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Highlights

Elections Special:

Darfur JEM expects postponement of April elections in wake of accord

Sudan Tribune website 20/2/10 reported that the Sudanese Government is likely to agree to postpone the elections again following the recent agreement it signed with the JEM, a senior rebel figure said today.

A senior JEM official speaking to Sudan Tribune on condition of anonymity said that the matter was discussed during talks between rebel leader Khalil Ibrahim and Sudanese presidential adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Deen in Chad this week.

"Any elections held under the circumstances the country is going through would be meaningless and will have no bearing whatsoever on improving the situation in Darfur or Sudan as a whole," the official said.

"We do not recognize the census or the demarcation of geographical constituencies or the voter registration process and Khartoum knows very well our position. In the interest of peace, the NCP must agree to reschedule the elections," he added.

The official said that it is "all but certain" that Khartoum will agree to the postponement revealing that Ghazi's tone was less dogmatic about holding the elections on time contrary to Government known position on the matter.

But Amin Hassan Omer the head of the Government delegation was quoted by Sudan news agency (SUNA) as saying that only the electoral committee has the authority to make a decision about postponing the elections.

This week NCP officials at a meeting with former South African president Thabo Mbeki ruled out any talk about postponing the elections partially or fully.

Observers say that if elections are delayed then the earliest they can be held is in November following the rainy season in large parts of Sudan. However any such move will cast doubts over the 2011 self-determination referendum in the South of the country.

SPLM says NCP hijacks TV and Radio

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that SPLM presidential candidate Yasir Arman announced yesterday that the SPLM would boycott the state TV and Radio to protest the domination of the official media by the NCP because of unfair coverage of electoral campaigns. Arman told reporters that while each candidate is given 20 minutes for four times, the NCP candidate is given 23 hours and 40 minutes. He said the SPLM and other political parties would lodge a complaint to the NEC to demand a fairer mechanism to ensure equal chances for candidates on the TV and the Radio.

Arrangement finalized to set up electoral courts

Al-Sudani reports NEC Chairman Abel Alier as saying that preparations have been completed between the Commission, police authorities and Justice Ministry to form courts to look into electoral disputes. Alier made the remarks at meeting with Interior Minister Ibrahim Mahmoud

Hamid who called on the Commission Chairman yesterday.

The Minister said the police forces are ready to secure elections, adding that 30,000 police elements have been trained to secure all phases of the process.

No compromise for flogging drunken people – Al-Bashir

Khartoum Monitor reports Al-Bashir as saying that his party would not compromise the Islamic law in order to win the elections.

"Anyone who drinks (alcohol) will be flogged; we do not want drunk people to vote for us," the President told a rally in Doroshab, Khartoum North, last Friday.

"Our concern is for the implementation of the Islamic laws, not power," he added.

NBGS Governor bans electoral rally of independent candidates in Aweil

Sudantribune.com *Khartoum, 19/02/10* - The incumbent Governor of Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal State, Paul Malong Awan Anei, has on Thursday evening banned independent candidates from holding their electoral campaign rally scheduled to take place on Friday 19 in Aweil town without giving reasons for stoppage.

"Governor Malong Awan is in Juba and acted through his deputy in collaboration with director of police. All the microphones mounted on vehicles were removed and people who were making announcement were asked to stop and were put behind bars," said Honorable Deng Athian in Aweil town.

Similarly, Dr. Dhieu Mathok Diing Wol, one of the senior members of the independent group also said they were supposed to hold public rally on Friday in Aweil town freedom Square, but the Director of Police Major General Akot Deng Akot and Deputy Governor Madam Josephine Moses have decided to stop if the National Election Commission (NEC) wrote letters to concerned authorities including UNMIS in Aweil.

"Akot Deng was sent by Madam Josephine Moses the Acting Governor to arrest media team who were sent out from Gen. Dau's camp to pass information of the rally. The reason is still unknown" said Kuach Deng to Sudan Tribune.

At Maper Akot Aru resident policemen stopped vehicles and seized the microphones and arrested the speakers Taban Abdulmunim, Paulin Thiep and the whole team but they were all released shortly after Gen Dau heard the news, he added.

"These intimidating behaviors have to be stopped and let democracy flourish in our state," Kuach stressed.

Organizers said they had all the required authorization from the relevant authorities for the Friday rally and did not expect the ban.

"This decision raised many questions whether the leadership in our State is ready for democratic dispensation at this crucial time of the CPA. The GOSS president must relieve those officials who are contesting to pave way for fair and just competition," Kuach commented.

