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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

66 killed in bloody clashes between Gadet and SPLA

Local dailies 10/5/11 – Clashes between SPLA and Peter Gadet forces in Unity state left 66 soldiers killed and 98 wounded on the SPLA side. Spokesperson of Peter Gadet forces James Gai told *SMC* from the field yesterday that their forces launched a massive attack on the SPLA, forcing them out of Mayom. He said only five soldiers were wounded on Gadet's side.

According to *Al-Ahdath* 10/5/11, 64 SPLA soldiers and 27 defectors were killed in fierce confrontations in Mayom, Unity State. Spokesperson of "South Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement" (SSPLM) Paul Gatkouth told the newspaper that the fighting erupted on Sunday.

SPLA spokesperson, Philip Aguer, however, denied reports of clashes in the area.

Meanwhile, *Al-Sahafa* 10/5/11 reports sources as saying that the rebel leaders in the South convened a meeting in Aweil to coordinate stances.

Over 80 dead in recent sectarian clashes in Lakes state - official

Radio Miraya 09/05/11 - The recent inter-communal clashes between armed groups from Rumbek Central and Cueibet counties have left at least 80 people dead, Commissioner of Rumbek Central County, Matur Majok Magol, said on Monday. He added that many people have been displaced to five areas in Lakes state including Mayom, Abiriu and Malueth. More people continue to flee Cueibet and Rumbek, mostly children, women and elderly people, and the displaced people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, especially food and medical care, Magol said.

More than 80 killed in south Sudan violence - army

Reuters 10/5/11 - More than 80 people have been killed in clashes between rebels, civilians and police in southern Sudan in the latest violence in the oil-producing region that will become independent in July, the army said on Tuesday.

Analysts warn that the underdeveloped south, roughly the size of France, could become a failed state and destabilise the whole region if security deteriorates further.

A rebel militia raided a cattle camp in Warrap state, leading to the death of 82 people including 34 civilians on Sunday, southern army (SPLA) spokesman Philip Aguer told Reuters.

"We (SPLA) forced this militia out of Unity state on the 6th and 7th (of May). They crossed into Warrap state and attacked a cattle camp and killed 34 civilians and wounded 45. Later, civilians and police chased the militia into an ambush and killed 48 of them," Aguer said.

The casualty figures could not be independently confirmed but a spokesman for a rebel militia said fighting had been going on in the region. He said he could give no casualty figure because a different rebel group had been involved...

Abyei Administration announces food gap

Al-Sahafa 10/5/11 – Abyei Chief Administrator Deng Arop Kuol has announced food shortage in the Area caused by siege imposed on the area and the States bordering the North. He said flow of goods from the North to South has been blocked, warning that such a measure might give birth to an hostile and complicated separation. He added that the blockage had negative impact on trade.

Meanwhile, Kuol said the technical military committee arrived in Abyei yesterday and convened a meeting with him, adding the encounter focused on steps to implement Kadugli agreement.

Government welcomes GoSS move to cancel Abyei claims from draft Constitution

Sudan Vision 10/5/11 - The Sudanese Government has welcomed South Sudan's pledge not to take any unilateral measures regarding the disputed Abyei region and drop claims of ownership from the draft constitution.

Ambassador Mawia Altom who is responsible for liaisons offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Juba described this step as a return to the right track to solve Abyei issues peacefully. Altom said that any unilateral decision is considered a violation of the CPA.

SPLM official denies GoSS intention to delete Abyei from the Constitution

The Citizen 10/5/11 – SPLM senior official Luka Biong, in an exclusive statement to the newspaper from Juba yesterday, denied any knowledge of GoSS intention to delete a paragraph showing Abyei as part of the South in the new state interim constitution, saying the political forces and the civil society institutions have unanimously agreed on Abyei belonging to the South. He said the transitional constitution was already passed by the South Legislative Assembly and the executive organ in its first reading stage.

However, he said, “We are looking forward to the AU endeavour for finding a compromise before the end of the transitional period”.

Abyei crisis will be resolved next month – GoSS minister

Ajras Al-Hurriya 10/5/11 – GoSS Regional Cooperation Minister Deng Alor said claim to ownership of Abyei was included in the South’s constitution as a reaction to President Al-Bashir’s statement to the effect that Abyei is a northern territory. He said the crisis over the territory would be resolved during the coming month, before the end of the interim period.

“Al-Bashir has repeatedly said that Abyei is a northern territory and “our reaction in Juba was that we included Abyei in the Constitution”. Alor said the international community has held Al-Bashir responsible for what is happening in Abyei, adding the NCP is more concerned with oil than with population of the Area.

