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Headlines

- NCP, SPLM to resume dialogue on pending issues today (**Al-Akhbar**)
- Opposition parties to stage demonstration on Monday (**Dailies**)
- FM expressed astonishment over statements by Deng Alor (**Al-Ahdath**)
- Abyei will move southward, NCP is not an “enemy” – FM Deng Alor (**Al-Ahdath**)
- Kiir orders ministers to attend AIDS Day (**The Citizen**)
- Girl Killed as thousands displaced in fresh attacks in Awerial County (**Gurtong**)
- NCP and SPLM delegation to visit Washington (**Sudan Vision**)
- UN officials “flounder” on Darfur –Foreign Ministry (**Al-Ahdath**)
- Darfur rebels say five government soldiers killed during attack (**ST**)
- South African president pledges support for Sudanese government (**SAPA**)
- **Editorial:** Dismissal of Galwak Deng is justifiable (**Khartoum Monitor**)

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Highlights

NCP, SPLM to resume dialogue on pending issues today

The executive political committee between the NCP and the SPLM, headed by GoNU VP Ali Osman Taha and GoSS VP Riek Machar, will resume talks today in Khartoum, *Al-Akhbar* reports. Sources said the committee's meetings would focus on the pending issues particularly the referendum and national security bills as well as popular consultation for Abyei Area.

Reportedly, talks of the tripartite mechanism between the NCP, the SPLM and the US envoy on the pending CPA issues have reached a deadlock.

Opposition parties to stage demonstration on Monday

Local dailies report the Juba conference political parties announced that their leaders would meet by mid December to review the overall political situation in the country to take a decision accordingly. SPLM SG Pagan Amum told a press conference yesterday that the political parties decided to stage a demonstration on 7 December to press for democratic transition. The political parties also called on the National Elections Commission (NEC) to extend voter registration deadline for one week.

According to *Sudan Tribune website* 2/12/09, Sudanese opposition and the junior partner in the national unity Government are planning to hold a rally next Saturday to demand adoption of laws related to democratic transition.

Representatives of the Juba conference parties held yesterday a meeting in Khartoum to discuss the problems encountered in the implementation of the CPA and the democratic transition.

In their joint declaration at the end of Juba conference, the opposition and the SPLM asked to amend: the National Security Law, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Law, the Trade Unions Act, the law of immunities, the law of personal status, press and publications law, the laws of public order.

Pagan Amum, SPLM Secretary General, told reporters in Khartoum on Monday that the meeting decided to put pressure on the ruling NCP and demonstrate next Saturday to demand the CPA implementation and adoption of laws related to democratic transition.

With regard to their position on National Congress Party, he said they discussed a number of options including boycott of the election or to participate in the presidential elections with one candidate and to coordinate in the election for the federal and states' parliaments and governors. He added they will lodge a complaint to the Intergovernmental Authority Development in East Africa (IGAD) which sponsored the peace agreement.

FM expressed astonishment over statements by Deng Alor

Al-Ahdath reports that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it was concerned and astonished by statements made by its Foreign Minister Deng Alor who described the ministry as comparatively the worst in terms of employment system. Reportedly, a high-level government source was critical of Alor's statements, saying they were not institutional and they should have been raised at a Cabinet meeting.

Abyei will move southward, NCP is not an “enemy” – FM Deng Alor

Foreign Minister Deng Alor, who is currently visiting Abyei Area, speaking to a rally in the area yesterday appeared confident that southerners would vote for separation, *Al-Ahdath* reports. He stressed the need to compensate the victims of incidents occurred in the area last May, saying he was astonished by the lack of basic health services. He told the members of the Area Legislative Assembly that no breakthrough was made by the two partners on pending issues particularly referendum and national security bills. He said the NCP is a partner in the CPA, not an “enemy” and that is why he also visited the NCP office in Abyei. The Assembly members complained that the Area does not have a separate elections commission and also complained of obstacles encountering the work of the boundary demarcation committee.

According to *Khartoum Monitor*, Alor and Lino also met with UNMIS members in Abyei yesterday, who briefed them on the situation on the ground, especially in the aftermath of the PCA ruling.

Kiir orders ministers to attend AIDS Day

The *Citizen* reports that hundreds of people turned up to mark World AIDS Day but the minister were missing, prompting President Salva Kiir to order that all GoSS minister and state government of central Equatoria state to attend next year’s World AIDS Day. This order came after Kiir observed that nearly all ministers in GoSS and central Equatoria officials were missing yesterday’s World AIDS Day celebration.

Meanwhile, *Sudan Tribune website* 1/12/09 reported that the trend of HIV/Aids infection is on rise in Jonglei.

"In spite of all achievements [made in fighting] HIV/Aids, the situation has not changed," said Christine Maureen Onyango, the head of HIV/Aids directorate in Jonglei adding "in fact, it is rising."

Ms Onyango attributes the increase to limited resources, low knowledge of transmission and prevention, increased internal and cross border movement as well as cultural norms that favor transmission of the HIV virus. Widow inheritance, polygamy and the fading initiation marks are some traditional practices that are thought to be accelerating the HIV infection in Jonglei.

