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Highlights

Local Arabic and English language press

The Presidency to announce tomorrow the elections commission

Al-Sahafa reported that reliable sources said NCP leader Al-Diriri Mohamed Ahmed paid shuttle visits to Abyei and Muglad to collect information to support NCP position and he has handed over 57 documents to the NCP advisors on Abyei arbitration with regard to the 1905 border of the area.

On the other hand, the Presidency will meet tomorrow to announce the Elections Commission and the Political Parties Council.

The People of Sudan's initiative to be announced on Thursday

Akhbar Al Yom leaned from informed source that Thursday is fixed as the day on which the People of Sudan's initiative on Darfur will kick off. A ceremony will be organized for the purpose and the President of the Republic, political leaders, representatives of the civil society and some diplomatic missions will attend.

According to the source, the function is likely to take place in Darfur where the initiative's mechanisms will also be announced to draw up a roadmap to address Darfur issue.

Government is carrying out Africa's biggest demobilization process

Ray Al-Shaab reported that the Director of the Department of Peace and Community Security at the North Sudan DDR Commission (NSDDRC) Abdul Hafiz Mohamed revealed that Sudan was carrying out Africa's biggest process to demobilize 350,000 fighters from SAF and PDF. He said Africa's largest number of demobilized fighters was 135000 in Ethiopia.

He said his department was keen to implement CPA, DPA and Cairo agreement and also to implement health, water and education projects to prevent future conflicts.

He said the Commission supported a number of agricultural projects for the demobilized in Gedaref and southern Kordofan where the demobilized were able to cultivate 540 feddans.

Tanzanian president to arrive tomorrow to discuss Darfur crisis

Sudan TV reported that the Tanzanian president and chairman of the African Union, Jakaya Kikwete, will arrive in the country today on a two-day visit during which he will hold talks with President Bashir and other government officials on situation in Darfur and developments in the political arena.

The visit of the AU chairman to the country is part of efforts being made regionally and internationally to promote peaceful solution to the Darfur crisis.

Kuwaiti finance minister arrives to deliver Emir's letter to Bashir

Sudan News Agency stated that a high level delegation led by the Kuwaiti finance minister, Mustafa Al-Shimali, arrived in the country this afternoon on a two-day official visit during which he will deliver a letter from [Kuwait Emir] Al-Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah to the

president of the republic, Umar al-Bashir.

Finance Minister Awad al-Jaz welcomed his counterpart's visit and the accompanying delegation, expressing his hope that the visit would open the doors for a strategic economic partnership that would realize the aspirations of the two countries in joint ventures. He pointed out that Kuwait had always been first in investing in Sudan. Al-Jaz commended the Sudanese-Kuwaiti relations, saying they were advanced and distinguished and that the visit would strengthen the joint cooperation between the two countries and enhances cooperation in all fields.

For his part, The Kuwaiti finance minister, Mustafa al-Shimali, said in a statement that the aim of the visit was to convey a letter from His Highness [Kuwaiti Emir] to the President Bashir. The visit will also look into the relations between the two countries, especially in economic areas, in addition to exploring new areas for cooperation. He added that the visit would concentrate on expanding investment in Sudan, renewing and promoting existing investment projects.

SAF denies rebels allegations of operations in Darfur

Al-Intibaha carried a report stating that SAF spokesperson Brig. Mohamed Al-Aqbash denied rebels claims of ground and air attacks launched by the Sudanese army against their positions in North Darfur.

He said what was happening was that SAF was chasing marauders and armed robber to protect commercial vehicles and UN humanitarian convoys. SLA field commander Sherif Harir said SAF was attacking North Darfur to control main transportation routes linking Sudan and Chad to push them away from oil areas. However, observers are of the view that Khartoum wants to control larger areas before start of fresh UN-AU sponsored negotiations.

Signing of peace agreement between Uganda and LRA postponed

Ray Al-Shaab reported that the signing of peace agreement between Uganda and LRA, supposed to take place yesterday, was postponed indefinitely. GoSS Vice President and mediator of talks between the two sides cited heavy rains at border areas between Southern Sudan and Uganda as the reason for the postponement.

The Citizen newspaper to be distributed in Southern Sudan

Khartoum Monitor carried a report stating that the Citizen Newspaper will be printed in Southern Sudan neighbouring countries and will be distributed all over Southern Sudan up to 1965 North-South border until the National Press and Public Council endorses their managing editor.

Websites/International News Coverage

Kenya dismisses reports about troop deployment on Sudan border

(Sudan Tribune) — Kenyan Consulate has dismissed reports about possible deployment of more troops on the joint border with the Sudan following growing attack by cattle rustlers.

Radio Miraya quoted yesterday the General Consul as saying that Kenyan government was considering to deploy troops on Sudan's border. But the mission asserted that the Consul didn't make such statement to the radio.

