday a Code of Conduct for the forthcoming elections have complained that their activities may be derailed by lack of funds. Toby Madut of the Sudan African National Union Party pointed out that the GoSS may not be willing to fund activities of political parties although the elections laws provides for such support.

He said that the elections are better delayed or differed altogether since other parties could not raise funds to mobilize their supporters.

Report shows skewed media coverage for elections

The first report of a local NGO on monitoring of local media coverage for the elections has shown that the focus of the majority of journalists had been on disputes and abusive language among parties and candidates rather than focusing on platforms and positive suggestions, **Khartoum Monitor** has revealed.

The report by the Sudanese Initiative Organization for Development pointed out that since the campaigning season kicked off on the 13th of last month, the media focus was on activities of the campaigning bodies, of the NEC and sub-committees and of political parties. The report lamented the neglect of information on voting methods, eligibility criteria and other aspects of voting.

Other Highlights

Kenya invites Bashir to IGAD summit as he challenges world to arrest him

Sudantribune.com Washington, 03/03/10 – President Al-Bashir yesterday received an invitation to participate in an extraordinary summit of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to be held in Nairobi next week.

The Kenyan foreign minister Moses Wetangula delivered the invitation from his boss president Mwai Kibaki during a meeting in the Sudanese capital with his counterpart Deng Alor. Wetangula was accompanied by Ethiopian minister of foreign affairs Seyoum Mesfin.

Alor said that the visit came as part of an ongoing effort by IGAD to review the progress on the implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and preparations for the upcoming elections in April.

He said that IGAD is concerned over the CPA implementation and relations between the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and Sudan People Liberation Movement.

Meanwhile addressing young supporters at a Khartoum rally yesterday, Al-Bashir said that he will continue to travel worldwide despite the warrant accusing world powers of standing behind his indictment.

"They are liars, hypocrites...this [my destiny] is not in the hands of the US or the UN and we will not kneel before them like others did" the Sudanese president said.

"We do not fear them and we will continue to travel because death can be through fever or malaria or a traffic accident but a happy death is to die as a martyr to join my fellows who were martyred" he added.

World Bank to give \$125 million for health, road programs in South Sudan

Sudantribune.com Juba, 03/03/10 – The World Bank will grant funds totalling approximately US \$125 million to finance health and road infrastructure programs in South Sudan. This is the largest package of new projects approved by the Oversight Committee of the World Bank-administered Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) since its inception in 2006.

The first grant of \$63 million will support a health project implemented by the Ministry of Health. The project, called "Umbrella Health System Development," is supposed to strengthen grant management capacity, monitoring and evaluation, pharmaceutical management, and expand basic health delivery and medical human resource development.

Another \$40 million grant will be utilized for road rehabilitation and finance feasibility studies for feeder roads to connect production areas to market centres, according to a statement from the Bank today.

The third project costing \$20 million will finance new offices and training of Police and Prisons personnel. The project will be implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on behalf of the MDTF.

The fourth project – the Adolescent Girls' Initiative— aims at giving life skills training for adolescent girls between the ages of 15 to 21, stated the Bank. The \$1.7 million project is supported by a number of donors, including the World Bank, and will be implemented through BRAC South Sudan, a local non-governmental organization.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Planning in the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), David Deng Athorbei and the Manager of the World Bank Southern Sudan Program, Laurence Clarke, today signed the four grant agreements.

Inmates in Torit prison face threat of starvation

Al-Intibaha reports that the prison facility in Torit is facing a dire shortage in foodstuff as a result of a lack of funds.

Brown Lobong, the Director for Prisons in Torit, said that differences between county authorities and the company contracted to supply food to the prison is to blame for the shortage.

Toyota Proposes \$1.5 Billion Southern Sudan Pipeline

Bloomberg 03/03/10 - Toyota Tsusho Corp., the trading affiliate of Toyota Motor Corp., has proposed building a \$1.5 billion pipeline to transport crude oil from Southern Sudan to a planned port on Kenya's Lamu Island.

The Nagoya-based company has spoken to Kenyan officials and plans to hold talks with the Southern Sudanese authorities about the project, Takashi Hattori, executive officer at Toyota Tsusho, told reporters today in Nairobi, Kenya's capital. The company proposes to own the

pipeline, which would have a capacity of 450,000 barrels per day, for 20 years before handing it over to the governments, he said.

The 1,400-kilometer (870-mile) pipeline would transport crude oil from Southern Sudan's capital of Juba to an export terminal equipped with a storage tank and oil jetty at Lamu, according to a presentation Hattori distributed to reporters. Toyota Tsusho would consider a joint venture with other foreign investors, he said.

"We haven't studied in detail, but a partnership with other investors, governments, foreign companies is of course one of the options," he said. "Maybe to collaborate with a Chinese company would be one of the options."

China has expressed interest in funding the development of the proposed port in Lamu and other infrastructure, Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki said on Jan. 6.

UNICEF suspends activities in West Darfur

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that UNICEF has suspended food aid delivery in Darfur. According to Radio "Sawa", the agency has sent a letter to West Darfur's health ministry to that effect. West Darfur Minister of Health has warned of a possible health catastrophe and malnutrition in the area if UNICEF stops food delivery.

Police and civilians clash in northern Sudan

Violent clashes took place recently between the police and civilians at the Gabgaba area in River Nile (Nahr-el-Nil) State leaving three people dead (two of them police officers) and five injured, **Al-Rai Al-Aam** reports. A 7-member police force patrolling the area – the site of a gold-rush – had asked around 20 young people prospecting for gold to leave because a Moroccan company had concessions over the land. A young prospector reportedly reached out and struck one of the policemen. Violent clashes ensued resulting in the casualties, a Spokesperson for the police said.

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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN

Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200