Dr. Dhieu further stated that Gen. Dau, a leader of the independent candidates contesting against SPLM nominee incumbent governor Malong, will make official compliant to the NEC and UNMIS this morning.

Major General Akot Deng Akot, director of police, denied having arrested members of the rally.

"I have only asked them through my officers to stop launching their political rally based on instructions I received from acting governor," he said. "Also I have not received information of arrest; I only learned it from you now," he added declining to say reason for stoppage of

launching political rally as planned.

NEC to hold consultative meeting in Juba

Rai Al-Shaab reports that the NEC in collaboration with GoSS authorities will organize a consultative meeting in Juba on Wednesday for discussion on use of media organs in Southern Sudan for electoral campaigning particularly the TV and the Radio. The meeting will be attended by the information ministers of southern states.

Gosh campaign manager attempts to bribe me – independent candidate

The Citizen reports that independent candidate for parliament constituency (5) in Merowe Adil Mahjoub (alias Tayara) accused manager of the NCP contender in the same constituency Gen. Salah Gosh of trying to bribe him to withdraw his candidacy. He stated yesterday that security authorities in Merowe harassed organizers of his campaign by repeatedly summoning and threatening them. He described these acts as corrupt electoral practices which violate the elections law. He urged the alliance of the political parties in the area to agree on one candidate to ensure Gosh's fall.

NEC to prevent media from covering launch of developmental projects

Al-Wifaq reports the NEC has stressed the need to prevent official media from covering the launch of Government's developmental projects. NEC information official Abu Baker Waziri said the Commission would recommend the prohibition of the coverage of the launch of any government's development project which could be seen as part of election campaign.

S. Sudan opposition members held over alleged small arms breach

Sudan Tribune website 20/2/10 – The only South Sudanese opposition party running a candidate for the region's presidency, the SPLM-DC, voiced outrage at the detention of three members after one supposedly carried an unregistered pistol.

One of those held is the brother of Lam Akol Ajawin, the party's presidential candidate against Salva Kiir Mayardit, SPLM Chairman.

The Khartoum-based Information Department of the breakaway party yesterday had claimed that South Sudan army forces in Malakal were removing election campaign posters and in Juba Airport seized another load of materials from a courier arriving from Khartoum.

Maj. Gen. Kuol Deim Kuol, the spokesman of South Sudan's army, yesterday asserted that the SPLM-DC courier, Amjad Angelo, was detained for illegally carrying a pistol.

In reply, the opposition party called the army spokesman's statement 'ridiculous' and 'irresponsible'.

"Further to our press statement of yesterday, the number of SPLM-DC members detained has risen to three plus the driver. Our contacts with the authorities in Juba have revealed that the captors were officers belonging to a special military intelligence unit called "The Special Branch" falling directing under the President of the (GoSS). In addition to Mr Amjad Angelo who was arrested on disembarking from the plane, the other two came to the airport to receive him. When they saw Amjad being dragged away by the soldiers, they enquired about the development. They were there and then detained and taken away to an unknown destination," said SPLM-DC in a statement today.

It added, "Our enquiries confirmed that they were detained in one of the notorious cells

belonging to this Special Branch. The Chief of Military Intelligence of the SPLA visited them and took some video shots of the detained members of the SPLM-DC and gave a statement to the government radio and television in Juba that our members were detained because they were carrying a pistol!!! Nothing was mentioned about the elections materials seized."

The statement pointed out that the member would not have been able to carry a pistol onto a commercial flight from Khartoum to Juba, and added that even if he had the matter should not have been handled by special military intelligence police.

SPLM-DC stated that Mr. Amjad was detained so that the elections materials do not reach Juba.

The party disclosed that it plans to launch its campaign in South Sudan next week. It said: "This is going to take place. Either there is a free and fair election or there is none."

Elections in a volatile climate

IRIN 19/2/10 - Officials are appealing for calm during the campaign period ahead of upcoming historic elections in April as insecurity remains a major concern in Southern Sudan.

Electoral campaigning in the highly charged contest opened on 13 February, two months before three days of polling from 11 April, with the results due a week later.

Officials have called on politicians not to raise ethnic or political tensions in a region already reeling from violent clashes.

"During this period of campaigning, let this period be peaceful - let them not use inciting words that will lead to public disorder," said Jersa Kide Barsaba, a member of the South Sudan High Election Committee. "Let them not hate each other as parties, but let them come as one people who are Southern Sudanese, so that these elections will end up as peaceful," she added.

