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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

“White army” kills 400 SPLA soldiers

Local dailies report Jikany Nuer fighters attacked SPLA soldiers escorting UN relief convoy carrying food for victims of conflict between the Nuer and the Murle occurred last month. According to ***Al-Ahdath***, the Nuer fighters known as “the White Army” launched the attack, killing 400 SPLA soldiers on Friday. The battalion commander, Col. Paul Kong is also missing and the wounded were transported to the Nasir hospital for treatment. Sources said the “white army” carried out another attack on the SPLA HQs in Keit Beit area. Meanwhile, the commander of the SPLA’s Upper Nile military zone is reportedly mobilizing battalions from Malakal, Fagag, Khur Fulus and Renk, a step seen as a sign of possible revenge attacks.

On the other hand, the Upper Nile State government’s secretary Rek Faul said a probe was ordered in the incidents, saying the SPLA has denied link to weapons and ammunitions found part of the UN food relief aboard 21 barges. He said the state government had liaised with UN for clarification on the reasons for presence of weapons as part of its food materials.

Reuters 13/6/09 reported Armed tribesmen attacked barges carrying U.N. food aid in south Sudan, leaving an unknown number of casualties in the latest in an outbreak of ethnic violence, officials said on Saturday.

Members of the Jikany Nuer tribe attacked 27 boats as they were carrying tonnes of food towards an area controlled by a rival ethnic group on the Sobat river on Friday afternoon, said the U.N.’s World Food Programme.

The remote region has seen a surge in ethnic fighting in recent months, fuelled by traditional disputes over cattle and a ready supply of guns after more than two decades of civil war.

Officials said they were still trying to get detailed information on the attack which happened on the tributary of the White Nile close to the border with Ethiopia.

"We don't have information on how many people were killed or injured. But everyone we have talked to has described it as an attack," said Michelle Iseminger, the WFP's head of programmes in southern Sudan.

"Many of the boats are unaccounted for."

Iseminger said the barges, carrying sorghum and other food for thousands of people displaced by tribal fighting, set off from the town of Nasir in Upper Nile State, but failed to arrive at their destination of Akobo.

So far, sixteen of the boats had returned to Nasir, and appeared to have been looted, she added.

Iseminger said the boats and their crews had been contracted to carry the food for the WFP and included an escort of soldiers from the southern Sudan People's Liberation Army. No U.N. officers were on board, she added.

NEC announces electoral constituencies

Local dailies report NEC Chairman Abel Alier has announced distribution of geographical constituencies based on the fifth census results. According to **Al-Khartoum**, the 450 seats of the National Assembly are distributed as follows: Khartoum 60 seats, South Darfur 47, Al-Jazeera 41, Northern Kordofan 33, North Darfur 24, Kassala 20, White Nile 20, Southern Kordofan 17, Red Sea 16, Gedaref 15, Sennar 15, West Darfur 15, Jonglei 15, River Nile 13, Central Equatoria 13, Upper Nile 12, Warap 12, Blue Nile 10, Eastern Equatoria 10, 8 each for Northern 8, North Bahr el Ghazal 8 and Lakes 8, western Equatoria 7, Western Bahr El Ghazal 4.

Sudan Tribune website 12/6/09 reported NEC allotted Friday 50% of the seats in the federal parliament to six northern states based on the results of the fifth national census. Six states, namely Khartoum, Al-Jazeera, South Darfur, Northern Kordofan, North Darfur and Kassala won 225 seats, accounting for 50% of total seats in the National Assembly.

The other 19 states shared the remaining 225 seats. While the total of seats allocated to the ten States of Southern Sudan reached 96 seats, 21.3% of total seats of the National Assembly.

Humanitarian situation in Darfur stable – Humanitarian Minister

“The humanitarian situation in Darfur since the INGO ouster is stable but the challenge for the Ministry is to sustain that situation. We are certain of the Ministry’s capacity to cope,” State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Abdul Bagi Al-Jailani, said in an interview to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**. Asked about reports of food gap in Kordofan he said, “Teams have been dispatched to Kordofan states to assess the reported food gap. We will seek the help of the strategic stockpile and the Zakat Chambers to address the situation”.

Presidential Adviser says assets of ousted INGOs should remain

Al-Intibaha reports Presidential Adviser and Government chief negotiator for Darfur Ghazi Salah Al-Din as saying the government is keen to expedite the peace process in the region. He made the remarks while addressing political parties, civil society organizations and native administration chiefs in Darfur yesterday. Ghazi heard a report on ongoing efforts to fill the gap left by the ousted INGOs and instructed that properties of the ousted INGOs should not be disposed off without permission from the Ministry of “Social” Affairs.