Of the over 500 people tested during the mobile voluntary counseling and testing exercise in Bor in the days leading the marking of the world Aids Day, at least 6 tested positive, according to the figures released by the state’s HIV/Aids directorate. The body concerned with HIV/Aids has a reason to keep on fighting the Aids prevalence by saying "the victory [in eradicating HIV infection] will be seen when few out of many tested...are positive."

An estimated 3.1% of southern Sudanese are living positively with HIV/Aids, Lul Riek the director general of HIV/Aids in the ministry of health, Southern Sudan says.

Present at the rally today includes Governor Kuol Manyang Juuk who encouraged the venerable youths to be morally upright. Speaker of state legislative assembly Peter Chol Wal, State Ministers Agot Alier of health, Racheal Nyadak Paul of social development and several state MPs attended the mid-day ceremony at Bor Freedom Square.

Girl Killed as thousands displaced in fresh attacks in Awerial County

Gurtong 30/12/09 - A girl was killed and thousands rendered homeless following renewed clashes between the Mundari youth of Central Equatoria State and Awerial County youth in Lakes State.

Four people were also been wounded in the Saturday clashes that have led to the displacement of 8,000 people.

The Awerial SPLM County Secretary Dut Malual Chaoch said the Mundari raiders attacked Pulawar at 2AM on Saturday and killed a girl as well as injuring four other people.

"Eight thousand inhabitants of Pulawar were displaced and are now crossing into Jonglei State for fear of more attacks", said Malual.

He added that those displaced are from the urban villages of Pulawar, Kalthou and Mingkaman in Awerial County.

He said the security situation was still tense, adding that many non-governmental organisations operating in the area had also left for Bor in the neighbouring Jonglei State.

NCP and SPLM delegation to visit Washington

Sudan Vision 2/12/09 - A joint Sudanese delegation representing NCP and SPLM is scheduled to visit Washington soon at an invitation by the US Congress Foreign Relations Committee. Sudanese Chargé d'Affaires in Washington Akig Kog said the aim of the visit is for Congress to hear the viewpoint of Sudan's ruling partners on contentious issues, such as the referendum, the elections and their vision for the future of Sudan. Kog expects "a breakthrough in bilateral relations between Sudan and the U.S. in the coming year."

UN officials "flounder" on Darfur – Foreign Ministry

Sudan Government has described the statement by UN Assistant Secretary General for PKO Edmond Mulet as "contradictory", **Al-Ahdath** reports. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Muawia Khaled has accused unnamed circles of seeking to promote the old image of the situation in Darfur without recognizing the positive development. "It seems those responsible for peacekeepers in Darfur are floundering in their vision and assessment of the situation," he said, citing improvement and stability of the security and humanitarian situation in the region. He called on the UN and other organizations to focus on supporting the peace process instead of directing charges.

Darfur rebels say five government soldiers killed during attack

Sudan Tribune website 1/12/09— Five government soldiers were killed during an attack on rebel positions in Jebel Marrah of central Darfur on Monday, a rebel commander said.

"We repulsed an attack carried out by government troops and their allied militia near Jiba, in Jebel Marrah," said Haroun Abdel Karim, a commander of the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdel Wahid Al-Nur.

"We were able to stop their attack and force them to return back, after killing five and capturing other five members of the assailants" he said in a call by satellite phone on Tuesday from Darfur.

He also added they lost two of their fighters.

South African president pledges support for Sudanese government

SAPA 1/12/09 - South Africa will continue to help Sudan's unity government overcome its problems, President Jacob Zuma said on Tuesday. "We are hoping that the national election and the referendum next year will be a success," Zuma said in Pretoria after accepting credentials from Sudan's ambassador Ali Yousif Ahmed. He said South Africa would help ensure unity on the continent.

Yousif Ahmed said Sudan appreciated South Africa's helping its efforts towards achieving peace, stability and unity." We strongly support the leading role of South Africa on regional conflict resolution and peace building."

Editorial: Dismissal of Galwak Deng is justifiable

Khartoum Monitor 2/12/09 – In a press release of which Khartoum Monitor received a copy, Rt. Maj. Gen. Galwak Deng reveals that he has been dismissed from the NCP. In this regard, there is a question that should persistently be asked here: why has this dismissal taken place only now and not before? It is worth mentioning that this Galwak is one of the few founders of both the Ingath government and the NCP alike.

But because the present NCP government by now has become so powerful and in all spheres, socially, economically and politically, it is no longer in need of any service from anyone even if they are the founders, just like Galwak.

In fact, stories that the Ingath government has become so powerful and in all domains, have become so familiar to all, to both members and non-members of the NCP. Recently, a top official of this NCP government was quoted as saying that even if all the political parties in the country were just to collectively unify efforts in a bid to defeat the NCP in the elections, they are simply so weak, both economically and politically.

Sadly, such trend is quite true. Politically, this NCP has got a mechanical majority (52%) which it can use at any time to realize whatever it wants. This is well exemplified with regard to the "general budget" the NCP managed to endorse even without the presence of its main partner, the Sudan people's Liberation Movement (SPLM), by merely resorting to its mechanical majority.

So this context of power is the sole key factor to better understanding of NCP's behaviour.

If this is the case, then we should not get surprised even if the founders of the Ingath government and the NCP have just got rid of him because of power. Putting this fact into consideration, the dismissal of Galwak Deng is not without logic and is much justifiable, so to speak.