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Media Monitoring Report

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Highlights

Yambio riots politically motivated – WES Governor

The Citizen reports Western Equatoria Governor, also seeking re-election in April, said that last week's riots were politically-motivated. Speaking to *the Citizen* Jema Nono Kumba said her government has formed an investigation committee to probe into the incident.

A handful of students caused chaos just a day after the state hosted the CPA's 5th Anniversary and destroyed all that the government put in place prior to the celebrations.

She said the students were misinformed by the trainers that they would receive SDG 200 at the end of the occasion. Only 22 students were injured and there were no fatalities. The governor said the students were used by political elements to tarnish the image of leaders in WE state.

Kiir off to Kenya

Al-Khartoum reports FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit left for Kenya for consultations with Kenyan President on bilateral relations and the situation in the Sudan with a focus on the South under the run-up to general elections.

SSDF members arrested

Southern Sudan Democratic Forum leader Martin Elia yesterday said he regrets the arrest of his party members, *the Citizen* reports.

Elias said in a press conference that at least 9 members of SSDF are arrested in connection with current political situation. He said the rate of arrest among his party members was "intensive". Nine members were arrested in northern Tonj, 2 in Raja County of West Bahr El Ghazal as well as other members arrested in Gokrial. He claimed his party members are particularly under threats of intimidation and constant arrests.

GoSS clears an office for Al-Akhbar newspaper in Juba

Al-Akhbar reports that GoSS yesterday formally agreed to its request to open an office in Juba. The newspaper's representative Shoji Abdul Azim promised readers of unprecedented coverage of events in the South.

President Al-Bashir attends airborne troop training

Addressing a ceremony to mark the launch of training of paratroopers, President Al-Bashir who appeared in uniform weeks after stepping down from an army post, said SAF is the safety valve and guarantor of security, stability, peace and development in the country, *Al-Akhbar* reports. He said the forthcoming period would witness further development of the army.

UN peacekeeping mandate in Sudan comes under US scrutiny

Sudan Tribune website 26/1/10 – Ambassador Susan Rice, the United States' representative at the UN Headquarters in New York, said that the Security Council today received assurances from a top UN official that the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) will be oriented toward civilian protection in South Sudan.

This morning the UN Undersecretary General for Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy briefed the Security Council on the peacekeeping mission in Sudan, which is charged with monitoring the country's north-south ceasefire. The peacekeepers are also authorized, under

chapter VII of the UN charter, "to take the necessary action, in the areas of deployment of its forces and as it deems within its capabilities... to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence."

"We are very, very concerned that UNMIS take on board and fully implement the portion of its mandate – the critical portion of its mandate – that relates to the protection of civilians," said Ambassador Rice to reporters at the UN building in New York today.

She continued, "We made that point forcefully in the consultations and we were very gratified to hear from Under Secretary-General Le Roy that that is indeed the intention of the United Nations." But the diplomat did not enumerate what new steps the United Nations can and should take in this regard.

Ambassador Rice had received a letter last week from thirteen US senators asking her to "help frame discussions at the United Nations Security Council in the coming weeks and months to ensure the mission (UNMIS) has a forward-looking approach to civilian protection." The lawmakers, including Senators Russ Feingold, Sam Brownback, and John Kerry, on January 21 expressed "grave concern" about tribal and interethnic violence in Southern Sudan.

Senators Susan Collins, Robert Menendez, Bob Corker, Benjamin Cardin, Byron Dorgan, Barbara Boxer, Kirsten Gillibrand, Johnny Isakson, Mark Begich, and Tim Johnson also signed the letter. They urged the ambassador to take some new steps at the Security Council. Referring to rumoured discussion of adjusting UNMIS's protection mandate when it is renewed by the Security Council this April, the senators stated that "Such an adjustment would certainly be welcome, but we are concerned that waiting that long will only allow the security situation in southern Sudan to deteriorate further."

As to the military operations of UNMIS, the senators tentatively endorsed new preventive deployments, more long-range patrols and "other creative field presence." Without specifically mentioning the case of Jonglei state — where UNMIS forces temporarily deployed in remote outposts in May 2009 following a period of shocking violence — the senators referred to the "positive role" of such steps.

Despite the two senatorial pronouncements on such issues, Ambassador Rice today did not disclose any progress made at the Security Council to advance these recommendations.

The ambassador however also stressed that she is concerned about weapons flowing into South Sudan, from all parts including the North. "We would like a full accounting," Rice said, noting the semi-autonomous region's "porous borders" which make such arms flows hard to control and track.

"We heard today from the U.N. that it is not just small arms but some heavier munitions that seem to be flowing in," she said. "We weren't given specifics on that. But we have seen, in the violence that is taking place in the South, a higher degree of sophistication and lethality of the weapons employed, and that's a source of concern."

US concerned about arms flowing to South Sudan

Reuters 26/1/10 - The United States is worried about the flow of arms into semi-autonomous southern Sudan, some of it heavy weapons, ahead of a nationwide April election, the U.S. envoy to the United Nations said on Tuesday.

