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Headlines

- Presidency endorses census results, hands them over to NEC (**Dailies**)
- Presidency agrees to fund CJMC (**Al-Ahdath**)
- USG Holmes arrives in Sudan to review humanitarian situation (**ST**)
- Sudan says willing to admit new NGOs (**Reuters**)
- Plenary meeting Thursday to discuss humanitarian work in Darfur (**SMC**)
- Machar desirous of running presidential elections (**Al-Rai Al-Aam**)
- LRA strikes again while Southern parliament Speaker visits Yambio (**ST**)
- Chad says targeting rebels with air strikes (**Reuters**)
- Government, JEM Doha talks resume (**Local dailies**)
- SPLM MPs angered by presence of a revolver in the Parliament (**Al-Watan**)
- NCP delegation detained, tortured (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Bari-Mundari clashes claim 11 lives (**Miraya**)
- SPLA dismisses deputy commander removal claim (**ST**)
- Ballal's relatives to file case against Yassir Arman (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Minnawi-led SLA prevented from registering as political party (**SRS**)

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Highlights

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Presidency endorses basic census results, hands it over to NEC

The Presidency at a meeting yesterday endorsed the basic results of the fifth population census and handed over a copy of the census results to the National Elections Commission, *local dailies* report.

According to *SUNA*, the meeting which was chaired by President Al-Bashir in presence of FVP Kiir and VP Taha, asked the National Council for Population Census to speed up the technical work for extraction of the technical analysis and the social and economic indices so that they would be used in the comprehensive national planning. The meeting also heard a report by the Population Council presented by General Bakri Hassan Salih, the Minister for the Presidency of the Republic and Chairman of the Council in the presence of Dr Yassin Hajj Abdeen the Director of the Central Statistics Bureau, Mr. Issaya Chul the Director General of the Statistics commission in southern Sudan and Dr Abdul Baggi Gilanni Chairman of the Census Monitoring Commission. The technical group composed of the Central Bureau and the Southern Sudan Commission as well as the United Nations Population Fund would continue preparation of its work with regards to the analysis of the population census result that would help with the national and lower level planning in accordance with the economic and social indices. The meeting also heard a report from the Committee of Observers which was prepared by the observers from outside the Sudan namely from South Africa and which was endorsed by the observers committee that includes representatives from all states of the country, the political parties, the civil society organizations and population observers from the African Union, the Arab league and from other neighboring countries beside international experts.

The Presidency of the Republic also heard a report by the head of the National Election Commission Abel Alier as well as a report by the technical committee on the border demarcation between the north and the south. The report pointed out that the committee has finalized its work in drawing the demarcation line on paper in most of the eastern sector and that it continued drawing on the paper of the other areas from the eastern sector then in the central and western border. The committee is working for completing the work on paper before the onset of the rainy season. The Presidency directed the committee to finalize its paper work by the end of September and then finalize demarcation work by December.

According to *Al-Rai Al-Aam*, NEC Chairman Alier said the meeting also discussed budget for upcoming elections. Alier described the Presidency meeting as “positive and good”.

Presidency agrees to fund CJMC

Al-Ahdath reports the Presidency yesterday endorsed a request by the CPC to provide funding to the CJMC.

UN's Holmes arrives in Sudan to review humanitarian situation

Sudan Tribune website 6/5/09 — UN humanitarian chief John Holmes Wednesday arrived in Khartoum on a five-day visit to review humanitarian situation in both Southern and Western Sudan.

This evening he discussed the humanitarian situation in the country with the head of the UN Mission in Sudan Asharf Qazi, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ameerah Haq, and representatives from the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

On Thursday he is scheduled to meet representatives of the Government of Sudan, and will participate in a High Level Committee meeting on the implementation of the Joint Communiqué on the Facilitation of Humanitarian Activities in Darfur signed in March 28, 2007.

He will then proceed to Southern Sudan on Friday 8 May, where he will meet UN officials and representatives from the Government of Southern Sudan. He will pay a visit to Akobo, where he will meet the IDPs.

In Southern Sudan, he will advocate for greater attention to north-south issues, the needs of civilians and a strategy for relief and recovery in Southern Sudan.

On Saturday he will travel to Darfur to meet with local leaders and aid workers and to visit Zam Zam camp for IDPs in North Darfur.

