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Highlights

Elections Watch:

NEC instructs poll stations to transmit results manually

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 24/04/10 - The NEC has ordered its stations across the country to stop entering the results into the designated software built for that purpose and start transmitting it manually in order to save time.

"The concern is that any way of tracking what's going on and any control mechanisms are out of the window. They could write down anything on a bit of paper," said one elections observer.

The NEC technical director al-Hadi Mohamed Ahmed denied it would make any difference to the result, "We are working by Internet, fax... anything — this is Sudan after all," he said. "Some states don't even have electricity."

Mohamed Jaweesh, NEC head of IT, said staff shortages were among the problems delaying data input.

"They were supposed to concurrently send the manually tabulated results and input into the system," he told Reuters. "But now they will not wait for the system."

One observer said the software had a number of "red flags" built in that would show up obviously wrong or suspicious figures, for example a voter turnout of more than 100 percent.

"My understanding is that in various places, almost every result was going into quarantine because there was a query on it for some reason or another," the observer said.

A second international source close to the voting system said the computer system had already shown up discrepancies.

"Abandoning the automated system makes the entire results process extremely vulnerable to manipulation," the source said, adding the NEC had been advised against the move.

One opposition figure reached by Sudan Tribune said the NEC "is trying to clean up the mess they created".

The revelation will likely elevate opposition suspicions that the electoral process has been vulnerable to fraud and vote rigging allowing the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) to gain an overwhelming majority in the presidential, gubernatorial and legislative elections.

Meanwhile, the NEC issued conflicting statements on when the election results will be released. It is widely expected that they will be announced tomorrow though some officials said they might be delayed until next week.

According to **Al-Sudani**, Al-Hadi also stated that the NEC would normally announce results from the states as soon as they arrive and are verified. Of the results of the presidential polls at the federal and GoSS levels, Al-Hadi said that they expect the results to be ready for announcement within the next 24 hours. He pointed out however that the preliminary poll results announced so far will only be considered final once the challenges to those results, if any, are looked into.

NCP-list in Khartoum wins all parties and women parliamentary seats

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 23/04/10 - The National Congress Party (NCP) has won all the 24 seats allocated for political parties and women in the national parliament in Khartoum State sweeping 82.7% of the votes up for grabs, the NEC announced on Friday evening.

The list of winners includes the following: - Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Anthony Yak, Ahmed Abdel Rahman Mohamed, Al-Tayyib Mohamed Al-Ghazali Ahmed, Joseph Alexander Makine, Mohamed Ahmed Fadl, Ali Ahmed Suleiman and Ali Mohamed Hassan.

The NCP party also got the 15 parliamentary seats dedicated for women in the National Assembly sweeping some 82.8% of the votes.

NCP declares support for SPLM in south Sudan polls

The National Congress Party (NCP) has announced its support for the SPLM following preliminary results that showed the SPLM was tipped for a major polls victory in most constituencies in southern Sudan, reports **Al-Ayyam**.

Suleiman Mafor, a senior NCP member in southern Sudan and its candidate for a constituency in South Tonj, reports that the elections in southern Sudan were highly contested and were carried out in a brotherly atmosphere with some problems in Bahr-el-Ghazal. He said that the SPLM candidates who were victorious in the polls have his part's blessings. He added that his party would embark on the plans to make unity attractive.

In a related development, senior NCP member and Presidential Advisor Mustafa Osman Ismail has downplayed recent statements by SPLM Secretary-General Pagan Amum saying that the SPLM will not participate in the state governments in northern Sudan, reports **Akhir Lahza**. Osman pointed out that Amum wanted to vent out the SPLM's disappointment at the landmark victories NCP candidates scored against their SPLM opponents who received no votes in northern Sudan.

Osman further explained that the SPLM would in fact not participate in the state governments in northern Sudan because the people did not vote for the SPLM in northern Sudan. SPLM participation in the northern state governments could only take place through a political deal, he said.

