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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

Sudan's Al-Bashir ratifies anti-terror law

Radio Omdurman (via BBC Monitoring, 15/02/10) - President Al-Bashir has issued a Provisional Order ratifying the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Law following cabinet approval. Justice Minister Abdulbasit Sabdarat said the new law laid down new restrictions and closed the loopholes that were in the former anti-money laundering laws and brings it to par with related international legislation.

CPA partners close to deal over outstanding issues

The NCP and the SPLM have agreed at a recent meeting in Juba to recognise the points on the north-south border that have been delimited by the border demarcation committee and to seek an appropriate mechanism for the contentious border areas, reports **Al-Sahafa**.

GoSS Presidential Affairs Minister Luka Biong said following the meeting that the two sides have also agreed that the forthcoming meeting of the Presidency scheduled for the 20th of this month should culminate in tangible results over key contentious issues such as the census results, border demarcation and the elections.

He also said that the parties agreed that the Presidency state consultations with the NEC over a mechanism for the conduct of the elections in Abyei. The GoSS minister added that the parties are of the same view that discussions over post-referendum issues should be launched.

FVP Kiir, Governor Haroun discuss census results, border demarcation

FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit held talks in Juba yesterday with a high ranking NCP delegation led by Southern Kordofan Governor Ahmed Haroun, **Al-Ayyam** has learnt. Talks between the two sides focused on the NEC, the differences of the census results, post-referendum issues, border demarcation and Southern Kordofan's special status in the forthcoming elections.

Following the meeting, Haroun said that a meeting of governors of the states along the north-south borders will convene on 27 and 28 February [*the report mentions no venue*].

US envoy travels to Sudan, Chad amid hopes for Darfur peace

AFP Washington, 15/02/10 - US Special Envoy to Sudan, Scott Gration, returned to the region this week for a fresh round of diplomacy, the State Department said Monday, amid hopes thawing ties between Khartoum and Ndjamenia could bring peace to troubled Darfur.

Gration departed Sunday for an eight-day tour designed "to support and advance recent efforts to improve bilateral relations between Chad and Sudan," the State Department said in a statement Monday.

Gration told AFP last week in an interview that the normalization of relations between the two countries was historic and offered a possible end to the "cycle of insecurity" in Darfur, the war-torn region of western Sudan which borders Chad.

The US diplomat was due to meet President Idries Deby in Ndjamenia, as well as Foreign Minister Moussa Faki Mahamat, after the Chadian president visited Khartoum last week for the first time since 2004.

After Chad, Gration proceeds to Sudan, where he was due to visit Juba, Kadugli and the capital Khartoum before returning to Washington on February 22.

In Juba, Gration planned to resume talks with members SPLM, to resolve "remaining issues" on the CPA the State Department said.

Preparations for national elections would also come up for discussion, it said.

Gration also planned to visit Kadugli to meet officials with the UN mission in Sudan and state officials there before heading to Khartoum.

In the Sudanese capital, Gration will hold talks with the SPLM and the National Congress Party to discuss a census for the south, a referendum on southern independence and other issues, the State Department said.

Protest at funeral of “tortured” Darfuri student

Reuters Khartoum, 15/02/10 - Armed riot police surrounded hundreds of protesters at the funeral of a Darfuri student who colleagues said was tortured and killed by Sudanese authorities in a case that has sparked tensions ahead of elections.

Sudanese security services have denied any involvement in the death of Mohamed Musa, 23, who fellow students told Reuters was abducted in Khartoum on Wednesday and later found dead.

More than 1,000 Darfuris, students and politicians, including at least two presidential candidates, gathered at the funeral in the Khartoum suburb of Omdurman on Monday morning chanting and waving banners, said Reuters witnesses. Scores of armed riot police and security officers surrounded the family home while relatives sat inside with the body.

"I have lost my son ... I want justice from the government, justice for my son," Musa's father Musa Abdullah Bahr-el-din told Reuters, breaking down in tears.

Presidential candidate Yassir Arman was greeted with chants of "Yassir for change" as he arrived at the house with other candidates from his party, the former southern rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

"This crime (Musa's killing) wasn't committed in a far village in the rural areas of Darfur. It was in the heart of the capital, a few kilometres from the (president's) palace ... It needs to be investigated," Arman told **Reuters** after the funeral.

He condemned the security crackdown at the ceremony and the terms of a recent security bill which allowed Sudan's intelligence services wide powers of arrest and detention.

There was a tense standoff as riot police moved in to block the funeral group when family members started driving Musa's body to Omdurman's famous Ahmed Sharfi cemetery, where more students were gathering, said **Reuter's** witnesses.