Holmes will review the humanitarian situation in the areas, two months after the expulsions were announced. He will also review issues pertaining to the protection of civilians in Darfur.

Sudan says willing to admit new NGOs

Reuters 6/5/09 - Sudan said on Wednesday it would "not close the door" to foreign aid organizations that want to operate in the largest country in Africa but a decision to expel 13 international NGOs was non-negotiable. "For the expelled 13 NGOs, this is history. It's finished. But this decision, this decree, does not close the door for any new NGOs -- American, British, French ... with new names, with new logos," said Hassabo Mohamed Abd el-Rahman, the head of Sudan's HAC.

"Any new NGOs that fulfill the criteria are most welcome," he told reporters at the airport after welcoming U.N. humanitarian chief John Holmes to Sudan on Wednesday. "I can assure you that there are many applications being processed." "We're working on the capacity-building of national NGOs, the Sudanization... Sudanization does not mean that we close the door for foreign aid," Abd el-Rahman said.

"Clearly there were gaps left when the NGOs were expelled... we have been trying to fill those most critical life-saving gaps but we know we've not been able to do that on a full basis," Holmes said. He said the best solution would be for the expelled NGOs to be allowed to return.

"Our position from the beginning is that the best way out of this problem is to reverse the decision and let back in the NGOs that were expelled... if there are ways in which gradually over time some, or all, of them can be allowed back in to work that's something I'd very much welcome," Holmes said. "That's something we'll be discussing in the next few days."

Plenary meeting Thursday to discuss humanitarian work in Darfur

SMC 6/5/09 reported the Higher Committee for Humanitarian Work is to hold a plenary meeting today to discuss progress of the humanitarian work in Darfur, with participation of the American and European envoys to Sudan, representatives of the Arab League, the donors, the Ministries of Humanitarian Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. HAC Commissioner Hassabu Mohamed Abdul-Rahman said that the government in cooperation with the UN, the

organizations operating in Darfur, the Arab support and the Arab League, has covered the humanitarian needs in Darfur region.

Machar desirous of running presidential elections

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports GoSS VP Riak Machar's Press Secretary Yuhanse Musa Fok as saying that VP Machar is desirous of contesting upcoming presidential elections if President Kiir declines to run. He said the SPLM recent Politburo meeting did not decide SPLM presidential candidate, adding the matter was left for the upcoming meeting of the SPLM National Liberation Council to determine a candidate.

LRA strike again while Southern parliament speaker visits Yambio

Sudan Tribune website 6/5/09 – LRA Guerrillas struck villages just 15 miles from Yambio town during the two day visit of the Speaker of South Sudan Legislature Assembly and Deputy Chairman of SPLM, James Wani Igga, who arrived Monday before returning today to Juba.

Hon. Wani Igga was quoted by the Western Equatoria state (WES) Ministry of Communications as saying that “the insecurity of WES is deplorable and condemnable.” He reportedly also described the insecurity in WES as perpetuated by irresponsible individuals.

The LRA are reported by WES defence groups and confirmed by WES officials as attacking a village called Bureangburu where the LRA abducted a man and his wife, said Charles Kisanga, a leader of the region's Azande community living in the United Kingdom.

Formation of defence groups, sometimes referred to as “arrow boys” for their primitive outfitting, has been encouraged by the state governor in recent months.

“A chase was given by self-defence arrow boys and girls who caught up with the LRA and thereby clashing with them and one LRA terrorist was killed. The dead LRA was soon torn to pieces by an angry mob but the arrow boys managed to bring the torn hand of the dead LRA rebel to Yambio town for authorities to see and hopefully maybe let Hon. Wani Igga also to get a glimpse of it to see for himself the brutality of the LRA war in Western Equatoria,” said Kisanga.

LRA also struck at a place called Nasoro, near Gangura and looted food and abducted an unknown number people. Two days ago another attack was reported in Sakure where two boys aged 12 and 15 years were abducted by the LRA.

Continued LRA attacks and looting have emptied the villages of Bureangburu, Nasoro and Bakiwiri, from which residents fled to Yambio seeking protection. According to Kisanga, the displacement puts strain on all those who had relatives in the villages. Bureangburu is not far from Bakiwiri with only river Yubu separating the villages.

“Most people in Yambio have households with members swelling to over 20 to 50 and some reaching a hundred as relatives seek refuge from LRA,” described Kisanga.