But tensions remain high in the south, with several inter-ethnic clashes between rival groups. More than 2,500 people were killed and almost 400,000 displaced in 2009. The violence affected seven of the region's 10 states, according to the Office of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Southern Sudan.

"Projections for 2010 indicate that the situation is likely to worsen," the office said in an overview of humanitarian issues, citing lack of resources and capacity among security forces for resolving conflicts.

In the run-up to a January 2011 referendum in which southerners will decide between secession or unity, "there is a real, but hopefully avoidable, possibility that the humanitarian crisis will engulf Southern Sudan, jeopardizing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement", according to the overview.

Votes will be cast for both the president of the republic and for the semi-autonomous south, as well as for national, southern and state legislative assemblies.

"Election security is a major issue," the US Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration told reporters in Juba on 18 February. "The efforts we are taking right now are to reduce the potential for violence."

Despite recent steps forward on several key issues, tensions remain between the former civil war enemies: the south's ruling SPLM and the northern NCP.

“The single most important factor influencing the success or failure of the Sudanese peace process is the nature of the relationship between SPLM and NCP,” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned in a 19 January report. “The current atmosphere of pervasive mistrust, in which any gain by one party is viewed as a loss by the other, dramatically undermines that political will, effectively disrupts international efforts to assist, and sets the stage for renewed conflict,” it added.

But many fear pressures within the south too: while the top leadership of the SPLM has vowed not to restrict the campaigns of opposition parties, distrust remains high among lower level officials and the armed forces.

A splinter faction known as SPLM-DC is seen by many in the south as a proxy force of former enemies in Khartoum – an accusation strongly rejected by the SPLM-DC itself.

Meanwhile several senior SPLM leaders have broken party ranks to contest seats as independents against the official candidates - including for influential state governor positions – raising concerns it could create local flashpoints for violence.

“We do not want violence, I can assure you that,” said Dau Aturjong, a general in the Southern army and SPLM stalwart, but who is running as an independent for the governorship of Northern Bahr el Ghazal state. “But I cannot talk on behalf of others: if people realize they are weak and are going to be defeated, they may think of making violence.”

“These elections are so complex many do not understand - we are trying hard to explain to people but still they find it difficult,” Barsaba added. “Even some of the candidates themselves don’t understand it.”

Instead, many in the south appear more concerned with the independence referendum slated for January 2011. However, successful elections are a vital stepping stone towards that vote, officials have warned.

“Credible elections are crucial for a smooth post-election transition to the referendum,” Ban’s report added. “A credible process will also reduce the possibility of election-related violence and will help to legitimize bodies that will oversee the referendum processes.”

Sudanese radio to air election programmes of presidential candidates

Sudan Radio Omdurman 20/2/10 - The national radio continues to air election programmes of the presidential candidates. The radio recorded yesterday the election programme of Kamil al-Tayyib Idris, who is standing as an independent candidate, which will be broadcast next Friday [26 February] at 07:30 in the morning. In the same vein, the radio will air the programme of Hatim al-Sirr Ali, the presidential candidate for the Democratic Unionist Party-Original today. Tomorrow Monday [22 February] the radio will broadcast the programme of the candidate of the Popular Congress Party, Abdullah Deng Nhial. On Tuesday [23 February] the radio will air the programme of candidate of the Sudanese Democratic Socialist Union, Fatimah Ahmad Abd-al-Mahmud. On Wednesday [24 February], the radio will air the programme of the presidential candidate of Sudan People's Liberation Movement, Yasir Arman. On Thursday [25 February], the radio will air the election programme of Mubarak Abdullah al-Fadil al-Mahdi, the presidential candidate for the Ummah Party-Reform and Renewal. The election programme of the presidential candidate for the National Congress Party, Umar Hasan al-Bashir will be recorded and aired on Sunday 28 February.

Government, JEM initial framework agreement

Sudan Government and JEM made a significant breakthrough yesterday by initialing a framework agreement in N'djamena to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Darfur crisis, **Local dailies** report. According to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**, President Al-Bashir announced that the deal, covering three key issues including ceasefire and wealth sharing, would be endorsed tomorrow "Monday" in Doha in the presence of Chad's President and Emir of Qatar. The President has also announced the cancellation of the death sentences against JEM elements who participated in the attack on Omdurman. The deal was initialed by Presidential Adviser Ghazi Salahueldin and JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim.

President Al-Bashir made the remarks yesterday while addressing a rally of women in Khartoum as part of his elections campaign.