"We heard today from the U.N. that it is not just small arms but some heavier munitions that seem to be flowing in," U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice told reporters after a U.N. Security Council meeting on Sudan.

"We weren't given specifics on that," she said. "But we have seen, in the violence that is taking place in the South, a higher degree of sophistication and lethality of the weapons employed, and that's a source of concern."

She added that Washington believed some of the weapons were coming from northern Sudan.

"But I imagine that weapons are also coming from elsewhere and we would like a full accounting," Rice said, adding that it was a region with "porous borders" and that weapons were coming from "all directions."

Rice said the April elections, which Bashir hopes to win, needed to be credible and that U.N. peacekeepers in the South and Sudan's western Darfur region would have to do their best to provide security for all the people of Sudan.

Sudan deploys Russian-made aircraft Darfur rebels

WorldTribune.com 26/1/10 — Sudan has been absorbing a range of Russian military aircraft and putting it to use in fighting off rebels in Darfur.

Industry sources said the Sudanese Air Force has been deploying Russian-fixed and rotary-wing platforms for conventional warfare and counter-insurgency operations.

Sudan has received four Mi-35 attack helicopters from Moscow. The sources said the air force has been operating the helicopters in attacks on rebels in the Darfur province since late 2009.

The biggest project included the arrival of the Su-25 Frogfoot fighter-jet from Russia. The sources said Sudan introduced eight Su-25s, deployed at the Wadi Seidna Air Base, for operational service during 2009.

"Many of these aircraft have already been used, particularly in Darfur," an industry source said.

The sources said Sudan planned to receive additional Russian aircraft in 2010. They said this could include the MiG-29 fighter-jet, a contract of which was signed in November 2008.

Sudan has accumulated a fleet of 12 MiG-29s. They include 10 MiG-29SEs as well as two MiG-29UBs, all of them delivered in 2004.

The sources said the new aircraft arrived in Sudan during 2009 amid an effort by the Khartoum regime to deter such neighbors as Chad and Libya.

Government admits flaws in humanitarian law

Humanitarian Affairs State Minister Abdul Bagi Al-Jailani has recognized flaws in the humanitarian law on the ground and painted a grim picture of the humanitarian and security situation in the South, *Al-Intibaha* reports. He said his Ministry is proceeding with the implementation of the humanitarian work "Sudanization" plan by building capacities of national NGOs. On the South, he described the humanitarian and security situation as worse, citing food, security and water challenges. Al-Jailani made the remarks at a function held in Khartoum

to honour an official of the Islamic Relief Agency.

According to **Al-Raed**, Al-Jailani described the humanitarian situation in the south as “catastrophic”. He said 100 out of 3300 NGOs have been rehabilitated as part of capacity building efforts.

SLM/MM commander found dead in Khartoum

Local dailies report that police yesterday found SLM (Minni Minnawi) senior commander Ali Mahdi Abdullah dead at the Movement’s HQs in Omdurman.

Police sources said five people have been arrested in connection with the incident and they were being investigated.

According to **Al-Ahdath**, the deceased is a senior officer in the SLM with the rank of colonel who was in charge of the movement’s medical corps.

Journalists barred from second session of strategic planning

Press Officer at the National Council for Strategic Planning Abdalla Osman barred journalists from attending the second session of the Council for Strategic Planning yesterday, **Rai Al-Shaab** reports. The decision comes following the events of the opening session at the Friendship Hall a day earlier that saw a man hurling a shoe at President Al-Bashir after which security personnel confiscated cameras from journalists.

Khartoum State endorses Edward Lino’s nomination

SPLM’s Edward Lino will vie for the Governorship of Khartoum State, **Rai Al-Shaab** reports. The Khartoum State High Elections Committee has endorsed Lino’s credentials for the race for the position against eight other candidates – six from political parties and three independents.

Hundreds demonstrate in Kalma camp to protest road construction

Hundreds of IDPs in Kalma camp in Nyala (South Darfur) yesterday staged a demonstration to protest a plan by authorities to construct a road that passes through the camp, **local dailies report**.

According to **Al-Sahafa**, All Darfur Camp Chief Hussein Abu Sherati said that the purpose of construction of the road is to remove more than 3000 houses in the camps and to obliterate a mass grave of IDPs killed in incidents of August last year.

Popular athlete gunned down in Nyala

In a third incident in 50 days, a famous sport figure, Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed, was shot dead two days ago by unidentified assailants, **Ajras Al-Hurriah** reports. South Darfur State police authorities said gunmen intercepted the victim while on his way home, shot him dead and got away with his motorcycle and mobile telephone.

36 people to stand trial for participation in demonstration

Al-Ayyam reports that 36 civilians will appear before court today in Wad Medani on charges of participation in a peaceful demonstration last December. Minister of Local Government and Civil Service in the state Anwar Mohamed Ahmed said that senior officials and lawyers were among those detained and beaten up by police personnel. The demonstration was staged in Wad Medani to protest the detention of SPLM SG Pagan Amun and SPLM Deputy SG Yasir Arman for participation in a peaceful march in Khartoum.