SPLM pledges to form inclusive government in the south

Sudantribune.com Juba, 23/04/10 - The leadership of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) has today announced its intention to form an inclusive government in the region if declared winner of the recently concluded polls.

Addressing a press conference in Juba, SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum, announced that his party will work with all elected leaders of the people regardless of their political background and affiliations. "The SPLM looks forward to forming an inclusive and representative government with all political leaders," Amum said.

The new government may include other political parties in Southern Sudan; he said explaining that his party will embrace all leaders including independents, even those who will have defeated its own candidates for the sake of unity, peace and prosperity in the Sudan.

Amum, who seemed to know the results, said the SPLM candidate and chairman, Salva Kiir Mayardit is assured of a landslide victory in the elections but was quick to advise the electorate to wait for the official results before commencing celebrations.

The top member of the ruling party told reporters that president Kiir is currently consulting widely in an effort to form an inclusive and representative government to take the Sudan to the next level of socio-economic and political development.

He said priorities of the new government will include provisions of leadership for the referendum for self-determination in Southern Sudan; effective popular consultation in Blue Nile and South Kordofan; ending of the conflict, lifting of the state of emergency and improvement of the lives of the people in Darfur; and the realization of genuine democratic transformation in Northern

Sudan.

Accompanied to the press by his deputy for the Southern Sector, Dr Anne Itto, he reiterated expression of confidence that SPLM has won the elections with a comfortable margin.

While cautioning NEC to handle the results with care to uphold the verdict of the people, he appealed to all parties and candidates to accept the results of the elections and reiterated that the SPLM will respect the will of the people.

Advising parties or candidates who feel aggrieved in one way or another to seek legal redress as per the law, he disclosed that the SPLM is already seeking legal counsel in some areas where it encountered irregularities.

Political Parties Council says poll irregularities in southern Sudan "plentiful"

Radio Miraya Juba, 24/04/10 - The Political Parties Council (PPC) in Southern Sudan says irregularities in the just concluded polls were "plentiful" in southern Sudan. Speaking to the press in Juba on 24/04/10, Acting Chairman of the PPC, Ufondi Ndima, stated that the council has submitted to the National Elections Commission (NEC) a detailed list of these electoral discrepancies, stating that polling stations were poorly managed and that voter intimidation was widespread.

Ndima further added that electoral materials were mismanaged, the names of registered voters distorted during the polls and that some polling stations delayed polling by operating later than officially scheduled. The Acting Chairman alleged that voters were prone to duress during the polling process as many were coerced by security operatives to vote for candidates that were not of their choice.

The PPC was formed with assistance from the African Union to observe that the electoral code of conduct is adhered to and implemented. All southern political parties signed the code of conduct and collectively agreed to ensure free and fair voting in the country.

South Sudan beefs up security ahead of poll results

Sudantribune.com Wunrok, 24/4/10 – With the announcement of poll results drawing closer, authorities from the Government of Southern Sudan have stepped up deployment of security forces in major towns in the region.

Throughout the poll and counting periods, strong rivalry prevailed amongst contesting political candidates where SPLM members-turned-independent-candidates caused ripples in the political pond. The major contestants running against SPLM gubernatorial candidates were Alfred Ladu Gore in Central Equatoria State, George Athor in Jonglei, Dau Aturjong Nyuol in Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal, Alessios Ojetuk in Eastern Equatoria, Joseph Bakosoro in Western Equatoria State and Madam Angelina Teny in Unity State.

They have all led preliminary results against their rivals hence prompting security concerns among their supporters as accusations of arrest continues to float.

"We are deploying more from our well trained riot police units to states identified as with potentials for violence," Achuil Tito Madut, the Inspector-General of the Southern Sudan Police Service (SSPS) told **Sudan Tribune** by phone from Juba.

Three people killed following Taban Deng elections win in Unity State

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 23/04/10 - Three people were killed and two others injured when protestors took to the streets of Unity State capital, Bentiu, following in the state capital Bentiu by supporters of Angelina Teny who has formally lost the race for governor in the oil-rich state.