Al-Sahafa reports President Al-Bashir has announced the revocation of death sentences against 105 JEM elements, saying 30% of the convicts would be freed immediately. Presidential adviser Ghazi Salahueldin, who negotiated the framework agreement with JEM leader in Chad, described the deal as a "historic breakthrough" saying it would not be at the expense of other factions". Reportedly, a final agreement is likely to be achieved by mid March.

Reuters 20/2/10 reported that the Sudanese Government agreed a ceasefire with Darfur's most powerful rebel group on Saturday as part of an agreement to "heal" the war in the western region, Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir said.

The JEM said the framework agreement reached in the Chadian capital N'Djamena was not a final peace deal but set out the terms for negotiations that could still fail if it saw signs of bad faith from Khartoum.

Bashir told state television: "Today we signed an agreement between the government and JEM in N'Djamena, and in N'Djamena we heal the war in Darfur."

JEM officials said the "framework" agreement would include a list of areas to be fleshed out in negotiations, including compensation for Darfuris, humanitarian access and the broad topics of "power sharing" and "wealth sharing." "This is not the end. It is the beginning of the end," senior JEM official Al-Tahir al-Feki told Reuters.

JEM officials said Saturday's deal would be formally ratified by Sudan's President and JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim in the Qatari capital Doha early next week.

Before the deal was signed, JEM spokesman Ahmed Hussein Adam said the ceasefire would be temporary and dependent on Khartoum's behavior.

"We will not play their game if they are only interested in buying time, in tactics, in just signing papers to make it easier for them in the elections," he said. "The vicious circle can begin again and we can resume our armed struggle."

Sudan Tribune website 20/2/10 reported Sudanese Presidential Adviser said today they agreed with the JEM on March 15 as deadline for the signing of final peace agreement to end

Darfur conflict in Doha.

Speaking at Khartoum airport following his return from N'djamena, Ghazi Salaheldin said the two parties agreed to complete negotiations and reach a final peace agreement on or before the 15th of March. The Government had expressed keenness to sign a peace agreement before the general election scheduled for April 10.

The Presidential Adviser also stressed that N'djamena agreement does not mean to exclude the other rebel groups in Doha who are expected to engage direct talks in addition to JEM with the Government on Monday 22 February.

President Al-Bashir, Kiir discuss pending issues

President Al-Bashir and FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit held a lengthy meeting yesterday for discussion on pending CPA issues including elections in Southern Kordofan and increase of the Southern Sudan's parliamentary representation, **Al-Sahafa** reports.

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports Joseph Lual, State Minister at the Presidency, has said the Presidency also agreed to earmark \$200 million through the Unity Support Fund to support basic infrastructure development to link the Southern Sudan with the North.

According to **Sudan Tribune website** 20/2/10, President Omer Al-Bashir, FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit and Second Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha met on Saturday to discuss a number of issues including recent Darfur accord and outstanding CPA issues.

SUNA quoted minister of State at the palace Joseph Montwell as saying that the agreement forms the basis for a final solution to the Darfur problem, pointing out that Bashir will witness the signing ceremony in Doha in the coming days. The meeting commended the efforts of the Chadian President Idriss Deby who mediated between Khartoum and JEM.

Furthermore the meeting tackled the formation of human rights commissions, South Sudan and Abyei referendum pointing out that consultation will continue to complete the formation of commissions. The Presidency also discussed post- referendum arrangements and decided to form joint committees on them.

A report was delivered at the meeting from the chairman and vice-chairman of the Technical Committee of the border between north and south and it was indicated that the bulk of the demarcation process was completed.

Abyei administrator seeks presidential approval for new cabinet

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 19/02/10 – Abyei Chief Administrator Deng Arop Kuol said last Thursday that he is in Khartoum to seek presidential approval of his cabinet.

"I have come to meet President Bashir and members of the Presidency for administrative issues including endorsement of the new cabinet," Deng said.

The new cabinet is reportedly replacing old faces including Achuil Akol for department of finance, Nyanwut Miyen for physical infrastructure where there are speculations that Kuol Arop Kuol would retain his position as head of agriculture department.

Amum discusses CPA pending issues in Cairo

In response to an invitation from Egyptian Government, SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum,

Foreign Minister Deng Alor and SPLM Chairman in Southern Kordofan Abdul Aziz Al-Hilu will visit Cairo for discussion with Egyptian officials on the CPA pending issues including the Southern Kordofan crisis, Abyei referendum commission, South Sudan referendum commission and a human rights commission, *Khartoum Monitor* reports.