Officers ordered the group to carry Musa to a much smaller graveyard near the house, on the far outskirts of Omdurman, around 45km (28 miles) from downtown Khartoum.

Police officers last week told **Reuters** they had found Musa's body in the street and denied he had ever been arrested. "We consider this to be a normal crime," a security source said.

Khartoum University students who gathered around a morgue where Musa was taken last week said they had seen the body, adding his hands were burned, his head and body beaten, cut and swollen and his clothes soaked in blood.

They blamed President Bashir's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) for the abduction, saying the authorities regularly targeted and beat Darfuri students.

SPLM exploiting death of Khartoum University student – NCP

The NCP has accused the SPLM of exporting ongoing conflict in the South to the North, saying the SPLM has exploited the killing of Khartoum University student Mohamed Musa in the kick-off of the campaign of its presidential candidate Yassir Arman, **Akhir Lahza** reports.

NCP official Mohamed Mandour Al-Mahdi claimed the SPLM is exporting insecurity to the national capital. Al-Mahdi did not rule out that the assassination of the student is part of the SPLM plot to incite events in Khartoum, saying his party is ready to deal with any eventuality. "The SPLM has exploited the incident of killing of the student in its election campaign to incite violence in Khartoum," he said. Al-Mahdi, who was addressing a press conference yesterday, called on the security authorities to deal decisively with any incidents of insecurity. He also called on the political parties not to get involved in the attempts by the SPLM and its presidential candidate to incite student violence in Khartoum. "The SPLM is playing with fire," he warned.

JEM burns down villages in the Jebel Moon area

Civilians fleeing the fighting around the Jebel Moon area in Darfur are accusing the JEM of burning down their villages, **SMC** reports. Eyewitnesses reportedly said that JEM forces burnt down a number of villages such as Hilat Abbas because they believe SLM-MM forces were hiding there. The action was in retaliation for an SLM blockade of the roads leading to the Jebel Moon area.

Kenya, Sudan act to flush out militias

The East African 15/02/10 - Kenya and Southern Sudan security forces are conducting a joint security operation to crack down on suspected Toposa militia along the border.

This follows an attack by the militia who ambushed and shot at a Kenyan military truck on Sunday, killing two soldiers and injuring six others on the volatile Nadapal-Lokichoggio road.

The Toposa militia ambushed a Kenya security truck and shot the vehicle with a rocket-propelled grenade. The driver of the truck, despite his injuries, managed to drive from the scene to Lokichoggio where they sought help.

The bomb exploded in the truck injuring the victims.

A reinforcement team dispatched to the scene later found some of the weapons belonging to Kenya that had dropped there. Rift Valley Deputy PC Christopher Musumbu said Kenya and Sudan would collaborate to bring the suspects to book since the two countries have good diplomatic relations.

Mr Musumbu said Kenya had sent its forces to the border to beef up security and pursue the militia.

Darfur rebels say repelled fresh attack in Jebel Marra

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 15/02/10 – SLM-Abdulwahid forces say they have repelled a second SAF attack in the Jebel Marra in Darfur killing 48 troops. He said that they lost one fighter and incurred some injuries in the course of fighting.

The government forces and militias launched last week an attack on different positions of the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdulwahid Al-Nur (SLM-AW) in a bid to control the mountainous area which is a stronghold of the rebel group since 2003.

"Government troops, transported by 80 vehicles, attacked our positions in Aradyeb Al-Asharah,

Jebel Marra, for the second time, said Commander Nouredine Janga in a satellite call with **Sudantribune** from the region.

The rebel commander who retook the control of Gulu last month said four helicopters; two MiGs and two Antonov aircraft bombed their positions. He added they repulsed the attack at 12:30 local time, after fierce battle that lasted around seven hours. The commander also said that they found among the dead some members of the Chadian opposition; "We found with them Chadian Identity Cards", he stressed.

In a separate development, a leading opposition figure Ibrahim El-Hilu expressed regrets that the Arab League would hold meetings in Darfur to support the Sudan government.

Ibrahim also condemned the construction of three villages in the states of North, South and West Darfur. He pointed out that IDPs should go back to their home villages and not to other places chosen by the government.

SAF denies reports of clashes in Darfur

SAF Spokesperson's Office has denied any fighting between the Sudanese army and a Darfur movement, saying the armed movements and has challenged the armed movement to name the areas where the fighting took place and the weapons used, **Al-Ayyam** reports.

"We have repulsed an attacked launched by the Sudanese army and the area is now under our control. We are providing protection to civilians," SLA-AW commander Nur Ibrahim Al-Hilu said. The clashes have reportedly forced civilians to flee and MSF-France to evacuate its international staff members to Nyala.