Political parties to request UN humanitarian intervention

Al-Intibaha reports Southern political forces and political parties are resolved to conduct wide consultations on a range of national issues including elections and referendum. Reportedly, Southern Sudan Democratic Front (SSDF) Chairman Prof. David De Chan said southern political parties’ leaders are determined to submit memos to the Presidency and the UN to request their intervention to assist in resolving the food shortage and famine in some parts of southern Sudan.

Sudan denies allowing return of expelled aid groups

Sudan Tribune website 14/6/09 - The Sudanese government this week vehemently denied reports that it would allow some of the aid groups expelled from the country last March to return.

In New York, the UN humanitarian chief John Holmes told reporters yesterday that four of these groups have been authorized by Khartoum to resume work under new names or new logos.

“That possibility is there for all the organizations that were expelled and some of them have already taken advantage of that, and have got very recently new registrations, and will be

restarting their operations” Holmes said.

“Four have already applied for new registration under their slightly changed new names and they have been accepted. I think the same possibility is open to others” he added.

But the Sudanese envoy at the UN Abdel-Mahmood Abdel-Haleem dismissed the assertions by Holmes.

“The people put it like we are throwing them from the window and they are coming from the door, or visa-versa. It is not like this” Abdel-Haleem told VOA.

“Those that have been expelled are expelled. They are not being allowed to come back. But whoever would like to apply afresh, credentials will be checked and a decision will be taken on a case-by-case basis” he added.

Yesterday the Sudanese foreign ministry spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq told the official news agency (SUNA) that none of the evicted groups would return.

“The government position on this is very clear. These groups will not return to Sudan either using their names or other new ones” Al-Sadiq said.

The Sudanese diplomat said this issue was discussed with Holmes and US special envoy Scott Gration adding that the agreement was to “improve situation in Darfur”.

CPA Partners discuss referendum bill

Miraya FM 13/6/09 - the Naivasha partners have started the discussion amidst procedural differences, over the referendum draft bill. The differences between the SPLM and the NCP are on the number of members of the commission and the site of commission HQ.

The minister of cabinet affairs in south Sudan Dr. Luka Monoja said that copies of the latest referendum draft bill has been distributed to ministers so that they can understand the content of the bill before advising the committee on what to do.

Meanwhile, the issues under discussion between the two parties include the seat of the referendum commission. SPLM says that referendum commission should be established in the South but NCP wants it based in Khartoum.

SPLM also wants the government of South Sudan to nominate the leadership of the commission then appointed by the president of the Sudan in consultation with the president of the government of South Sudan but NCP says president Bashir should appoint the leaders.

National congress party says that southerners living in the north should vote during referendum but SPLM seems to be in disagreement with the idea.

SPLM proposes that the referendum commission should comprise of nine members majority from the south while NCP says it should have fifteen members majority from the North. Other issue is post referendum arrangement, which is not part of the referendum bill according to the source.

However, all these issues are still under discussion between the two parties

Western moves to extend Sima Sarmar's mandate

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports while Western groups in the Human Rights Council are engaged in "suspicious movements" to extend Simar Sarmar's mandate in the Sudan, Sudan delegation is conducting consultations to terminate the mandate. Justice Ministry source yesterday said the government delegation would react to any issues Samar might raise and would push for termination of her mandate.

SPLA accused of killing civilians, raping minors in Mayom

Al-Khartoum reports SPLM source in the Unity State has accused some SPLA soldiers of violating human rights in Mayom County. The source revealed clashes occurred yesterday between SPLA soldiers and civilians in the County, resulting in killing three civilians among them a priest and raping two minor girls. The source expressed concern over possible explosion of the security situation in the area.

SPLM advance delegation leaves for Washington on Monday

Ajras Al-Hurriah reports high level SPLM advance delegation headed by deputy chairman Malik Agar will leave for Washington on Monday to prepare for FVP Kiir's visit to take part in the CPA-support conference to discuss pending issues.

Sudan to endorse Mbeki's panel recommendations - report

Sudan Tribune website 13/6/09 -The Sudanese government intends to implement recommendations to be drafted by the AU panel on balancing accountability with peace in Darfur, according to a news report.

The London based **Al-Hayat** newspaper were told by unidentified Sudanese officials that the panel has understood the realities of the Darfur conflict and the violations that took place.

African diplomats speaking to **Al-Hayat** said that their report "will be objective and realistic" containing ideas on political resolution to Darfur conflict, justice and compensating victims.

They also said that it is likely that the panel will propose a South African style "Truth and Reconciliation" commission.