NCP distorts Islam – Sadiq Al-Mahdi

Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi, addressing an elections rally in the town of Atbara yesterday, accused the NCP of distorting the image of Islam, causing harm to the country's interest and allowing corruption to mushroom, *Al-Khartoum* reports. Al-Mahdi said if he wins he would engage the international community on environmental issues in the Sudan.

INTERVIEW-World Bank vows to speed spending on South Sudan

Reuters 18/2/10 - The World Bank acknowledged on Thursday it needs to speed up funding for rebuilding war-torn South Sudan but said it also had to ensure the aid was not wasted through corruption or mismanagement.

Western donors criticized the institution on Thursday for being too slow to disburse the funds from the World Bank Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), one of the main ways for donors to funnel cash into the region.

Obiageli Ezekwesili, vice-president for the World Bank's Africa Department, said the institution was working with donors and the Government to speed up implementation of rebuilding programs. It had a high-level mission on the ground looking at the issue, she said.

"We need to move much faster, while still ensuring the proper use of funds, and we continue to look for ways to speed up the program's effectiveness, including channeling money through faster mechanisms," she said. She admitted shortcomings in the trust fund, saying it had "not met our standards achieved by other trust funds we administer in similar countries."

"It is important to remember that this is donor money that has been entrusted to the World Bank, and we are expected to ensure the highest fiduciary standards to see that resources go to the poor and not the powerful," she added.

Donors said the funds had been tied up by red tape and only \$188.1 million of the \$524.1 million of funds given to the trust fund had been disbursed since Sudan ended more than two decades of north-south civil war in 2005.

Much of the south is still in ruins and the U.N. said this month that almost half the population in South Sudan faced food shortages because of conflict and drought.

World Bank figures show that of the \$594 million committed by donors to the trust fund, some \$213 million had been disbursed. The Bank has targeted another \$100 million for projects in the current fiscal year which ends in July.

In addition, 12 projects worth \$326 million have been approved over the next several years.

The Bank has long been pressured by donors, especially the United States, to ensure that money for development is well spent and not lost through corruption. In recent years it has stepped up its anti-corruption efforts and barred companies that have abused its funding.

Ezekwesili said that despite the criticism there had also been progress in South Sudan, including the rehabilitation of the main hospital in the southern capital Juba and half of the city's

water supply. Financing has also providing basic materials for health care and education, and supported agricultural projects and ensured government ministries are set up with offices.

"Nevertheless, we need to move faster," Ezekwesili added.

She said the Bank had nearly doubled the number of staff on the ground over the past two years, with many living in tents, and assigned two international procurement specialists to its team and added experts in the finance ministry to handle funds.

It also simplified requirements for small business contractors and increased the threshold for the number of contracts that can be locally approved.

"The development issue in Sudan is urgent and in addressing that urgency we must ensure that limited resources that are available are effectively and efficiently used," she said.

"That has meant we would have to comply with at least the possible minimum level that ensures us effectiveness of use of resources in such a challenging and complex environment," Ezekwesili added.

World Bank admits 'not satisfied' with south Sudan spending

Reuters 20/2/10 — The World Bank said on Saturday it was "not satisfied" with its own management of a key fund to rebuild the war-shattered region of south Sudan, where less than half the money granted has been spent five years after the conflict ended.

The World Bank-administered Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) has been heavily criticised by donors, with a lack of spending restricting the main route to funnel cash to support the south as it rebuilds from a 1983-2005's civil war.

Five years after a peace deal was signed, just 217 million dollars (159 million euros) of the 526 million dollar (387 million euro) fund have yet been spent, bank officials said.

"The World Bank has not been satisfied with the performance of this trust fund, which in some respects has not met standards achieved by other trust funds we administer elsewhere," said senior bank official Joseph Saba, in a statement read to reporters.

This was due "in large part" to "severe capacity constraints" said Saba, co-head of a team sent from the bank's Washington headquarters to assess progress in south Sudan.

Donors have criticised what they say is the bank's unduly bureaucratic process, holding up disbursement of the funds.

The mainly Christian or animist south was left in ruins by the civil war with the Muslim-dominated north which killed some two million people and saw some four million flee their homes.

A peace agreement was signed in 2005, but many are furious that redevelopment has appeared slow, with even the most basic services lacking in many areas.

The autonomous regional government for the south set up by the peace accord has contributed to the reconstruction fund.