US Embassy in Sudan to relocate to new premises in March

Al-Rai Al-Aam (via *BBC Monitoring*, 15/02/10) - The US Embassy has confirmed that its doors are open to all Sudanese students who want to pursue education opportunities in US universities. The embassy said that visa procedures for undergraduate and postgraduate students would commence in May.

In a seminar organized by the national youth training centre in collaboration with the US Embassy which was held at Al-Shahid al-Zubayr Centre about education opportunities in the US, the public relations affairs officer at the US Embassy in Khartoum, Judith Ravin, minimized the effect that the US political [economic sanctions] boycott on Sudan would have on education opportunities.

She pointed out that the embassy will move to its new premises in Soba [south Khartoum] in March.

Police net in largest gang of "Niggers" in Khartoum

Police in Khartoum arrested yesterday 21 "Nigger" gangsters who are currently being interrogated, **Akhir Lahza** reports. Eyewitness said the "niggers" unlawfully gathered in a market in Khartoum to cause trouble and clashed with a police force that came in an attempt to disperse them.

Sources did not rule out that the gathering of "Niggers" had something to do with the campaign launched by Khartoum State Police two days ago.

Africom says will work with Khartoum and Juba to avert violence

Ambassador Anthony Holmes, the Deputy Head of the US African Command (Africom) for Civilian Affairs, said that the organisation is assisting in developing SPLM into a political party and government, reports **Al-Sahafa**. He pointed out that the US policy will remain in support of a comprehensive peace whether the country remains united or separates after the 2011 referendum.

He added that pursuant to the provisions of the CPA, the organisation would do all it could to work with the two governments – in Khartoum and Juba – to minimise chances for disintegration and violence and would like to see peace prevail.

ELECTIONS SPECIAL

UNMIS welcomes launch of elections campaigning

UNMIS Spokesperson Ashraf Eissa says the UN mission welcomes the launch of the elections campaign season. **Akhir Lahza** quotes him as saying that this is proof that the elections process is proceeding in the right direction. He expressed confidence in the ability of the Sudanese political class to make of the elections a transparent and credible process that would meet the aspirations for a democratic transformation.

He also said that the UN will provide logistics assistance to the NEC for the polling phase of the process.

Kiir officially launches his election campaign on Saturday

Sudantribune.com Juba, 16/02/10 – The incumbent President of the GoSS, Salva Kiir Mayardit, is set to launch his re-election bid for the post on 20 February. The only other candidate pitted against him is the SPLM-DC aspirant Lam Akol who is yet to launch his campaign drive in the south.

Kiir had earlier directed his governors in the South not to allow Akol's party to operate in the region, accusing the party of allegedly having a military wing in violation of how political parties conduct their business, while Akol on the other hand wrote an objection letter to the National Elections Commission (NEC) asking it to disqualify Kiir's candidacy, accusing him of allegedly remaining an active military officer in violation of the electoral law. The courts however ruled against both accusations and allowed them both to run for the post.

Results of a recently conducted internet opinion poll on Sudan Tribune website this week in which more than 20,000 people participated had indicated that Dr. Lam Akol was ahead of Salva Kiir by a narrow margin.

Observers however questioned the reliability of the internet poll, arguing that participants in the internet voting might have not met the qualification criteria set by the NEC. They argued that some might have been foreigners, northerners, less than 18 years of age or those individuals that abused the process by casting votes more than one times, thus not reflecting a true potential result. The poll also witnessed only the participation of the educated and mostly urbanized section of the society leaving out samples of the uneducated villagers who constitute the majority of population in the South.

Potential voters have been waiting eagerly to hear from the two leaders during campaigns about the program each of them wants to sell to the people of Southern Sudan in order to win their votes for the seat of the president.

At the level of governorship, two leading independent candidates have already launched their campaign for the post over the weekend. Alfred Ladu Gore, an independent candidate for governorship of Central Equatoria State and another independent candidate, the incumbent governor of Eastern Equatoria State, Aloysius Emor Ojetuk, have already taken their campaign to the streets.

Moving with a large convoy of supporters in Juba town, Alfred Gore who competes against the incumbent governor, Clement Wani Konga, said if elected into office his priority would be to maintain security, turn the state into productive region for service delivery and make sure that employees receive their salaries.

He added he would also bring to an end the conflict between Mundari and Bari as well as any other inter-community conflicts involving the state.

While Kiir fights for his party to maintain the seat of presidency in the South, his three deputies are also contesting for various seats. His first deputy, Dr. Riek Machar Teny is contesting for a parliamentary seat in his home constituency of Unity State, James Wani Igga aspires for a parliamentary seat in Juba and the party's third deputy chairman, Malik Agar is contesting for governorship in his home state of Blue Nile where he currently serves as the governor.