But the Kenyan Consulate, in a statement sent to Sudan Tribune by email from Juba, contested the accuracy of that statement saying "Kenya is not planning to deploy troops at the border

because there are normal police stationed in the area."

"The Kenya Government and the Government of South Sudan are enjoying very cordial relations and will address this perennial problem of cross-border cattle rustling in a consultative manner," worded the statement carefully.

Armed cattle rustlers suspected to be Topossa from Southern Sudan attacked twice last month Lorau and Mogila Locations in northern Kenya. During the first raid the cattle rustlers killed 3 Kenyans while 8 Topossa raiders killed. In the second attack they killed two boys and abducted one, they also stole around one thousand cattle.

Nairobi protested officially to the government of southern Sudan over the attacks and requested safe return of the abducted Kenyan and the stolen cattle.

Darfur peace partner to meet with JEM leader

(Sudan Tribune) – The leader of the only Darfur rebel group to sign a peace agreement with Khartoum will meet with the Justice and Equality (JEM) chief Khalil Ibrahim.

Sudan's senior presidential assistant Minni Arcua Minnawi told Miraya FM radio that Ibrahim has expressed readiness to hold peace talks with Khartoum.

If the meeting takes place it would be the first time JEM leader meets with a Sudanese official since the failed rebel attack last May on the capital.

Khartoum has labeled JEM as a terrorist organization and urged the world to officially adopt this designation.

Minnawi also said in the interview with Miraya that he would run for president in the 2009 elections only if peace is "realized in Darfur".

He also criticized the Sudanese political parties and accused them of ignoring the Darfur crisis.

Minnawi left the Sudanese capital 4 months ago and informally suspended his participation in the government leading to speculations that he defected from the government of national unity.

It was reported at the time that he arrived in the Chadian capital and met with President Idriss Debi. However the former rebel leader firmly denied these reports.

Minnawi stressed to Sudan Tribune in an interview last month that he has no intention of returning "until there is good will from NCP [National Congress Party]".

Two years ago the Sudanese government has signed the DPA with the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) faction led by Minnawi who was appointed as the senior assistant of the Sudanese president in August of the same year.

However, Minnawi's faction persistently accused the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) of ignoring the implementation of the DPA.

Two rebel groups clash with Sudanese army in North Darfur

(Sudan Tribune) — Two rebel groups said today they clashed with the Sudanese army and its militias in northern Darfur. They also said inflicting heavy casualties.

The Sudan Liberation Movement –Unity Command and the United Resistance Front (URF) destroyed 23 military vehicles and killed 93 horses and camels carrying ammunition belonging to the janjaweed militias following an attack on the rebel positions between Disa and Bir Maza, in northern Darfur today.

Mahgoub Hussein, the SLM-Unity spokesperson further added in a statement to Sudan Tribune that the joint rebel force captured 12 army officers and 18 soldiers.

Hussein condemned the attack adding that today's attack constitutes a clear violation to the ceasefire agreements. "Thus, we suspend all the ceasefire agreements" the rebel official added.

Last week, the SLM-Unity welcomed a call by the head of the joint peacekeeping mission to "cease hostilities" during the holy Ramadan and committed its self to observe it.

The SLM-Unity and URF, a breakaway faction from the Justice and Equality Movement of Khalil Ibrahim, signed an agreement last June committing themselves to form a single movement.

Commanders from the SLM led by Abdel-Wahid Al-Nur also said they had been attacked by the Sudanese army today in Disa, northern and eastern Jebel Marra in West Darfur state. Nur also spoke about an attack in the remote area of Jebel Midoub in North Darfur.

Sudan launches large scale attacks

(Sudan Tribune) – Sudanese troops launched a large scale attack against rebel positions in northern and western Darfur, a rebel leader stated on Saturday.

Abdel Wahid Mohamed Al-Nur, accused the Sudanese army and its Janjaweed militias of attacking his troops in North Darfur state at Jebel Midoub, Disa, Tibayra, He further said that a second force targeted the localities of Fanga and Al-Maradib Alasharra in northern Jebel Marra while a third force attacked Taradonat, Khazan Tonjang and Souk Martal areas in eastern Jebel Marra.

He also said that the assailant troops backed by helicopter gunship and two Antonov planes killed hundreds and forced thousands of civilians to flee their villages.

Al-Nur said SLA fighters succeeded to repel government troops in all the positions of his group, but he regretted the important death toll among civilians.

He also said exact casualty figures were not yet available, however Ibrahim Al-Hillu, speaking from Disa said more than 60 people were killed from the Sudanese army, rebels and civilians.

But Al-Nur said his troops captured eight Sudanese soldiers in Jebel Marra.

The government, through these large scale attacks, means to implement a new reality in the ground by displacing more people from their homeland, the rebel chief said.

