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Highlights

Heavy rains paralyzed Khartoum State

Local dailies report torrential rains hit Khartoum State yesterday causing loss of lives and property. According to **Akhir Lahza**, ten persons were killed, five injured, houses and schools destroyed and many trees were uprooted.

Al-Sahafa reports the Humanitarian Affairs Minister, Abdul Bagi Al-Jailani and First Lady Widad Babikir toured the affected areas to console affected families and to offer condolences to the relatives of the deceased. Roads were flooded and traffic disrupted, forcing education authorities to close schools for two days. SPLM has called on the civil society organizations and the political parties to assist the victims. **Ajras Al-Hurriah** reports five persons have been killed and seven injured by the torrential rains.

SPLM sticks to its right to declare secession

Al-Ahdath report the SPLM has adhered to its right to declare independence from within the Parliament, downplaying the National Assembly Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir's warning that such step would derail the peace process. SPLM spokesperson Yen Mathew said Sudan's unity "is not attractive", adding southerners have the right to decide their destiny.

Umma Party leader to visit Juba for meeting GoSS officials

Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi is to lead a high-level delegation from his party to Juba next week for consultations with GoSS officials including FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit on a range of issues especially the CPA implementation, democratic transformation and liberties, **Al-Sahafa** reports. SPLM SG Pagan Amum said Mahdi's visit is in response to an invitation from the SPLM, adding a similar invitation was extended to the DUP leader Mohamed Osman Al-Mirghani.

Graton to report to US Administration on Saturday

Al-Sahafa reports US envoy Scott Graton will brief President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Saturday on the situation in the Sudan and his efforts to unify Darfur movements as well as the way ahead. Graton's adviser Omar Ismail Gamar Al-Din has downplayed warning by some Sudan government officials to discontinue dialogue with the US, saying Khartoum has welcomed Graton's initiatives.

SPLM blames JIU failure on NCP

The **Citizen** reports the SPLM yesterday said the NCP was behind the failure of the JIUs. SPLM Deputy Secretary General Anne Itto said that the NCP had failed to provide necessary requirements for the joint forces particularly salaries.

Partial sanction lifting encourages secession – Government

Sudan Government warns that partial lifting of sanctions on Sudan by the US is a "dangerous step" and will encourage secession, **Al-Ayyam** reports. Presidential adviser Ghazi Salah Al-Din said US's reports confirmed that Sudan took no part in any terrorist act against Washington. He said lifting sanctions from South Sudan and maintaining the same in the North is "extremely dangerous".

NCP to participate at Juba conference, with conditions

NCP's Political Affairs' Secretary, Mohamed Mandour Al-Mahdi, has said his party would participate in the Juba conference of political parties if all political groups are invited, the NCP is involved in its preparations and is given ample opportunity to articulate its views, *Al-Ayyam* 26/8/09 reported.

Elections committee lists voter registration centers, polling stations

Al-Ayyam reports Khartoum State High Elections Committee has finalized listing voter registration centres and polling stations as part of preparations for upcoming general elections. The high committee also carried out a mock voter registration exercise that was witnessed by the NEC members and representatives of a number of civil society organizations.

Humanitarian authorities warn of spread of NGOs in Darfur

The Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs warned yesterday against the spread of foreign NGOs in Darfur, *Al-Wifaq* 26/08/09 reported. State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Abdulbagi Al-Gailani, said the NGOs had worsened Darfur problems, adding 90% of their resources go to their personnel. Al-Gailani made the remarks at an Iftar hosted by the African Association for Child Welfare. He reiterated the state's commitment to strengthen national NGOs and to Sudanize voluntary work in the Sudan.

Kenya paving the way for South Secession

Al-Wifaq reports about Kenyan army officers have arrived in Southern Sudan, to be followed by forty nine others, to train the SPLA on aviation, artillery and tanks etc. Reportedly, the officers have entered Sudan without permission from Khartoum.

Clashes on Kenyan-Sudanese border leave 10 dead and 8 injured

Miraya FM 26/8/09 reported cattle-related clashes at the Sudanese-Kenyan border in Lokichoggio, between the Kenyan Turkana tribe and the Sudanese Taposa, have claimed the lives of 10 Kenyans and injured 8 others. The SPLA Chief of Staff, James Hoth said they were still searching for casualties, pointing to an agreement between Kenya and South Sudan to disarm border tribes.

Meanwhile, the *Daily Nation* reports the border row between Kenya and Sudan has been solved, Foreign Affairs minister Moses Wetang'ula has said. The minister had a tough time cooling down the belligerent MPs who had begun doubting Kenya's territorial integrity after three Cabinet ministers were harassed by Sudanese soldiers. Mr. Wetang'ula said last month's incident in which Mr. Otieno Kajwang' (Immigration), Mr. John Muniyes (Labour) and Prof George Saitoti (Internal Security) were stopped by the soldiers was just a minor incident that did not amount to occupation.