Earlier today, the local FM station in Bentiu announced that the state electoral committee declared

the incumbent governor Taban Deng Gai as the winner in the tight and highly contested race. The National Elections Commission (NEC) expressed fury over what they saw as a premature move by local electoral officials.

NEC chairman Abel Alier said that this was not coordinated with the head office in Khartoum. He phoned Teny, wife of GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar, to say that no final results have been released noting that the NEC is in the process of looking into the alleged inflating of figures in favour of Taban Deng by the electoral office in Bentiu before it could make the decision on who won the race.

But later in the day the NEC officially announced that Deng garnered 137,362 of the votes against 63,561 for Teny.

The chairman of the local electoral committee in Bentiu, Michael Mayul, on Friday rushed to announce Deng as the winner in a move seen by some as a way to try to avoid the verification of figures by the NEC team in Khartoum.

Preliminary results had shown that Angelina Teny got more than 68,000 votes while Taban Deng got over 44,000. The recently alleged inflated figures for Taban have more than tripled his previous votes counted by additional 56,000.

Teny had earlier warned that the electoral committee in Bentiu was under pressure by Deng to inflate his vote figures and announce him the winner.

When asked about Taban Deng's victory, Teny's campaign Spokesperson Yohannes Pouk said, "It was not a victory. Angelina Teny was leading by a difference of 24,000 votes and she was supposed to be announced the winner. So we were shocked when Taban Deng announced himself the winner on radio."

"When he [Deng] saw people coming out in big numbers, he gave the order to shoot. Two people died immediately and four are injured and in hospital," Pouk told Agence France Presse (AFP) by phone from Khartoum, adding that more people were wounded but that some ran away.

Al-Ahdath meanwhile reports that Angelina Teny maintains that the results were rigged. She expressed regret over the killing of two innocent civilians but urged her supporters to remain calm. "There is no need to risk the lives of innocent people by asking them to march in protest in the face of gunfire. This part of our war has ended," she said.

Yohannes Musa, the Spokesperson for Teny's campaign team, told a press conference in Khartoum that he believed that the incumbent's victory could be attributed to the "in-fighting within the SPLM" and deals between the SPLM and the NCP.

Two election officials kidnapped amid tight security in Yambio

Sudantribune.com Yambio, 24/04/10 - Western Equatoria's electoral standoff worsened yesterday amid allegations that the state government is alleged to have ordered the withholding of election results and that plain-cloths security personnel had kidnapped some 2 electoral officials, **Sudan Tribune** confirmed Saturday night.

Alfred Gimigu and Benty Singba, both IT professionals tasked by the State High Elections Committee (SHEC) to type elections results, were reportedly brutally beaten by their kidnappers. Security organs in Yambio deny reports of the arrest and their whereabouts remain unknown.

This also follows reports that Lawrence Sulubia who heads the State High Elections Committee (SHEC) in Western Equatoria escaped an apparent assassination attempt on Thursday when a police car was sent to pick him in the middle of the night.

The rest of the state electoral committee's officials are either sleeping outside their houses or at the UNMIS compound for fear arrest.

DUP to conduct protest march at elections committee in Kassala

The DUP supporters met in Kassala yesterday to finalise preparations for a march of protest to the local high elections committee offices this morning in protest over alleged poll-related irregularities, reports *Al-Sudani*. Mohamed Sid Ahmed, a lawyer and prominent party member, said that they are in possession of evidence to prove there were irregularities in the electoral process. The party said it categorically rejects the poll results for Kassala.

"The NCP wants the DUP to use the same kind of rhetoric that the SPLM used to secure a win in one of the northern states," he maintained.

The local police have meanwhile refused to grant the DUP permission carry on the march today.

Other Highlights

SPLA clash with South Darfur tribal elements in border area

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 24/04/10 – The SPLA and armed cattle herders from Rizeigat tribe clashed today in the border area between Western Bahr-el-Ghazal and South Darfur, amid reports of human casualties.

