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Media Monitoring Report

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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

Khartoum suffers power blackout

Local dailies report that a total power blackout hit Khartoum city yesterday. According to **Al-Rai Al-Aam**, the National Electricity Corporation (NEC) attributed the power cut to the failure of the Merowe Dam's power generation units which accounts for 65% of the power supply from the national grid.

The National Assembly has reportedly summoned Energy and Mining Minister Al-Zubair Ahmed Hassan to respond to an urgent question on the status of power generation and on the Global Witness' claims over alleged discrepancies in oil revenue figures.

VP Taha may be replaced: report

Sudantribune.com Khartoum, 04/10/09 - President Omer Al-Bashir is mulling replacing his Second Vice-President Ali Osman Taha, according to a newspaper report.

The London based **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat**, quoted unidentified NCP officials saying that President Al-Bashir may appoint a VP from Darfur in addition to Taha and First VP Salva Kiir from southern Sudan. The officials said that Al-Bashir has three Darfurian members of Dr. Turabi's Popular Congress Party (PCP) in the short-list for the job.

The officials also spoke of a memorandum signed by a substantial number of NCP figures demanding an end to what they described as "hegemony by the security group on the party"

Furthermore they said that there are two factions within the NCP, one that wants to consolidate Al-Bashir's grip on the party while the other wants to separate the Presidency of the Republic from the NCP leadership.

PCP assistant Secretary General Ali Al-Hag told the newspaper that there is an ongoing conflict between Al-Bashir and Taha which may trigger the reshuffle.

If the report is true, this would be the second major change in the government since the powerful chief of the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) Salah Gosh was removed last August. There has been widespread rumors in Khartoum that Bashir is suspecting that Gosh and Taha are seeking to oust him as president with the aid of Western countries.

Mundari – Bor clashes kill scores, enter third day

Sudantribune.com Magala (CES), 04/10/09 - Initial casualties of the Mundari. Dinka-Bor clashes left scores of people dead on both sides and continue for the third consecutive day of fighting, eyewitnesses told the **Sudantribune** on 04/10/09. A 200-strong Southern Sudanese force composed of police, prisons, wildlife soldiers and SPLA were deployed early Sunday to quell the tension but with little success. Reinforcements from Bor are said to be headed to the clash site to assist.

At least 30 people from both sides are now said to have died since Friday. Of the dead, Bor youths claim 8 people and 18 could probably be Mundari men, a source preferring anonymity said. A village known as Diar between Wuor-bar and Gemeza is substantially devastated, the source added.

UN source says southern Sudan needs security policy review

The UN says the security situation in a number of southern Sudanese states requires an urgent review of the security postures before things run out of GoSS control, reports **Al-Rai Al-Aam**. An informed source within the UN said that the recent violence in Bentiu was caused by the

multiplicity of political leaders in southern Sudan, their tribal differences and the spread of firearms. The source reportedly called on the GoSS to expedite the disarmament of civilians and the tribes. He said that the large number of firearms spread in southern Sudan is a cause for concern and requires a review of the security policies.

UN welcomes Sudan acceptance to establish office in Al-Mujlad, S. Kordofan

The UN has welcomed Sudan's approval to the establishment of a United Nations Resident Coordinator Support Office in Muglad (Southern Kordofan State), report *local dailies*. In a press statement issued yesterday, UNMIS pointed out that the United Nations Resident Coordinator Support Office in Muglad will play an important role in supporting the local communities to meet the humanitarian and development needs as well as the government of Southern Kordofan in planning early recovery activities in the region. It also reiterated its readiness to support the Sudanese authorities and the local communities in their efforts to achieve peace and development in the Sudan.

Parliamentary session to deliberate on key bills

The Speaker of the National Assembly has revealed that the National Security Bill will be among the bills to be tabled for deliberation when parliamentary returns from recess today. Speaker Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Tahir said however that the bill has first to be endorsed by the Council of Ministers, reports *Al-Sahafa*. The Speaker also expressed hopes that parliament would be able to deliberate over the referendum bill.