PCA ruling on Abyei binding, I support dual nationality – Turabi

Ajras Al-Hurriya 10/5/11 – PCP leader Hassan Al-Turabi said the PCA ruling on Abyei is binding on both sides, adding that he supports dual nationality, indicating that some state officials enjoy dual nationality. Al-Turabi made the remarks in an interview to the newspaper.

France urges swift settlement for Abyei status

Sudan Tribune website 9/5/11 - France's foreign ministry voiced concern today at the recent tension in the region of Abyei and urged the two partners of 2005 peace agreement to reach a quick settlement on the status of the contested area.

France "encourages the authorities of North and South, as well as leaders of local communities to do everything possible to immediately restore calm and prevent unnecessary suffering to civilian populations," said a statement released by the French foreign affairs ministry on Monday.

France, which is the president of the UN Security Council for May, urged swift solution of the status of Abyei "within the boundaries defined by the decision of the Court of Arbitration in The Hague". Also this settlement should respect "the legitimate aspirations of nomads to move freely within the territory of Abyei," underlined the statement...

UN hails parties' agreement to withdraw forces from Abyei area

Xinhua 9/5/11 - The United Nations peacekeeping mission in Sudan has welcomed the commitment of the northern and southern sides to withdraw their forces from Abyei and to immediately deploy combined teams to the disputed area to provide security, UN officials said here on Monday.

Participants in the Abyei Joint Technical Committee, which is facilitated by UNMIS, agreed at a Sunday meeting to start the withdrawal of all unauthorized forces and the deployment of joint integrated units (JIUs), made up of personnel from both sides, by Tuesday and to finish the process by May 17, the officials said.

The two sides agreed that they will work to create a more conducive environment by de-escalating tensions and speaking to communities on the ground about the implementation of recent peace agreements aimed at ending the violence in the Abyei area, said the officials.

North and South have repeatedly accused each other of sending large numbers of "irregular" forces into Abyei, violating a January truce which called for the withdrawal of all forces except policemen and United Nations peacekeepers.

Major General Moses Bisong Obi, the force commander of UNMIS, said the Sunday meeting reflected the commitment of the two sides toward easing tensions.

"There was goodwill from both sides and we hope to follow up on this spirit," he said.

The two sides also agreed to ensure freedom of access for UNMIS contingents who are deployed in the area.

SPLM to hold conference of political parties in the North and South

Al-Sahafa 10/5/11 – The SPLM announced preparations to hold a conference of political forces in the North and South on 9 July to agree on a charter for co-existence, reconciliation and partnership.

The SPLM will also hold a meeting of its political bureau on 16 May. According to *Al-Akhbar* 10/5/11, the bureau meeting will be historic because it will be the last meeting.

Oil business as usual in Sudan after separation - ambassador

The Borneo Post (Kuala Lumpur) 10/05/11 – The separation of southern Sudan from the north will not in any way affect the operations and investment of Petronas and other oil companies in the African country. Sudanese Ambassador to Malaysia Nadir Yousif Eltayeb said most of the oil was in the south, but infrastructure such as refineries, pipelines and ports were located in the north. Nadir said after July 9 there would be a joint committee between the north and the south and the consortium of oil companies to ensure it was business as usual. “There will be no change in the operations of oil exploration in Sudan and none, as far as oil investment is concerned,” he said, when asked about the oil industry following the separation.

Over 80% of countries in Africa to attend South Sudan’s independence celebration

Sudan Tribune website 10/5/11 - Over eighty per cent (80%) of the 53 countries in Africa have already accepted invitations by South Sudan’s leadership to participate in the formal declaration of the region’s independence on 9 July.

President Salva Kiir of South Sudan has dispatched a number of ministers and other government officials to various countries in Africa to hand-deliver the invitations to leaders of the countries throughout the continent and beyond.

In the meeting of the High Level Committee on Monday, chaired by the Vice President Riek Machar, which is responsible for organizing the independence celebrations, it was revealed that over eighty per cent of countries in the African continent have already accepted invitations to participate in the event.

The Undersecretary in the ministry of Regional Cooperation Ambassador Majok Guandong further explained that the remaining few countries in Africa will also receive the invitations.

Invitations will also be delivered to countries in Asia, America, Europe, Middle East and Australia.

Machar earlier said the region was expecting more than 1,500 foreign dignitaries including heads of state or their representatives and support staff.

There are eleven different sub-committees each headed by a minister with specific task. These include sub-committees on security, ceremonies and parade, culture and entertainment, invitation, reception and catering, accommodation, transport and health.

