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Address: UNMIS Headquarters, P.O. Box 69, Ibeid Khatim St, Khartoum 11111, SUDAN
Phone: (+249-1) 8708 6000 - Fax: (+249-1) 8708 6200

Highlights

President Al-Bashir now free to travel across the continent - Government

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq said that Al-Bashir is now free to travel to any African country without fear of arrest following the AU resolution granting immunity to President Al-Bashir in the continent. Darfur rebels and human rights organizations condemned the decision saying it grants impunity to a war indicted individual, reports ***Sudan Tribune website***.

FVP Kiir to visit Southern Kordofan

FVP Salva Kiir will travel for a three-day visit to Southern Kordofan next week, reports ***The Citizen***. State Governor Ahmed Haroun and Deputy Governor Abdulaziz Al-Hilu were in Juba last week to brief FVP Kiir on the situation in the state and had extended him an invitation to visit the area.

Governor Haroun said that the FVP would hold a number of public meetings in Kadugli, Mujlad and Kauda.

NCP Leadership Office to discuss draft Referendum Bill

The NCP Leadership Office sitting yesterday under the Chairmanship of party leader President Al-Bashir has called for a rephrase of the draft Referendum Bill to cover some key related issues, reports ***Al-Sudani***. The NCP seeks to include in the draft bill issues pertaining to nationality, waters, joint forces, border demarcation, and other issues that may come to play should southern Sudan opt for secession. NCP Information Secretary Kamal Obeid also said that the party has directed its team to consult with all political forces and to continue consultations with the SPLM to ensure broader national acceptance of the Referendum Bill.

GoSS rejects census results

(***Sudan Tribune website*** – 04/07/09) The GoSS has rejected the 2008 population census results, saying it should not be used as the basis for allocating wealth and power sharing in the region. In a cabinet meeting on Friday chaired by FVP Salva Kiir, the meeting resolved to write a letter to the Chairperson of the National Elections Commission (NEC), asking the Commission not to use the census results for allotting constituencies.

The NEC said however that the Presidency has approved the results but FVP Salva Kiir said he never agreed to the census results being used as the basis for allotting the constituencies, or generally for sharing of power and wealth.

Last week, the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly also rejected the census results, saying it did not reflect the true population of Southern Sudanese in the country.

More JPIU deploy to Abyei

Head of the Abyei Area Administration Arop Moyak has revealed that 300 more Joint Police units have been deployed to Abyei, reports ***Ajras Al-Hurriya***. Despite the relative calm in the town, Moyak said he does not rule out the occurrence of some unrest around the date the Permanent Court of Arbitration issues its ruling on Abyei. He underlined the need for more police reinforcements for the area.

Moyak lashed out on the Federal Ministry of Finance and the JPIU Support Fund who, he said, have both failed to meet their obligations towards development in the Abyei Area. He singled out the UN as the only agencies that provide service to the people in Abyei.

GoSS VP announces major food gap in southern Sudan

GoSS VP Dr. Riek Machar said southern Sudan, especially Bahr-el-Ghazal, Upper Nile and Eastern Equatoria, is facing a major food gap. He said that LRA operations have caused the displacement of many people and has negatively affected the agricultural season, reports ***Al-Sahafa***.

VP Machar further said that agreement has been reached between the GoSS, the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) and a number of UN humanitarian agencies to carry out bi-annual joint humanitarian needs assessments for southern Sudan. He also said that Juba is set to host a donors' humanitarian assessment meeting on the 3rd of August.

CPA is not a gift from anybody - SPLM

The SPLM has lashed out on the NCP describing as “irresponsible” the recent criticisms levelled by NCP Information Secretary Kamal Obeid on the SPLM, ***Ajras Al-Hurriya*** reports. Martin Majut Yak, a senior SPLM official, wondered why southern Sudanese would be expected to vote for unity come the Referendum if there is nothing to encourage them to do so. He further pointed out that the CPA is not a gift from anybody and should be implemented by both parties. He also lashed out on statements by National Assembly Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir on the drive to draft a Referendum Bill that would make it difficult to encourage southern Sudan for secession.

Sudanese training aircraft on test flight today

President Al-Bashir inaugurates today the Aviation Complex in Karari at the northern outskirts of Omdurman. The Complex is expected to test-fly a prototype of a Sudanese-made training aircraft, reports ***Khartoum Monitor***.

SPLM denies SPLM-DC murder accusations

The SPLM office in Upper Nile has rebuffed accusations by SPLM-DC of complicity in the recent murder of Akeij Dak, a prominent member of the SPLM-DC, in Wadakona, Upper Nile State, reports ***Al-Ayyam***. The SPLM head of office in Upper Nile State, Sukeir Goj, described the incident as a crime that the courts have to decide on. He called on SPLM-DC to adhere to the principles of political activities and not to mix between political and criminal issues.