Deputy Speaker Farah Maalim, who is also MP for Lagdera, informed the minister of the plight of Kenyan investors in Sudan, whose business premises were demolished by government agents despite having obtained the required licenses. The minister confirmed the harassment and said a protest letter has been sent to the Sudanese Government seeking compensation for the traders. Property worth Sh68 million is said to have been destroyed in the "arbitrary and unlawful demolitions.

Sudan's SPLA denies involvement in armed raid on Kenyan border

Sudan Radio Service 26/8/09 - The SPLA spokesperson, Kuol Deim, has stressed that his soldiers were not part of a raid that occurred over the weekend at Locor-Akope, 48 kilometers from the northern Kenyan town of Lokichoggio.

Kuol Deim denied allegations by Kenyans in Lokichoggio that the SPLA may have taken part in an ambush that killed Kenyan security personnel who were pursuing the raiders. He said that the Saturday and Sunday incidents were carried out by cattle raiders from the Toposa community in Sudan.

[Kuol Deim]: What happened, according to the information available in my office, is that three Kenyan police were killed by Toposa cattle raiders. The cattle raiders raided the Turkana cattle, and they were moving with them towards the Kenyan border. While they were moving towards the Sudan-Kenya border they were ambushed by the Kenyan police and during the fighting the Toposa managed to kill 3 Kenyan officers, this is what happened. There is no SPLA here, these are criminal cattle raiders. SPLA is not involved at all, and that area is known for cattle raiding. It is a cattle raiding area.

The SPLA spokesperson condemned the raiders and appealed to Kenyans not to take their revenge on Sudanese living in Lokichoggio.

[Kuol Deim]: We in the SPLM condemn the Toposa cattle raiders. We will support the southern Sudanese community in the apprehension of these criminals when the police ask us to assist them because this is the responsibility to apprehend the internal criminals. We are appealing to our Kenyan brothers not to take revenge on any Sudanese who are in Lokichoggio, these are innocent people. We are very thankful for the efforts of the Kenyan authorities, in the protection of innocent Sudanese in Lokichoggio. These are innocent people. They have nothing to do with the cattle raiders.

Kuol Deim, who was speaking to Sudan Radio Service on the phone from Juba, urged both the GoSS and Kenya to work jointly to stop cattle rustling along their common border.

Turkana West District commissioner, Patrick Muriira reiterated Deim's statement, saying that the SPLA was not to blame for the attack. Muriira said calm had returned to Lokichoggio and people are going on with their business. He added that both GoSS and Kenya are working to resolve the issue.

[Kuol Deim]: We suspect they were Toposa raiders, people from the Toposa community, not the SPLA. I was there yesterday, and today the tension has reduced. I spoke to the deputy governor of Eastern Equatoria state and we agreed on the strategies to handle insecurity around the border. The attacks have increased, the reason for that is drought, so the pastoralists' are moving all over the place.

Patrick Muriira said that some of the wounded were treated in Kakuma hospital and discharged, while others are still undergoing treatment.

On Tuesday, the Sudanese ambassador to Kenya, Majok Guandong, also told Sudan Radio Service that the SPLA was not involved in the two incidents which left 7 people dead. He added that following the discussions between him and the Kenyan government, a meeting will be held on the Sudan-Kenya border on 3rd September, between the Government of southern Sudan and Kenya to resolve the issue and reconcile the two communities.

SPLM launches membership ID device

The *Southern Eye* 26/8/09 – The SPLM has, as part of efforts to boost its election strategy, officially launched an ID processing machine in the greater Yei region. Targeted in this case are the areas of Morobo, Lanya and Kajokeji. Mr. Samuel B. Ganya, the Acting SPLM County Secretary said each member of the SPLM shall be required to pay SDG 15 to have his or her ID processed using the new technology.

Land “Grab”: state to pay off UN

The *Citizen* reports the Minister of Physical Infrastructure in Central Equatoria State, Paul Ladu Bureng said that the land under questioned occupied by UNMIS is going to be tabled before the cabinet. The Minister said yesterday to the State Assembly that UNMIS had made a clear stand not to move out of the land, because of the huge money they have spent, and that their plans are ready for application on the land. Paul Ladu said the cabinet shall discuss how to compensate UNMIS, on legal basis and decide what to do this portion of land, currently fenced by UNMIS.

South Sudan rescues Nile Commercial Bank restructures management

Sudan Tribune 26/8/09 – The Government of Southern Sudan and the Central Bank of Sudan have resolved to rescue the collapsing Nile Commercial Bank. This will be the second attempt by the government in just over one year to rescue the bank from total collapse. In the last cabinet meeting, it was resolved that an amount of 102 million Sudanese pounds will be availed to bring the NCB back to its feet.

Civil society groups urge Presidency to set up Rights Commission

Ten national civil society networks have issued a press release on 24 August urging the Presidency to expedite approval for formation of a national human rights commission, *Al-Sahafa* reports. The organizations stressed the need for compliance with international standards, transparency and consultations on matters relating to selection of the commission's members.