Leaders of the state government of WES largely ignored a regional disarmament campaign last year, preferring that the populace remain armed against the LRA fighters who have crossed over from northeast Democratic Republic of Congo. However, unlike other parts of southern Sudan, WES never developed large-scale militias during the 22-year civil war that began in 1983.

Kisanga, head the new SPLM Patriotic Organization for change, recommended that the current

government of the semi-autonomous region of Southern Sudan be dismissed to be replaced with “a caretaker government mostly made of some SPLA military officers and technocrats” who would use maximum force to protect the south ahead of elections.

Chad says targets rebels with air strikes

Reuters 6/5/09 - Chad said on Wednesday it had carried out air strikes on rebels in the east of the country and had made preparations aimed at preempting any further advances by them.

Chad accused neighbouring Sudan this week of sending armed groups into the east of the country. Khartoum denied the accusation but Chad's Interior Minister Ahmat Mahamat Bachir repeated the assertion on Wednesday and said its forces had targeted Sudan-backed rebels in the town of Goz-beida, some 200 km (125 miles) south of Abeche in the east. "These mercenaries are swarming around this town," Bachir said in a statement. "They have been tracked down by our forces and dealt with by our aircraft," he said, adding: "All preparations have been taken to ensure there is no (rebel) advance." The statement gave no details on how many rebels had been targeted, nor on the timing or outcome of the strikes.

SMC 6/5/09 reported the Chadian opposition dismissed N'djamena accusations that Sudan is supporting them. Opposition spokesman Ali Arjo said the accusations were intended to divert attention from the JEM presence on the Chadian soil.

UN News Centre 6/5/09 reported SG Ban Ki-moon warned against any attempts to destabilize eastern Chad, where United Nations aid agencies say mounting insecurity could threaten the delivery of aid to over 400,000 refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Mr. Ban is following developments in eastern Chad with “increasing concern,” his spokesperson said in a statement. He appealed to all parties to respect the humanitarian character of the operations of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in eastern Chad, and to refrain from deploying forces in areas where such operations are under the protection of the UN peacekeeping force in the Central African Republic and Chad, known as MINURCAT. “The Secretary-General stresses that any attempt at destabilization through violent means is unacceptable and reaffirms that MINURCAT will act within its mandate and capabilities to protect civilians threatened by armed elements,” the statement said.

In addition, Mr. Ban urged the Governments of Chad and Sudan – which signed an accord on Sunday in the Qatari capital – “to bridge their differences using diplomatic and other peaceful means available to them and to redouble their efforts to implement the Doha agreement.”

UN agencies on the ground warn that the delivery of aid to some 250,000 Sudanese refugees and 166,000 displaced Chadian could be compromised due to mounting insecurity.

“As a precautionary measure, they are advising their staff to limit their movement to a minimum, most particularly in and around the towns of Goz Beida, Kerfi and Koukou. These towns are all within 100 kilometres of the Sudanese border where there are reports of tensions between government and rebel forces,” UN spokesperson Michele Montas told reporters in New York.

Government, JEM Doha talks resumed

Local dailies report Sudan government and JEM resumed peace talks yesterday in Doha. According to **Ajras Al-Hurriah**, talks were resumed in presence of the US Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration. Qatari State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ahmed Ben Abdullah said the aim of the talks was to complete the Goodwill and Confidence-building agreement signed in Doha. This is the first time the two sides resume talks face to face since they were suspended by JEM over expulsion of 13 INGOs.

SPLM MPs angered by presence of a revolver in the Parliament

SPLM MPs were angered by the MP Yasin Mohamed Nour who carried a revolver to the National Assembly session, *Al-Watan* reports. SPLM MP Lida J. Chol said Yasin was seen loading his revolver moments before the start of the Parliament session on Tuesday. Deputy Speaker Mohamed Al-Hassan Al-Amin said he would prohibit carrying weapons to the Parliament sessions. SPLM MP Maj. Gen. Elias Lino said they would complain to the National Assembly Speaker about the phenomenon of MPs attending meetings with weapons. He told the paper that the MP who was seen carrying a revolver had differences with the SPLM MP Yasir Arman.

NCP delegation detained, tortured

Al-Intibaha reports that NCP delegation was detained and tortured upon arrival in Yambio yesterday. The delegation comprising six NCP members were taken upon arrival by SPLA security and beaten up.