Umma's Al Mahdi launches "10 Points to Salvation" presidential bid

Radio Miraya FM Khartoum, 15/02/10 - Sadiq Al-Mahadi, leader of the National Umma Party, launched his presidential bid in Omdurman on Monday with promises of good governance, attractive unity, north-south dialogue, economic development and peace to all Sudanese. Al-Mahadi's campaign, aptly termed "10 Points to Salvation", was met with rousing cheers and chants as Umma supporters thronged the party headquarters chanting Umma's slogan "Road to Salvation".

Umma's leader, in his first presidential rally, criticized the policies and programs of the National Congress Party (NCP), and said many in Sudan have become hungrier and poorer as a result. He said some have even been driven to become beggars, while others suffer without proper medical care.

He accused the NCP of unlawfully exploiting state resources in its electoral campaign and urged the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to investigate

Ex-Sudan leader accuses Bashir of blemishing Islam

Reuters Khartoum, 15/02/10 – Sudan's last elected leader accused President Omar Al-Bashir's party on Monday of blemishing Islam, and warned there was a risk of violence in Darfur and the south in the build up to elections.

Sadiq Al-Mahdi, who was overthrown by Bashir in a bloodless coup in 1989, attacked the president's dominant National Congress Party as he launched his campaign for elections due in April.

"They have spoiled the good name of Islam because they associated Islam with dictatorship, they associated Islam with violence," Al-Mahdi, who leads the opposition Umma Party, told **Reuters**.

"We believe that this is most unacceptable. Islam welcomes freedom, justice, tolerance and we think that they have blemished the good name of Islam in linking it with their restrictive, oppressive policies," he said, speaking in English.

Mahdi told **Reuters** he would not take revenge against Bashir's party if Umma won the presidential and legislative elections, drawing parallels with a purge in Iraq of officials who were members of Saddam Hussein's party.

Al-Mahdi repeated his party's position that people accused of war crimes in Darfur should be tried by "hybrid" courts including foreign judges, without naming Bashir. Umma says the start of an active legal case would allow the U.N. Security Council to use its powers to suspend the ICC case. Mahdi said there was a risk of fresh violence in the run up to the elections, from Darfuri groups who felt left out of the process, and from tribal groups in the south.

Mahdi said "some elements" were encouraging the violence, while leading southerners have accused Khartoum of arming tribal militias, a charge it denies.

Mahdi promised to resolve the festering Darfur crisis and repair relations with neighbouring

countries and other world powers if he won the presidency.

He accused Bashir's NCP of squandering Sudan's oil revenues on security and "ostentatious expenditure", and promised to redirect the cash to development.

Al-Bashir on the campaign trail in Wad Medani today

NCP Campaigns officer in Al-Gezira State Ahmed Al-Shaygi has announced that President Al-Bashir is expected in the state today, **Al-Sahafa** reports. He said that the local stadium will host a mass rally that will also see other NCP hopefuls for the local executive and legislative positions hit the campaign trail.

NCP blasts SPLM for boycott of the Southern Kordofan polls

The NCP says that an SPLM boycott of the Southern Kordofan polls means the party is also boycotting the popular consultations stipulated by the CPA, **Akhir Lahza** reports.

"We were surprised by the SPLM withdrawal from the Southern Kordofan polls in spite of their consent to early proposals on related issues," said NCP Political Secretary Ibrahim Gandour. He noted that this means that the SPLM is boycotting the popular consultations for the region which are based on the decision of an elected Legislative Assembly for the state.

"I think the SPLM has more sense than to allow that to happen," he mused.

Misseriya reject incumbent Haroun's re-election bid for governor

Al-Sahafa reports that the head of the Justice Party, Mekki Ali Bileil, says the parties to the CPA are trying to work towards delaying the polls for Southern Kordofan. He says his party will not accept a "partial postponement" of the polls.

Bileil who addressed a rally at Omdurman yesterday to launch his party's elections campaign for executive and legislative positions pointed out that the NCP and the SPLM were silent when reports came out of irregularities in the Southern Kordofan census and have opted to start talking about it now. He stressed that these irregularities have to be resolved. He called for justice for crimes committed in Darfur.

The party leader also lashed out on the NCP saying the party has traded with Islam. He appealed on the electorate to remember pictures of the widows, orphans and impoverished and of the scorched villages as they go to the polls.

The event also saw the Secretary-General of the Misseriya Association, Musa Hamadein, express the Association's support for Bileil's bid for Governor of Southern Kordofan. Hamadein pointed out that the incumbent Governor Ahmed Haroun does not hail from the area and should have instead taken his aspirations to North Kordofan where he belongs.

Despite the show of support from the Misseriya, Bileil lamented that he may be able to garner not over 10% of the votes because "the NCP controls everything."

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