Darfur mediator in Cairo for talks with Egyptian officials

Sudan Tribune website 26/8/09 - The Joint United Nations and African Union Mediator for Darfur, Djibril Bassole, has arrived today in Cairo for talks with Egyptian officials over the peace process in restive western Sudan province.

Bassole is expected to meet the Egyptian foreign minister Ahmed About Gheit and the Arab league Secretary General Amr Moussa to discuss the outcome of a consultative meeting held in Cairo on the regional and international efforts to reunite Darfur rebels.

The meeting was attended by officials from Libya, Sudan and US to coordinate their efforts on rebels' unity. Qatar, the host country and Bassole were not invited.

The different initiatives undertaken by Libya, Egypt and the USA over the reunification of the rebel factions led to the emergence of new divisions among the factions and could complicate the peace process.

Initially, the mediator with Libyan support had been working to establish a common ground between the rebels and their participation in the talks with one delegation. Egypt and the US envoy Scott Gration gathered different groups to unify them under one structure.

While the SLM-Nur dismissed some commanders that attended Addis Ababa talks, the rebel

groups are divided over who will lead the unified structure.

Also, the SLM-Unity of Abdalla Yahya is witnessing divisions and power struggle. Earlier this month, a breakaway faction led by Ali Karbino announced the establishment of a new rebel group called Democratic Sudan Liberation Movement.

Also the leadership of Yahya is reportedly much contested and he could be removed soon, a matter that would cause more divisions among the members of the SLM-Unity.

Russian firm to maintain Sudanese helicopters

Sudan Tribune website 25/8/09 — Helicopter service company, JSC, said it would start maintenance of Russian-made helicopters at the recently opened helicopter plant in the Sudan, Safat aviation complex.

The Russian firm, JSC, said this week it signed an agreement with the Sudanese Safat to maintain and repair helicopters, delivery of spare parts, staff training, and technical consultations.

The new aviation complex aims to meet the growing need for aircraft in the country. Further the plant would promote the aviation industry and techniques in Sudan as well as enhance the capacity of research institutions.

Over 130 Russian-made helicopters of the Mi family are operated in Sudan by local civilian operators, Interior Ministry and Defence Ministry. There are also 40 helicopters operated by Russian companies and 30 helicopters operated by Bulgarian, Polish companies and companies from other countries.

The complex was established in 2005 to primarily support the Sudanese air force. It is part of Sudan's military manufacturing commission. It aims to be a regional center in North Africa.

Editorial condemns SPLM's "undemocratic" tendency in Southern Sudan

Sudan Vision 26/8/09 - Last week, while the Sudanese people prepared themselves to receive the holy month of Ramadan, the SPLM issued a statement that the party has sacked two of its leading figures who are MP in National Assembly representing the party. One of the two is Ghazi Sulayman, a lawyer and human right advocate for more than two decades. The other is Manoa Aligo who is a prominent politician from Yei locality in Central Equatoria. Both figures are known for their long ties adhering to democracy, human rights and good governance. The statement of SPLM indicated that the reason behind sacking the two politicians was that both of them acted contrary to the political line drawn by the party leadership. As an MP, Ghazi Sulayman spared no effort to defend the case of SPLM on all fronts. May be one of his major guilt was his deep belief in full meaningful democracy even within his party, the SPLM. In discharging his freedom as a Sudanese national, Ghazi voiced some opinions which seem to be unacceptable to some of the communist figures in the SPLM.

While many of Ghazi Sulayman's opinions are typical of the Sudanese public opinion reflecting their traditions and values towards their dignity, integrity and sovereignty, his dismissal only contradicts the beliefs of the SPLM communist figures but not of Southern Sudanese. For sure, there are hidden reasons that the SPLM statement prefers not to mention. Since the move of the ICC General Prosecutor Ocampo, like majority of the Sudanese people, Ghazi voiced his absolute rejection of that step. May be Pagan and his group consider such a move as unacceptable even when First Vice-President Salva Kiir Mayardit headed the highest committee

to counter the ICC decisions.

When people like Pagan called on US not to lift sanctions imposed on Sudan and not to remove the country's name from states sponsoring terrorism, Ghazi introduced himself as a national advocate who branded all those sanctions as imperial acts and continued to call on the international community to distance itself from the colonial hidden agenda.

It is sad that the partner of the CPA which should act in symbolic way with regards to democracy that the party cannot afford to accept democracy and free opinion even with its leading figures. It is not a secret that the SPLM/A is blocking any political activities for Southern Sudanese in the South and continues to deny the rights of its opponents to perform their political activities there. It was also not secret that the defections of Dr Lam Akol and other leading figures are due to the undemocratic tendencies in the party given as the reason behind their defections to form the SPLM/DC, the new party. May be today is Ghazi Sulayman and Manoa Aligo but there should be many others to expect their defections or dismissal by SPLM tomorrow.