"These confrontations which took place today came as a result of provocations by the SPLA, which infuriated members of the Rizeigat tribe in the area and pushed them to confront elements of the SPLA", said Mohamed lyssa Elaio, Chairman of the Rizeigat Shura (Consultation) Council, in a statement to *Xinhua*, Saturday.

The tribal leader further said the clashes occurred within the northern part of the border at Bulbula area, some 200 km south of Matariq town in the South Darfur State. He further stressed they had informed the concerned authorities about the presence of the SPLA in this area but Khartoum didn't react.

The SPLA Spokesperson has however accused the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) of attacking SPLA forces in Raja in Western Bahr-el-Ghazal State.

"A company of 120 SPLA soldiers was attacked on Friday night by heavily armed men wearing fatigues," said Major General Kuol Deim Kuol.

The SAF has denied the accusation.

"We were not involved in these clashes. If one of the partners in the comprehensive peace agreement has such allegations to make about the other, the Joint Defence Board should speak about it," said SAF Spokesperson Al-Suwarmi Khaled.

The SPLA official said there were casualties but he did not elaborate. However the tribal leader stated that some 17 people were killed and 11 others were wounded.

Disarmament in Lakes State raises criticism and concerns

Sudantribune.com Rumbek, 24/04/10 – An SPLA civilian disarmament drive is running soar in Lakes State with reports that of criticism by local officials due to the brutal handling of the issue by SPLA operatives and a perceived lack of coordination between the authorities concerned.

David Marial Gumke, the commissioner of Rumbek East County said that he had not been notified about the disarmament process taking place in his county.

"The army is not ready to listen to us. I don't know how we can work in this atmosphere," David

said, blaming the army for not informing the county authorities about the disarmament.

He reaffirmed that there was agreement earlier that local chiefs and county commissioners be informed.

"We are excluded in this disarmament, now the army is receiving orders from where I don't know; I am wondering whether they are receiving orders from their commanders whom we meet in Rumbek or from SPLA general headquarters or from elsewhere, I don't know really," David said.

He further stressed that the army should cooperate with the local officials, and act in a responsible way if they want a fruitful campaign.

Rapid intervention force set up headquarters in West Darfur

West Darfur Police commissioned yesterday the headquarters of a Rapid Intervention Force in Al-Geneina, reports *Al-Rai Al-Aam*. The new buildings will house 3 companies of the force that will be tasked to move rapidly to address any emergency that may threaten security in the state.

OIC and UNAMID agree to boost cooperation on Darfur

Sudantribune.com Jeddah, 24/04/10 – UNAMID and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) agreed Saturday to enhance their joint cooperation to achieve peace and reconstruction in Darfur.

The head of the joint mission Ibrahim Gambari met on Saturday with OIC Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu at the OIC Headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The meeting took place one month after a donor conference for Darfur development and reconstruction held on March 21 in Cairo sponsored by the Islamic countries body.

During the meeting "Gambari stressed on closer cooperation between the OIC and UNAMID, in particular in the field of early recovery and development in Darfur, said a press statement released following the meeting on Saturday.

"He focused on UNAMID's presence in the field and mentioned about his participation in the OIC Donor Conference for Darfur in Cairo as a testimony to UNAMID's willingness in assisting the OIC in implementing its projects in Darfur," it further stressed.

The two sides agreed to push forward their efforts to boost their cooperation and collaboration under the cooperation framework of the OIC-UN and OIC-AU relations.

Speaking to Sudan Tribune from Jeddah, the UNAMID official spokesperson, Nouredine Mezni who travelled with Gambari, said the Joint Special Representative will curtail his visit to Saudi Arabia for a meeting with President Omer Al-Bashir over the four kidnapped peacekeepers.

Gambari who was initially planning to travel Sunday to Riyadh for meetings with Saudi officials, has rescheduled this visit at a later date, he said

"He will return this morning to Khartoum where he will be received by President Omer Bashir. The issue of the four UNAMID abducted peacekeepers will be on the top of the agenda of the meeting," he said.

The abductors said last week they would release the four South African police advisers kidnapped since April 11, after the results of the elections.

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