Meanwhile, the SPLM parliamentary caucus has threatened to boycott sessions of the National Assembly should parliament go ahead to strip SPLM Deputy Secretary-General Yassir Arman of immunity. The SPLM said it regards the requests by some parties to strip the head of the SPLM parliamentary caucus of immunity as a show of disrespect to the caucus. According to *Al-Rai Al-Aam*, SPLM Deputy SG Yassir Arman told a press conference in Khartoum yesterday that members of the SPLM parliamentary bloc would attend the opening session of parliament because it will be addressed by President Al-Bashir but will later consider a walkout. He pointed out that the SPLM was not consulted over the agenda of this session. He also said that the SPLM has already registered its rejections to the draft National Security Bill that would be tabled before parliament for deliberation.

SPLM-DC leader Lam Akol accuses SPLM leaders of corruption

Lam Akol, the head of the SPLM-DC, said that the SPLM had the opportunity to implement its ideas in southern Sudan following the signing of the CPA but has failed and has "turned southern Sudan into hell," *Al-Intibaha* reports. Speaking to *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, he accused southern Sudanese leaders of corruption and pointed out that graft spreads from "the summit to the base" of the southern Sudanese government. He wondered where SPLM officials find the money to buy those houses in the US, Australia, South Africa and Uganda. "Their families remain in those foreign countries while they call on southern Sudanese to return home," he said.

He further pointed out that some \$8 billion dollars have entered the coffers of the GoSS but there is "nothing in the form of health, education or other services" to show for that.

Sudan's peace partners considering solutions to census issue - Machar

Sudantribune.com Juba, 04/10/09 – In his briefing to the Southern Sudanese cabinet last Friday on the status of talks with the NCP at the level of the Joint Political Committee, GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar said that the two sides have been working to reach a compromise that would overcome the dispute over the census results.

Machar said the two parties have been discussing the possibility of amending the Interim National Constitution in order to provide for certain provisions that would address the concerns

of southern Sudan. These provisions, still not finalized, may include amends to the power-sharing representation of southern Sudan, among others.

The two sides may resume talks in the next two days to address the outstanding issues.

Sudan, Uganda agree to demarcate common borders

The governments of Sudan and Uganda have agreed to demarcate their common borders, reports ***Al-Sahafa***. Uganda's State Minister for Foreign Affairs was in Khartoum yesterday to discuss timelines and means of implementation of the border demarcation process.

Following a meeting with the envoy, Foreign Minister Deng Alor said that Sudan has expressed its readiness to cooperate with Kampala on the issue.

Foreign Minister announces breakthrough in Sudan-Chad relations

Chadian Foreign Minister Musa Fekki intends to fly over to Khartoum soon, ***Al-Sahafa*** has learnt. The impending visit is said to be in a bid to help defuse tensions and improve relations between Sudan and Sudan.

Foreign Minister Deng Alor said that the two sides are determined to make use of the improvements the diplomatic front is bound to witness in relations between the two sides.

Envoy Gration in Libya to push for reunification of Darfur armed movements

US Special Envoy Scott Gration concluded a visit to Libya last Saturday in a new push to reunite the Darfur armed factions, ***Al-Ahdath*** reports. Informed sources report that Envoy Gration is not satisfied with the situation.

SPLM Spokesperson and media team involved in car accident

SPLM Spokesperson Yien Matthew was involved in a car accident while returning to Juba on the Juba-Terekeka road, ***Al-Ahdath*** reports. He and members of an accompanying media team were on their way to Juba yesterday when the car hit a stone on the road and overturned. The SPLM Spokesperson was flown to Kampala for medical treatment and preliminary reports say he is in good health. A reporter for Cairo-based ***Al-Dastoor***, an ***Al-Arabiya*** correspondent and cameraman, the BBC Arabic correspondent and cameraman and the information officer for a construction company who were accompanying him on the trip all suffered injuries – none of them fatal.

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