Over 3000 dogs eliminated in Khartoum

Local dailies report Chairman of the Stray Dogs Elimination Committee Maj. Gen. Mohamed Al-Saraj as saying that more than 3,780 dogs have been shot dead in Khartoum, saying the hunt would continue until all stray dogs are eliminated. Reportedly, the campaign was launched following recent reports of humans been attacked by wild dogs in Khartoum state.

Elections Special

NEC receives nominations of three presidential candidates

The National Elections Commission (NEC) accepted nominations for the presidency of Umma Party leader Sadiq Al-Mahdi, Umma Party Reform and Renewal leader Mubarak Al-Fadil Al-Mahdi and Prof. Fatima Abdul Mahmoud from the Sudanese Democratic Socialist Union Party, **Sudan TV and Radio** broadcast. According to **Al-Sahafa**, the NEC also accepted the nominations of Ali Ibrahim and Mahmoud Ahmed Jiha as independent presidential candidates.

Meanwhile, **Al-Ahdath** reports that the deadline for electoral nominations will expire today 27 January and that the total number of nominees for all electoral levels exceeded 7000 and they will compete for more than 1600 seats. NEC Registration Chief Gen. Al-Hadi Mohamed said that six presidential candidates have so far been cleared.

PCP paints a grim picture of upcoming elections

Al-Watan reports that Turabi-led Popular Congress Party official Kamal Omer Amin has painted a grim picture of the upcoming elections. He demanded the formation of an interim government to monitor the elections, saying international observers would not be able to prevent elections from being tampered with and that the sole way out is to delay the exercise and form an interim government to ensure proper monitoring.

Sudan's ousted PM vows to end "totalitarianism"

AFP 26/1/10— Sudan's former prime minister Sadiq al-Mahdi on Tuesday vowed to put an end to "totalitarianism" and resolve the conflict in Darfur by taking power at elections in April.

Mahdi, who was ousted 21 years ago in a military coup that brought President Omar al-Bashir to power, said victory for him in the presidential poll "would be a return to normal."

"I have not been fired by the people; I have been fired by the guns. Now it is possible for the people to reinstate who they believe represents their interest, represents aspirations," he said in an English statement at a news conference.

"We think our programme is going to dismantle totalitarianism, is going to resolve all the problems of the peace agreements and create conditions for Sudan united on new principles or neighborhood between two sisterly states," he added.

Mahdi, 74, heads the influential Umma party and is spiritual leader of "Ansar," a Sufi brotherhood that venerates the famous Mahdi who defeated British colonial forces under General Gordon in 1885.

Descended from Sudan's legendary Islamist ruler, Sadiq al-Mahdi has held the premiership twice before, in 1966-67 when he was just 30, and again after his party won Sudan's last multi-party elections in 1986.

Umma is the main opposition party in the north. Bashir heads the ruling National Congress

Party (NCP).

BBC 26/1/10 reported that former Sudanese Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi has announced he would stand against the current leader Omar al-Bashir in a forthcoming presidential election.

The BBC's James Copnall, in Khartoum, says Mr. Mahdi's presence gives real legitimacy to April's election.

Our correspondent says many of the other major figures in Sudanese politics have opted not to challenge President Bashir.

Al-Mahdi raised the possibility of ending the troubles in the Darfur region - where thousands of black Africans have been killed by Arab militias. "Darfur can be resolved if there is sufficient political will, if there is sufficient political leadership," the 74-year-old said.

SPLM warns against contesting as independent candidates

Sudan Tribune website 27/1/10 – The ruling party in the semi-autonomous region of Southern Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has warned not to tolerate its party members who want to contest as independent candidates for the upcoming April elections.

The Chairman of the SPLM Youth League and member of the party's Political Bureau, Akol Paul Kordit, announced on Tuesday that the party would not allow any of its members to stand as independent candidates.

Three senior officials of the party have officially declared their independent candidacy for governorship. These include Southern Sudan President's advisor on Diplomatic Affairs, Alfred Lado Gore for Central Equatoria state, the state minister of Energy and Mining in the Government of National Unity, Angelina Jany Teny for Unity state and the incumbent governor of Eastern Equatoria state, Aloysius Emor Ojetuk.

Jonglei state was also reported to have been processing for an independent candidacy for governorship while many others across the region considered contesting for parliamentary seats as independent candidates.

The party's youth chairman directly appealed to all those considering to register as independent candidates, while members of the party, to reverse their decisions. "We are a party characterized with a high degree of discipline. I don't think the SPLM will entertain at any time the idea of independent candidates," he warned.

There are growing fears in the SPLM leadership that many of the candidates nominated by the Political Bureau in Juba may lose elections to independent party candidates who were initially nominated by the people and the Electoral Colleges in the states, but dropped by the Bureau.

The Political Bureau nominated those it calls loyal and long serving members for all the public positions the party wants to contest, but the process has been widely criticized as ignoring the choices of the people in the constituencies concerned.