Sudanese officials told the newspaper that they will abide by Mbeki's recommendations adding that it will allow it to avoid international pressure on non-cooperation with the ICC.

Furthermore, they pointed out that Khartoum has promised the Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa to implement a series of steps on Darfur justice and political track but did not carry them out until an arrest warrant was issued for Bashir.

Mbeki is scheduled to arrive in Khartoum today on a weeklong visit for talks with Sudanese officials, NGO's and political parties.

It is not clear what the impact of Mbeki's report will be on the ICC outstanding arrest warrant for three Sudanese individuals including Bashir.

The prosecutor has no power under the Rome Statute to scrap arrest warrant that has been approved by the judges.

Darfuri refugees at the camps in Chad told the panel that they want the arrest warrant against Bashir executed.

Sudan hails UN humanitarian chief's report on Darfur

Sudan tribune website 13/6/09 the Sudanese government welcomed yesterday the report submitted by the USG for humanitarian affairs John Holmes saying it "opens wide opportunities for cooperation".

The foreign minister spokesperson Ali Al-Sadiq told reporters that Holmes testimony "acquits" Sudan government of allegations of obstructing humanitarian work.

The top UN relief official said that Khartoum signaled its readiness to receive new aid groups from abroad.

The foreign ministry spokesperson said his government is looking for ways to stabilize the Darfur situation working with other international organizations.

"What Holmes reported also affirms that direct cooperation between the UN, the Sudanese government, AU and international NGOs working in Darfur is the best way to work together to calm the general situation in Darfur" Al-Sadiq said.

Separately the Sudanese commissioner for humanitarian assistance Hasabu Abdel-Rahman said that the UN apologized for "mistranslation" in Holmes statements regarding return of expelled aid groups.

The UN humanitarian chief told reporters that four of the ejected groups have been authorized by Khartoum to resume work under new names or new logos.

"That possibility is there for all the organizations that were expelled and some of them have already taken advantage of that, and have got very recently new registrations, and will be restarting their operations" Holmes said.

"Four have already applied for new registration under their slightly changed new names and they have been accepted. I think the same possibility is open to others" he added.

Holmes said these groups include CARE, Save the Children, and Mercy Corps.

We approve of suicide bombings, but with conditions – Party leader

Interviewed by **Al-Watan** on a range of issues, the chairman of the *Hizbul-wasat al-Islamic* (Moderate Islamic Party), Yousuf Al-Koda, said his party had decided to contest upcoming elections. Asked about the best approach to deal with the west, he said, "Dialogue should be the top priority and there should be no resort to confrontation unless the west chooses to confront. Honestly speaking, we are not properly addressing the west's concerns about Islam. Reflecting the tolerant image of Islam is better than exploding a bomb or killing a human". Asked whether they support the Islamic groups which carry out suicide bombings he said, "We approve of the Jihad operations and suicide bombings to resist an occupier or an aggressor like what the Palestinians are doing against Israel. But we do not approve of Jihad operations against innocent civilians. We should kill French and say their country support Israel. Such actions should be governed by the interest. If our interests require that we do, otherwise we do not do. US President is now saying that Israel is a state and it should be recognized and so does Palestine. He has recognized the rights of the Palestinian Muslims. As such, we do not

need bombings”.

SPLM (Salva Wing) sends units to assassinate Akol – SPLM-DC

Sudan Vision reports SPLM-DC leaderships revealed that SPLM (Salva) has sent special unit to Khartoum to assassinate SPLM-DC leaderships. The sources told the paper that SPLM-DC Chairman, Dr. Lam Akol, his deputy Anwar Omar Mousa, and the SPLM-DC Spokesman, Jamal Al-Sarraj received a beware notice.

SPLM-DC described the step as disgraceful and shame which does not coincide with the democratic transformation,

SPLM-DC Spokesman, Jamal Al-Sarraj told Sudan Vision that they actually received cautions from several parties advising them to take care from the SPLM (Salva) step, affirming that his party disregard the hostile movement of SPLM (Salva) and that they will go ahead for the benefit of South Sudan people.

Washington Lifts Financial Sanctions on Sudanese Mission in USA

Sudanese Media Centre 13/6/09 - US treasury department announces lifting sanctions on Sudanese mission in Washington and New York. The resolution stipulates that mission workers have right to purchase goods and services inside the United States for official purposes and personal use. Diplomatic source considers the resolution as positive step that could push bilateral talks between Khartoum and Washington.

