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Highlights

UNMIS observes International Day of Peacekeepers

UNMIS observed yesterday the International Day of Peacekeepers, ***Al-Khartoum*** reports. The ceremony was attended by the Mission personnel and political forces in the country. SRSR Ashraf Gazi read out the UN Secretary General's message marking the Day which said the international community continues to rely on the UN to keep peace.

Sima Samar nominated for HC post

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports while the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the Sudan Sima Samar has been nominated for the post of high commissioner for human rights in Geneva, the Sudan government embarks on move to end her mandate in Sudan. Sudan's Human Rights Advisory Council Deputy Chairman Ahmed Idriss said even if Samar wins the post that does give her the right to extend her mandate in Sudan. He said the government would seek to terminate her mandate.

President Al-Bashir meets with Chinese envoy

President Al-Bashir held a meeting yesterday with the Chinese envoy Liu Guiin which focused on a range of issues including the outcome of the recent meeting of the SC and AU representatives in Qatar, ***Al-Rai Al-Aam*** reports. The Chinese envoy expressed his country's satisfaction over the way the Sudanese government is handling the ICC issue, saying his country would continue supporting efforts to address Darfur. He accused the ICC backers of promoting hidden agenda, saying Sudan is capable of resolving the Darfur crisis. Liu said he would visit Chad and Ethiopia as part of his efforts to improve Sudan-Chad relations.

Meanwhile, the Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie said the government would continue efforts to hold elections on schedule. He praised China's support for Sudan. According to ***Al-Sahafa***, the envoy has called for elections on schedule, considering it the only way to lay a solid foundation for CPA implementation.

According to ***AFP***, Liu pledged three million dollars in humanitarian aid for Darfur. He "greeted the president for the resumption of the talks in Doha between the JEM and the government," Sudanese foreign ministry official Ali Youssif told ***AFP***.

On the other hand, Sudan government yesterday agreed to a roadmap presented by Doha talks' mediators.

Sudan says 69 parties registered for elections

Sudan Tribune website 1/6/09 – The Political Parties' Affairs Council said yesterday that 69 parties have formally registered ahead of the 2010 elections.

Mohamed Bushara Dousa the head of the Council told reporters that these parties are the only ones allowed to run in the elections. Dousa also said that the registered parties would be allowed to conduct political rallies and conventions.

The major parties include the ruling National Congress Party (NCP), Sudan people Liberation Movement (SPLM), Umma Party, Democratic Unionist Party, Popular Congress Party and Sudanese Communist Party.

SPLM, NCP to meet in Washington

The *Citizen* reports the MFA revealed that SPLM and NCP will meet in Washington during the current month. FM Deng Alor told reporters following his meeting with the new US Charge d'Affaires in Khartoum Robert E. Whitehead that the meeting would review the CPA implementation and the pending issues such as the dispute over Abyei. "No time has been specified for the meeting yet," he said, further revealing that the two parties' delegations to the US meeting were still unnamed.

Kiir keen on Juba forum

Al-Ahdath reports SPLM Chairman Salva Kiir has held intensive consultations with SPLM leaders in Juba on the status quo. He stressed the need to unify the Darfur rebel movements for talks with the government in Doha. SPLM Deputy SG Yassir Arman said Kiir emphasized the need to invite all the Sudanese political parties to meet in Juba to discuss key issues. Arman described the meeting as important.

Abyei Messeriya-Dinka conference 22 July

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports the Abyei Area Administration has embarked on efforts to convene a reconciliation conference between the Messeriya and the Dinka ahead of Abyei Arbitration Tribunal decision. Abyei Deputy Chief Administrator told *SMC* that the purpose of the conference is to promote peaceful co-existence between the two communities to address possible repercussions of the arbitration decision. According to *Al-Sahafa*, the Dinka-Messeriya conference will be held on 22 July.

GoSS receives SDG 16 billions – Finance Ministry

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports Federal State Minister for Finance Tariq Shelabi as saying that the total amount of transfers to GoSS since the conclusion of the CPA amounted to SDG 16 billion pounds (\$7.3 billions). He made the remarks in response to a question in the Parliament about the total amount of money transferred to GoSS, saying all dues have been transferred to GoSS.

Kenya's KCB signs \$452 million Sudan housing project

Reuters 1/6/09 - Kenya Commercial Bank said yesterday its mortgage subsidiary had signed a \$452 million deal to finance construction of housing units for government workers in southern Sudan.

"There is an increasing need for residential houses in many towns in southern Sudan due to the growing population of public servants and employees of private and non-governmental organizations," KCB Chairman Peter Muthoka said in a statement. The money will be used to put up 1,750 units.

Sudanese officials said the housing project should be a sign to investors that peace would hold.

Kiir appoints new army Chief of Staff, relieves deputies

Sudan Tribune website 1/6/09 – SPLA C-in-C Gen. Salva Kiir Mayardit has issued a decree appointing the SPLA's new Chief of General Staff and relieving a number of his deputies.