Southern Kordofan Elections Focus

NEC says crisis in southern Kordofan over elections contained

Al-Sahafa 10/5/11 – NEC deputy chair Abdullah Mohamed Abdullah announced yesterday the containment of the crisis over elections in Southern Kordofan state, saying the NEC delegation to the area reached an agreement with political parties to set up three committees to match results to finalize work within four days after which final results would be submitted to the NEC for announcement in Khartoum.

However, NCP political secretary Ibrahim Ghandour has disclosed that the SPLM is determined to stage demonstrations today in Southern Kordofan, warning that the security forces would deal with any attempt to destabilize the situation.

According to *Al-Tayyar* 10/5/11, Sudan's clerics have urged the President to postpone the release of elections' results in Southern Kordofan to avert an outbreak of war in the state.

Haroun beats Al-Hilu in southern Kordofan elections

Akhir Lahza 10/5/11 – Preliminary results of elections in Southern Kordofan indicated that ruling NCP candidate Ahmed Haroun is in the lead by a margin of 9,000 votes.

Sources said the NCP won elections in 22 constituencies and the SPLM won majority votes in 10 constituencies.

According to *Al-Tayyar* 10/5/11, Haroun has swept the elections by a margin of 8700 votes of a total of 370,000 votes. Haroun has won over 190,000 votes and Al-Hilu won around 180,000.

The NCP also won two-thirds of legislative seats (36 seats) while the SPLM won one-third of seats (18 seats).

NCP warns SPLM against chaos in southern Kordofan

Al-Rai Al-Aam 10/5/11 – Presidential aide and NCP deputy president Nafie Ali Nafie said he supports Ahmed Haroun's announcement that he would have no objection to the participation of the SPLM in the executive organ in the state. He warned that his party would not allow the SPLM to exploit elections to create chaos and to destabilize the region.

Al-Ahram Al-Youm 10/5/11 reports that the NCP has warned the SPLM against causing insecurity in the state, affirming that it would sweep elections and it would share power with the SPLM in the region. NCP leading figure Hago Gismulsid, speaking to reporters yesterday in Khartoum, blamed the SPLM for breaches in some constituencies and for expelling observers but said it would not affect the progress of the overall process. He said the security forces are ready to deal with any insecurity, adding the SPLM could not change the reality of the NCP having swept the elections.

NCP leading figure Ibrahim Ghandour disclosed that reliable information indicate that the SPLM intends to destabilize the region after 10 May, calling on all partners to accept the result when officially declared and commit themselves to peace and calm, according to *Sudan Vision* 10/5/11. He commended the performance of the state higher committee for elections, reaffirming his party's full confidence in the state's authorities. "The state's authority is capable of resolving the chaos and stabilizing the security" he said, adding "We pity the SPLM".

Other Highlights

Uganda invites Sudanese president to his swearing-in ceremony

Sudan Tribune website 9/5/11 -The Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir today received an invitation from his Ugandan counterpart Yoweri Museveni to attend his inauguration ceremony on May 12th where he will be sworn in for a fourth term.

The state minister for the Office of the Vice President in Uganda James Baba delivered the invitation personally to Bashir on Monday, Sudan official news agency (SUNA) reported.

The report did not say whether Bashir would attend the ceremony. The Kampala-based New Vision newspaper said that 13 presidents confirmed attendance so far including South Sudan leader Salva Kiir who is also Bashir's VP...

Sudan defense minister condoles family of man convicted of killing US diplomat

Sudan Tribune website 9/5/11 - The Sudanese defense minister Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein paid a visit to the family of a man who was sentenced to death after being convicted of assassinating a US diplomat more than three years ago.

The 32-years old Mohanad Osman Yousif Mohamed was one of four men who were accused of firing fatal shots on John Granville, who worked for the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and his Sudanese driver Abdel-Rahman Abbas Rahma on 2008 New Years Eve.

The men are believed to be belonging to the Islamic militant group Ansar al-Tawhid which claimed responsibility for the killing. In 2009 a Sudanese court ordered all of them hanged to death after finding them guilty of murdering Granville and Rahma.

But the convicts managed last year to break out of Kober prison which is considered a maximum security facility. Sudanese authorities said the men escaped through sewer pipes but the explanation was met with deep skepticism from observers and particularly those familiar with the design of Kober prison.

The independent Al-Tayar newspaper said that the Sudanese defense minister was one of the mourners who went to pay his condolences. He refused to answer reporters' questions saying that this is a "very private visit".

Mohamed's father was a former minister in the government of president Omer Hassan Al-Bashir but it is not clear if that is the link that prompted the top military official to visit. The father described his son as a martyr and defended the killing of Granville.

"I am calling for the government to release the Islamic youth from prison and also for the court to cancel the decision against Mohanad, because they were answering President [Omer Hassan] Al-Bashir's call when he told them to fight international troops in Darfur," he said...

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