Some rebels disarm, but no sign of olive branches – analysis

IRIN 12/6/09 - A key stage in Sudan’s peace process began this week - converting former rebels in the south into civilians - but the two parties to the 2005 accord are a long way from burying the hatchet.

The UN-supported disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of members of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) began at a ceremony in Juba, capital of Southern Sudan, on 10 June. It targets initially some 35,000 people designated as members of “special needs groups” – the disabled, veterans and women associated with armed forces and groups.

The process began in February in the North. In all, some 180,000 people across the country are slated to leave military life and start again as civilians. Assistance in various fields will be available: agriculture and animal husbandry, vocational training, establishing small businesses and formal education. Successful DDR and providing sustainable livelihoods are seen as key to ensuring the country’s long-term security.

Ashraf Qazi, who heads the UN peacekeeping mission in Sudan (UNMIS), has called the programme “one of the most complex and largest DDR operations of its kind in the world”.

But there are many challenges ahead, with experts warning that DDR depends on implementation of other parts of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA), which put a formal end to a conflict that claimed some two million lives.

“DDR is one of the many components of the peace process: its success depends also on the achievement of all the other benchmarks of the CPA,” said Lise Grande, the UN’s Deputy Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan, pointing out that north and south had yet to start discussions on the “critical process” of downsizing their respective forces.

“Given the importance of DDR to CPA implementation as a whole, we feel that it’s extremely important that these negotiations begin without further delay,” said Grande at the launch ceremony in Juba.

More than four years after the CPA was signed, animosity and mistrust still pervade relations between the two governments, especially over the distribution of power and oil wealth.

Few rule out the possibility that this animosity, or indeed tensions within Southern Sudan, where rival communities have clashed on numerous occasions in recent months, could degenerate into renewed major armed conflict.

In such a context, questions have been raised about the contribution the oft-delayed DDR process can make to durable peace.

“The Government of Southern Sudan’s security decision-making continues to be driven by what it perceives to be the unresolved conflict with the North,” warned the Geneva-based Small Arms Survey in a report released in May.

“Security continues to be understood in terms of the need to prepare for a possible future war, which includes the need to address perceived proxy forces and other destabilizing groups and individuals operating in the South,” it added.

At the same time, the UN is working hard to persuade donors to part with the cash needed to bankroll the DDR programme, which will cost US\$385 million over three years.

Donor pledges of about \$88 million were made during a February conference in Juba, while in April, the UN Budget Committee in New York agreed to triple resources of UNMIS for DDR operations.

“The United Nations is ready, in fact enthusiastic, about supporting the DDR process, but to make it happen we are very much dependent on contributions from the international community,” said Grande.

“We wish to encourage donors to continue with their generous support.”

Sudan’s Government of National Unity is also meant to contribute, but drastic drops in the price of oil – the country’s main source of revenue – have severely reduced state resources.

Southern President Salva Kiir recently said the economic situation was biting “very hard and very deep”.

Kiir told a conference of traditional leaders on 17 May that projected revenues in 2009 are “down by 50 percent”.

However, at the DDR launch, Kiir announced \$30 million funding to support the programme in the south.

“This funding will be specifically for the provision of good-quality, environmentally sustainable, low-cost homes for ex-combatants,” said Luka Monoja, Southern Sudan’s Minister of Cabinet Affairs, speaking on behalf of Kiir.

“The money will enable suitable ex-combatants to gain the skills they need to take the lead in

building such homes for their colleagues.”

Those signing up in the first batch echoed a common Sudanese sentiment of a simple desire for peace – and exhaustion at the prospect of renewed conflict.

“There is a big difference between war and peace, because right now it is good,” said Michael Taban, who switched to the then rebel Southern army in 1990 after deserting the Northern government force.

“I just want to become a mechanic, because that is what I know what to do,” he added.

Promise and peril in Sudan

The Economist 13/6/09

South Sudan may get independence in 2011, but could start life as a prefailed state MAJOR JOHNSON GUCH of the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) sits outside a grass hut at the edge of Nasir, a missionary post in Nuerland that in time became a dismal town (see map). Dressed in a tracksuit, he gives the air of a local warlord. A Nuer himself, Mr Guch is commander of a joint integrated unit (JIU) of southern and northern Sudanese soldiers mandated to keep the peace in Nasir. He says he has 150 southern soldiers, each with a small tin of bullets. But he is dismissive of the northern soldiers. He does not know how many there are. He says he does not care. It is not, in any sense of the word, a joint command.

The commander of the northern troops, Captain Osman Mustafa, is more gracious, but also more disingenuous. His tent is a walk across a black wasteland pocked by the twisted wreckage of vehicles blown up in the war and little piles of human faeces left by the locals, who eschew latrines. A Muslim from the Nuba mountains, Mr Mustafa says he has 300 soldiers, enough guns and, of course, very good relations with the southerners.