Opposition forces warn of possible constitutional void

Opposition parties are calling for amendments to the Interim National Constitution before next Thursday, 9/07/09, reports ***Al-Intibaha*** daily. They pointed out that the current government would be illegitimate by that date as per Article 216 of the Interim National Constitution. They also said that they will not stand as passive by-standers if amendments are not made but did not specify what actions they intend to take.

Umma Party may soon reach accord with SPLM

Rai Al-Shaab has learnt that the National Umma Party may soon sign an accord with the SPLM. Sources say that the party has sent a letter to FVP Salva Kiir outlining the party's

position on the forthcoming elections, the restrictive laws, elections, and the current situation in the country in addition to achieving attractive unity. Sources add that some senior party members may soon travel to Juba for talks with FVP Kiir and other senior SPLM officials.

NCP Information Secretary Kamal Obeid has meanwhile criticized the National Umma Party for signing a deal with the JEM. He described these developments as a “loss” and a violation of the country’s Constitution, **Al-Ahdath** reports.

In another development, the National Umma Party has followed its hotly-debated Thursday deal with the JEM with agreements with SLM-Unity Faction led by Mahjoub Hussein and the SLM-Revolutionary Leadership in the Libyan capital on Friday. Mariam Al Sadiq, who signed on behalf of the party, said the agreements emphasize the need to form a national government by the end of this month when the present government “would be considered unconstitutional,” reports **Radio MirayaFM**.

Authorities release 19 Fallata and Habbania tribesmen

Al-Sudani reports that South Darfur Governor Ali Mohamoud has revealed that the committee charged by the Interior Ministry to investigate inter-tribal clashes between the Misseriya and Rizeigat has finished investigations and would submit its final report to the minister. He said the police are deployed along the 150km common border strip between Southern Kordofan and South Darfur.

Meanwhile, authorities in South Darfur have released 19 people representing the native administration of the Fallata and Habbaniya tribes after the two sides pledged not to provoke sedition in the area.

Political forces in Red Sea State reject census results

Political parties in Red Sea State have rejected the results of the 5th National Population and Housing Census on the grounds the results give inaccurate figures of their population, reports **Al-Ahdath**. The parties demand that the 1993 census results be used as reference for the forthcoming elections. In a statement issued at a ceremony in Port Sudan yesterday to mark the signing of a “Charter for Political Forces and Civil Society Organizations”, representatives of political parties called on the State Elections Commission to coordinate with them in monitoring and overseeing all stages of the electoral process.

It is worth mentioning that signatories of the Charter included the SPLM, the Popular Congress Party, the Communist Party of the Sudan, the National Umma Party, the Beja Congress, amongst other parties and that the event was hosted by the Popular Congress Party, Port Sudan Chapter.

Rai Al-Shaab also reports that nine political parties (including the main parties mentioned above) have called on authorities in Red Sea State to lift the state of emergency imposed earlier on the Akeek area in South Tokar.

Gration urges armed groups to unify negotiations position

Al-Ayyam reports that US Special Envoy Scott Gration held talks in Tripoli yesterday with a group of 6 Darfur armed groups in a bid to encourage them to unify their positions to enable the parties reach a framework ceasefire agreement as soon as possible. The Political Officer for SLM-Unity, Osman Al-Bushra, said that Gration said he could play the mediator for the unification of the SLM factions and was pushing for a meeting to be held on the 24th of this month. The venue, he said, had not been discussed. The Political Officer further said that his movement had assured the envoy that they were prepared to meet in such talks with SLM-

Abdulwahid at a venue that the envoy would choose.

Interior Ministry issues statement on N. Darfur abductions

Akhir Lahza reports that the Ministry of Interior issued a statement yesterday revealing that eight people in a Land-Cruiser truck attacked the GOAL-Ireland offices in Kutum last Friday and abducted an Irish and a Ugandan employee and a local watchman. The watchman was later found in another place. Authorities have called on NGOs in the area to coordinate with the police to enable them provide security for their premises instead of using civilian watchmen.

The Director of the Department of Protocols at the Foreign Ministry, Dr. Ali Yusuf, said he believes the abductions were financially motivated, **Al-Ayyam** adds. He said that government is trying to make contact with the abductors who are now believed to be headed for Kabkabiya.

Authorities coordinate with UNAMID in search of abductees

Official sources have revealed that authorities are coordinating efforts with UNAMID at different levels as they search for the two GOAL-Ireland employees abducted in Kutum last Friday. Reports **Rai Al-Shaab**. GOAL has meanwhile announced that its employees have been evacuated to the state capital, El-Fashir.

On its part, UNAMID has expressed concerns over the continued abduction of humanitarian aid workers in Darfur. The Mission pointed out that this is the third incident of abduction in four months and pointed out that these negatively affect the population in the first place.