Bari-Mundari clashes claim 11 lives

Miraya FM 6/5/09 eleven people have been killed in recent tribal clashes between the Bari and Mundari communities. This was announced Wednesday by the Central Equatoria State Governor, Clement Wani Konga in a press conference. He said that tribal clashes were triggered by the death of a man killed by unknown persons. According to governor Konga, "criminal elements in Jebel Lado area" have been involved in the conflict.

SPLA dismisses deputy commander removal claim

Sudan Tribune website 6/5/09 – The army of south Sudan dismissed as “propaganda of the highest order” a report by the Sudanese daily *Al-Intibaha* that had claimed the dismissal of the force’s Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Lt. General Paulino Matip Nhial.

Matip, the former commander of a significant militia in Bul Nuer territory which was often government-backed, also headed a loose coalition of militias known as the South Sudan Defence Forces. Having chosen to integrate into the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) in a formal agreement signed on January 8, 2006, he now straddles a deep fissure within the SPLA.

The Arabic-language newspaper wrote April 20 that signs of division are emerging between SPLA figures and Matip’s loyalists in Central Equatoria State, stating that Matip is being replaced with one Major General Gong Gall – a name not known in the SPLA — who, according to their report, is a Nuer from Mayom County, Unity State, though also a Dinka loyalist.

Al-Intibaha insinuated that General Salva Mathok Gengdit, Deputy Chief of Staff for Administration, pushed for the new appointment in order to bolster “Dinka dominance” in the former rebel group. However, an SPLA official responded that “General Salva Mathok would not initiate the removal of one of his closest allies.”

Emphasizing matters of tribal loyalty, the article reported clashes on April 19, 2009 between the two factions in Juba town and another location, stirred up by discontent among Matip’s fellow tribesmen.

SPLA, in a statement issued by Col. Malaak Ayuen Ajok, Director of Information and Civil-Military Relations at the headquarters in Juba, outright denied that the Deputy Commander-in-Chief has been dismissed.

It also noted that since the historic Juba Declaration, General Matip no longer has his own forces, thus making any such supposed clashes impossible.

“We therefore find it unpalatable, unfathomable and offensive when agents of division in Khartoum, of which Al Intibaha is one, treat General Matip as a separate entity from the SPLA. To set the records straight, General Paulino Matip Nhial is the current Deputy Commander-in-Chief of SPLA. He does not have forces outside the SPLA in which he is the second-in-Command,” stated the SPLA representative.

Ajok affirmed “there is no tinge of truth in the propaganda that General Matip is being dismissed.”

“Unlike the North which has dishonoured too many agreements it signed with the South we in the South are bound to honour agreements we signed among ourselves,” he stated.

The SPLA spokesperson further added that Juba was calm on April 19, while residents went about their daily businesses: “There were no reports of insecurity or gun battles by any group, leave alone a massive gun battle between SPLA and the so-called Matip forces, in Juba and its environs.”

Then, moreover, the army spokesperson called it “surprising” and “mind-boggling” the extent to which Al Intibaha has forgone its journalistic ethics, questioning why the paper would “resort to manufacturing news, concocting non-existent events and incorporate them in their news stories.”

“We challenge the editorial team and management of Intibaha to prove beyond doubt that such incident occurred in Juba,” stated the SPLA spokesperson, also pointing out that Al-Intibaha does not have a single reporter or correspondent in Juba or Southern Sudan.

Ballal’s relatives to file case against Yassir Arman

Al-Intibaha reports the family of Ballal Hamid who was killed in 1985 in university campus violence, are determined to file a case against SPLM official Yassir Arman, charging him of involvement in the murder of her son who died of stabs in his chest. The family announced they would insist on retribution.

Minnawi-led SLA prevented from registering as political party

Sudan Radio Service 6/5/09 - The Sudan Liberation Army of Minni Minnawi has been prevented from registering as a political party in Sudan. The deputy leader of the SLM, Dr. al-Raiyah Mahmoud, spoke to Sudan Radio Service on Tuesday from Khartoum:

“We have applied to be registered as a political party, but the Political Parties Affairs Council said that the SLM still has military groups and only when these forces are integrated into the national army (SAF), can we be registered as a political party,” Mahmoud said, adding there were still differences between SLM and GoNU on the integration process.