The move comes after the appointment yesterday of the former SPLA Chief of Staff, Oyai Deng Ajak, as minister of regional cooperation, the equivalent to foreign minister in the semi-autonomous government.

Major General James Hoth Mai, now promoted to the rank of Lt. General, has been appointed

as the SPLA's Chief of Staff, replacing General Oyai Deng Ajak, with effect from May 31, 2009.

General Salva Kiir Mayardit told the newly appointed Chief of General Staff that despite many achievements, there are still many milestones facing the SPLA that need to be passed. He said that the prime areas of concern include lack of discipline among the forces, desertions within the units and delay of salaries.

James Hoth Mai was born in Ulang County, Upper Nile State. He joined the SPLA in June 1983 and participated in various capacities including being the commando commander and chief of operations for Operations Jungle Storm between 1993 and 1995. He also participated in Operations Thunder Bolt. He served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics in 2005.

Before his current promotion and appointment, Lt. General Hoth was the SPLA's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations.

This is first change in the SPLA command since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005, which recognizes the former rebels as a conventional army of southern Sudan's government.

General Salva Kiir Mayardit also issued another decree relieving from their positions Major General Salva Mathok Gengdit, Deputy Chief of Staff for Administration and Major General Bior Ajang, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, though the two outgoing deputies were promoted in rank.

No new appointments are yet decreed to fill the positions of the three deputies to the Chief of Staff for Administration, Logistics and Operations.

Kiir also issued other decrees promoting the SPLA Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Lt. General Paulino Matip Nhial to the rank of General (1st Lieutenant General), promoting Lt. General Oyai Deng Ajak, the newly appointed Minister for Regional Cooperation, to the same rank of General, and promoting Major Generals Salva Mathok and Bior Ajang to the rank of Lt. General.

The SPLA Commander-in-Chief also re-appointed Lt. General Salva Mathok Gengdit as Presidential Advisor for SPLA Affairs. No re-appointment is decreed for the former Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Lt. General Bior Ajang.

State official killed in road ambush near Rumbek

Sudan Tribune website 1/6/09 - The Lakes state deputy executive director in the Ministry of Local Government was killed on Saturday at a small forest between Wulu County and Rumbek Central at a place called Rumpanbuolriak just a distance of 14 miles from town.

The late Sabit Nichola Majok was killed by an unknown group, according to a state authority. Majok was going out from Rumbek town centre for a weekend to visit his family in Wulu County, said an SPLM official.

As a result of Majok's death in the morning at 10 am on Saturday, there is high tension between Wulu youth accusing Rumbek East youth of having a hand in his death. Rumbek East youth were not reached for comment in this article.

The state authorities are not yet clear on what decision they might take, though on Monday the SPLM Lakes State Secretary Samuel Mathiang Keer appeared in Wulu to impose clam in the

area while the security governor is holding a security meeting.

One official said that there is a man who was brought from Wulu with a gunshot wound and there is escalating fighting as security forces try to control the situation.

Central Bank bans Exchangers' dealing with foreign organizations

Local dailies report Bank of Sudan issued a circular yesterday banning exchangers' dealing with diplomatic missions, international and regional organizations in the Sudan. According to **SUNA**, the new regulation says exchangers should not sell more than 1500 (one thousand five hundred Euros) for each single traveler or its equivalent in foreign currencies. One third of the said sum could be carried in cash by the travelers and the remainder of the sum should be made in a form of bank transfer, provided the proper documentations are produced by the traveler, proving the person is traveling abroad. The regulation prohibits the exchangers from doing business with the diplomatic corps, foreign organizations and regional and international institutions and agencies operating in the Sudan. It said transactions of such organizations should be carried out via their bank accounts with the commercial banks.

UN chopper looted near Geneina

A UN helicopter was looted by unidentified gunmen in the area of Meshlaya, east of Geneina, west Darfur state, **Al-Sahafa** reports. MP Younis Al-Haj told the paper that the gunmen broke into the chopper shortly after landing 2km away from the town of Meshlaya, they looted the cargo and fled. The chopper was flying aid workers to refugees and IDPs camps in Meshlaya. He told the paper that the incident was unprecedented, saying bandits used to loot vehicles but now turned to aircraft.

Sudan ethanol plant to produce 65 million litres a year

Reuters 1/6/09 Sudan will soon open an ethanol plant to initially produce 65 million litres a year of the biofuel, and annual production should reach 200 million litres in two years, state news agency SUNA said.

The plant, which one economist said would be Sudan's first, will use by-products from Sudan's sugar industry to create a renewable energy source for a country whose economy is largely dependent on crude oil.

"Production is expected to increase to 200 million litres (a year) in two years' time," **SUNA** said, adding the plant would probably be opened by Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir. **SUNA** did not give an opening date or say who owned it.