The Lou-Nuer targeted a cattle camp tended by women and children from the Jikany. Those sleeping outside under mosquito nets were shot point blank. The Lou sprayed the huts with bullets. They drove older children into the river, where they drowned. The Lou took the cattle and Torkej’s other meagre possessions. Fifty seven wounded were taken to a Médecins Sans Frontières hospital.

The Jikany insist it is unheard of for cattle raiders to target women and children. They are furious that they had no guns to defend themselves. Under South Sudan’s patchy disarmament programme, the Jikany gave up their guns, the Lou kept theirs. Jikany elders say the Lou are working for the northern government of President Omar al-Bashir in Khartoum. They believe the north supplied at least 1,000 machineguns to the Lou in recent months. They say the Lou have been attacking their neighbours on all sides, including the Murle to the south, at the behest of Mr Bashir’s government. For their part, the Lou say it is the Murle who are proxies of the northern regime.

Whatever the truth, the episode is a sign of a wider breakdown of peace across southern Sudan. In the past month or so hundreds of people have been killed in violent clashes similar to the one in Torkej, as nomadic groups compete for the best cattle and grazing land. Conflict is normal, but it is not normal for so many to be killed in this way—at least in recent years. The UN says that more people are now being killed in the south than in Darfur, Sudan’s troubled western region.

Under the terms of a peace agreement with the northern government of Mr Bashir signed in 2005, the south is expected to vote for secession in a referendum in 2011. The prospect of

gaining a new country, South Sudan, raised hopes of an end to Sudan's civil war between the predominantly Muslim north and the Christian and animist south, which lasted on and off for the best part of 50 years. At last, the flattened south would rebuild itself.

Now, however, even many southerners, let alone their fiercely partisan foreign backers, worry that the region's progress towards independence is going awry. Not only is there the increasing rate of intertribal violence and the hostility of the north to contend with. But the south's woes have been added to by the incompetence and corruption of the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS), mainly composed of former guerrilla fighters in the SPLM, the political movement of the SPLA. They have managed to spend about \$5 billion in oil revenues over the past four years with very little to show for it, apart from weapons. At the present rate, South Sudan will fail before it has even been born.

There is no doubt that Mr Bashir's northern government has played its part in the violence and turmoil in the south. The north has been slow to honour many of its pledges under the 2005 peace agreement with the south. In delineating the border line between the two territories, which directly effects its ownership of the country's oil reserves, the north has refused to co-operate. This has bred deep distrust between the two sides. JIUs, therefore, like the soldiers at Nasir, are "joint" in name only, and unable to keep order in the disputed border regions.

Yet it is wrong to blame the north alone. The World Food Programme says the malnutrition rate in South Sudan is 16%, which signals a permanent humanitarian emergency. Over the past four years, despite billions of dollars in revenues, the GOSS has failed to build a single paved road outside Juba, the capital. In many towns, let alone the remoter areas, the putative government of the state of South Sudan has made barely any impression at all; most new clinics or schools have been built by churches or foreign charities. Increasingly, the mess is being blamed on the south's own politicians.

The widespread perception is that the GOSS is corrupt, especially at the lower levels. The army chief was removed in a recent reshuffle after he failed to account for missing salaries. Foreign governments are reluctant to pump much-needed cash into the southern government's coffers for fear that it will be squandered.

After the sharp fall in the price of oil last year, the GOSS suffered a collapse in its oil revenues, which make up 98% of its income. Although the government cannot be blamed for the fall in oil prices, many question why it remains so beholden to the vagaries of one commodity. Oil output is not forecast to increase in 2010 and prices, though far off their lows, may now rise only slightly.

The government needs money. The GOSS has spent over half of its income on paying its old soldiers and buying new weapons. The SPLA argues that this is an insurance against the north in case it tries to prevent secession in 2011, but the policy leaves little cash for anything else. The government has been unable to pay salaries for months at a time and teachers recently threatened to go on strike. Some argue that the south is now bankrupt, although one person familiar with the budget process says that is an exaggeration: "It's bad, but not a disaster."

This week saw the first sign of an internal rebellion against the perceived misrule in Juba. The influential former foreign minister, Lam Akol, is founding his own party to challenge the SPLM. "Why did the SPLM fail to govern South Sudan even though it had all the money and 70% of the power?" he asked. Mr Akol will probably fight the SPLM in the national elections due next year. Given the SPLM's poor record in office so far, he may do rather well.