But the bank said it had to ensure the money was not lost through corruption or mismanagement.

"We want to move faster, while still ensuring proper use of funds," Saba added.

By July, the bank expects that more than half of the 526 million dollars (387 million euros) will have been disbursed, the statement added.

A total of 109 million dollars (80 million euros) has been allocated to projects under implementation, with a further 163 million dollars (120 million euros) committed for projects still waiting for grant agreements to be completed, the bank added.

The bank blamed the "hugely challenging environment" as a key factor behind the lack of progress.

"Southern Sudan is amongst the poorest, least developed regions of the world," Saba said.

"It has been blighted by decades of conflict, lacks basic infrastructure and urgently needs to develop an administrative capacity for government while the necessary skills and experience are in extremely short supply."

Sudan is gearing up for nationwide elections in April.

However, many in the south appear more focused on an independence referendum promised for January 2011.

Southerners' choice in the referendum should be respected - Gration

Miraya FM 18/2/10 -The United States Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration and the President of Government of Southern Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit discussed means to conduct free and fair elections as well as post-referendum arrangements on Thursday in Juba. Gration said that he is committed to make sure that election is credible and referendum takes place on time.

Egypt to host conference between NCP & SPLM on Sunday

Sudan Tribune website 20/2/10 – The Egyptian Government will be hosting a three-day conference between the NCP and the SPLM in the latest move by Cairo ahead of April elections and the 2011 referendum.

The official Egyptian news agency (MENA) said that the NCP official will be headed by Sudanese presidential assistant Nafie Ali Nafie and SPLM by its secretary General Pagan Amum.

MENA quoted an unidentified Egyptian official as saying that the summit "comes in recognition by Egypt of a common destinies between the two states and historical linkage, present and future, which brings together the two brotherly peoples".

The official said that the conference will contribute to meet the challenges experienced by the Sudan and strengthen the unity and stability of Darfur to provide security and stability throughout the country.

It is not clear why the Darfur issue has been included on the agenda of the meeting between

SPLM and NCP.

National government passes anti-personnel mine bill

Sudan Radio Service 19/2/10 - The Council of Ministers in the Government of National Unity passed the Anti-personnel Mine bill last Thursday. The bill seeks to ban the usage and storage of landmines. Dr Umar Muhammad Salih, the secretary-general of the Council of Ministers, said during a press conference that the bill follows the agreements signed between the government and the Darfur movements. "It bans the use of land mines. Also it shows Sudan's support for the Ottawa Agreement which condemns the use and storage of landmines. A national anti-mines commission will be formed which will be in charge of limiting and destroying landmines in Sudan."

Human trafficking becomes regular practice along Sudan-Eritrean borders

Sudan Radio Service 19/2/10 - Human trafficking has become a regular practice along the borders between Sudan and Eritrea. The UNHCR estimates 100 people arrive in Eastern Sudan every day. The refugees are smuggled to Khartoum as they head towards Europe and Australia where they hope to make a new life. Speaking to [Sudan Radio Service] SRS in Kassala on Wednesday [17 February], the project manager for the Commission for Refugees in Kassala State [eastern Sudan], Hamad al-Jazuli, says human trafficking is frequent in eastern Sudan. "The phenomenon of human trafficking in this area goes back nearly two years and in recent days there has been coordination between local leaders, the security organs and the UNHCR in order to put an end to such a dangerous phenomenon. The UNHCR held several workshops to inform the local authorities in the area. In the last two months this phenomenon has reduced tremendously. This practice seems to involve a network that starts in Eritrea and ends in Sudan. Both Eritreans and Sudanese are involved. Those involved must be severely punished if they are caught."

Vice-president inaugurates launch of Sudanese postal company

SUNA 18/2/10 VP Taha launched last Thursday the start of the services of the Sudanese Company for Postal Services (Sudapost) through a celebration held at Al-Salam Rotana Hotel in Khartoum. Taha said that return of the postal services through Sudapost is an important issue for the Sudanese people. He called on the ministries and government institutions to consolidate their cooperation with Sudapost for the interest of all sectors of the Sudanese people. The minister of social welfare, Samiyah Ahmad Muhammad, said that Sudapost represents a genuine support to the economic and social development in Sudan. The director of Sudapost Company, Dr Khalid Sid-Ahmad Awad-al-Karim, said that the company will provide better services to the people in a manner that cope with the technological progress in the country. He said that the company aims to providing 5,000 jobs and to providing enhanced postal services to the beneficiaries.

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