The head of the AU-UN peacekeeping mission had proposed a truce during the Holy Ramadan. Rodolphe Adada, appealed on August 31, on the Sudanese government and rebel movements to "cease hostilities, put an end to the suffering of the Darfurians, and pave the way for a lasting peace in this beleaguered region."

Also the newly appointed Darfur peace mediator, Djibril Bassolé called upon the parties involved in the five year conflict to halt all sort of hostilities in order to create conducive environment for political dialogue.

Qatar proposed as host to international summit on Darfur

(Sudan Tribune) —France, Syria, Qatar and Turkey have backed calls for an international conference in Qatar on Sudan's troubled region of Darfur. The Egyptian foreign minister renewed yesterday a call to convene an international conference under UN and AU sponsorship to address the Darfur crisis. Ahmed Abul Gheit made this appeal after meeting in Cairo with Djibril Bassole, the new Darfur peace mediator.

French President, and head of the EU, Nicolas Sarkozy, discussed the Darfur situation in Damascus yesterday during meetings with Syrian President Bashar Assad, Qatari Emir Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. At a subsequent joint press conference, the four head of states and prime minister reaffirmed their hope to see a quick solution of the Darfur crisis and stressed the importance of the EU role in helping bring an end to the conflict. The Syrian President proposed a Darfur summit in the Qatari capital Doha.

Government in political crisis due to disagreements over ICC – Alor

(Miraya FM) The Minister of Foreign Affairs Deng Alor said that the Government was in a political crisis due to disagreements over cooperation with the ICC. During his meeting with his Dutch counterpart Maxim Verhagen in Hague, The Minister said he was hoping that the NCP and SPLM would reach an agreement over the issue. He said such disagreements would not maintain Sudan's interest at this particular time adding that NCP continues to refuse any cooperation with the ICC while SPLM sees that cooperation was necessary.

Iran violating arms embargo on Sudan: report

(Sudan Tribune) – The Iranian government has supplied Sudan with weapons used in the war ravaged region of Darfur, says an Africa Confidential report released today. According to the report, an unmanned spy plane Darfur rebels claimed to have shot down last week was Iranian made.

“On 28 August, the Sudan Liberation Movement-Unity Command shot down an Iranian-made Ababil-111 unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)” ‘Africa Confidential’ said in a press release.

A Sudanese army spokesman at the time said they lost an unmanned military plane at east of Jebel Marra and was unable to say whether the aircraft was shot down.

The newsletter also quoted military sources as saying that the UAV “probably controlled by Iranian technicians”.

The report contradicts earlier reports that the spy plane could have been Chinese since there was Chinese writing on the aircraft body.

Last year Sudan's Defence Minister, Lt-Gen Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein, revealed that his country has successfully developed unmanned surveillance planes.

At the time, he said Sudan had become self sufficient in conventional weapons and was in the process of developing missiles.

Sudan and Iran signed a military cooperation agreement in March to bolster bilateral military relations. The two countries signed an agreement on cooperation in the fields of technology, education, science, industry and exchange of expert delegations as well as establishment of military cooperation commission.

South Sudan steps up the fight against HIV/AIDS

(Sudan Tribune) — The Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) has passed a resolution to streamline HIV/AIDS programs into all the Line Ministries and independent Commissions as well as at the state levels.

The institutions were directed per the resolution passed by the Council of Ministers on Friday, chaired by the GoSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit, to establish their respective HIV/AIDS departments or units within their ministries and commissions to promote awareness campaigns about the disease among the civil servants, etc.

The memo, which was presented to the Cabinet by the Vice President, Riek Machar Teny and assisted by the Chairperson of the Southern Sudan HIV/AIDS Commission, Bellario Ahoy Ngong, also called for partnership with civil society organizations as well as private sector in stepping up the fight against the disease.

The resolution also resolved that a curriculum would be developed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to incorporate HIV/AIDS awareness programs into education system from primary to university levels in the South.

Ngong, who enlightened the Cabinet about the danger posed by HIV/AIDS as millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees return from northern Sudan and the neighboring countries, said majority of the population in Southern Sudan are ignorant about the looming disease.

He appealed to the government to collectively fight against the disease and not to leave it to his HIV/AIDS Commission and the Ministry of Health to fight it alone.

The HIV/AIDS Commission Chairperson advised that every one needs to know his or her HIV/AIDS status through voluntary testing centers available, and he commended the exemplary lead taken by the GoSS Vice President when he publicly got tested in the presence of thousands of people at Juba Football Stadium during the launch of the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign last year.

Ngong urged the GoSS Ministers to follow suit in their own private times to demonstrate to the public the importance of testing one's status.

The resolution also directed for establishment of testing centers at entry points from neighboring countries.

Ngong said the Commission has already developed awareness, preventive and curative programs for the disease which need to be supported and explained to the populace throughout the region.