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Headlines

- Ex-Sudanese President Nimeiry died (**dailies**)
- President Al-Bashir warns SPLM over political parties' activities (**dailies**)
- SPLM consultative meeting closes in Juba (**Al-Rai Al-Aam**)
- Government downplays possible SC sanctions (**Al-Intibaha**)
- Sima Samar praises the human rights situation in Darfur (**Akhbar Al Youm**)
- NEC agrees to international support (**ST**)
- President Al-Bashir to visit Zimbabwe (**Al-Rai Al-Aam**)
- Sudanese lawmakers agree to drop fine from press law (**ST**)
- SPLM official denies attempts on Kiir's life (**Al-Sahafa**)
- Threat of rape still stalks Darfur refugees in Chad – physicians (**ST**)
- Deputy Governor rejects census results for N. Bahr El Ghazal (**ST**)
- US envoy met SLM leader Abdul Wahid (**dailies**)
- 30,000 employees rendered jobless in the south (**Al-Ahdath**)
- Sudan tribal clashes kill 244, including police – Interior Minister (**Reuters**)
- Abducted children returned to Juba (**Al-Rai Al-Aam**)
- 40 Jordanian Police Officers arrive in El-Fashir to join UNAMID (**SMC**)
- Chad's Deby wants solution to feud with Sudan (**AFP**)
- **Opinion:** Ninety political parties?!? (**Al-Ayyam**)

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Highlights

Ex-Sudanese President Nimeiry died

Local dailies report the ex-Sudanese President Ga'afar Mohamed Nimeiry died yesterday.

According to **Sudan tribune website** 30/5/09, the former Sudanese president Ga'afar Mohamed Nimeiry was ousted in a popular uprising a quarter of a century ago.

The Sudanese presidency said he would be buried on Sunday in Omdurman where he was born in 1930. President Al-Bashir will attend the state funeral along with several other top figures.

Nimeiry took power exactly 40 years ago in a military coup that ousted the government of the former President Ismail al-Azhari, on May 25, 1969.

President Al-Bashir warns SPLM over political parties' activities

Local dailies report President Al-Bashir has strongly criticized SPLM, saying while SPLM is demanding free political activity in the north; the same does not exist in the south. "Our brothers in the political parties especially the SPLM keep complaining about restrictive laws in the north. They should see what they are doing first," the President said in his addressing to the closing session of the NCP's Shura Council yesterday. "They are ruling the south since four years by military intelligence. We want them to restore civilian rule in the south so that the environment is conducive for elections. We want an equal freedom of political activity guaranteed for all the political parties in the south such as it is in the north," he added. "If SPLM wants to bar the political forces from exercising free political activity in the south then the NCP will also reciprocate," "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," he said. "Political parties' leaders have been asked to go to the south to exercise their political activities. There is no question of closed or liberated territories," he added.

The President said the fifth census exercise was fair and transparent, saying those questioning the results are afraid of the people's verdict. On freedoms, the President said "any freedom that is not governed by the law is anarchy". "We will not tolerate the use of the media to incite sedition and to question the people's traditions, values and morals," he said. "We will not approve of a law that leads to insecurity in the north. We will not institute a powerless, toothless and clawless security apparatus at the time when the south is ruled by military intelligence," the President declared.

SUNA reports President Al-Bashir has stressed that the NEC would be open and would establish relations based on agreed national issues with all other political forces. He also expressed commitment to all agreements signed by the government and to genuine democratic transition in the country. He said conduction of elections is the decision of the NEC not the government, adding the government would provide every support necessary for NEC to conduct fair and monitored elections.

Sudan Tribune website reported the Sudanese President has threatened to ban the southern Sudan ruling party from operating in the northern part of the country if it does not remove the restrictions imposed on the other political parties in the south.

"We cannot accept the existence of closed or liberated areas because the Sudan is one country

and because the SPLM leaders are acting freely in northern Sudan not because they conquered it militarily but due to the CPA that we implemented and the same thing should be enforced there (southern Sudan)," he said.

The Sudanese president also urged the semi-autonomous southern Sudan government to redeploy the army out of the main cities saying the SPLA is still deployed in the streets since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement four years ago in 2005.

SPLM consultative meeting closes in Juba

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports FVP Salva Kiir will take a decision on the census results during the coming days. A source told the paper yesterday that the SPLM consultative meeting rejected the census results. Meanwhile, SPLM Deputy SG Yassir Arman informed the paper about intent by Kiir to set up a committee from SPLM and GoSS to address conflict between the Messeriya and the Riseigat.

Government downplays possible sanctions

Al-Intibaha reports Sudan government has played down the likelihood of sanctions or condemnation by the Security Council against it on 5 June after hearing the ICC Prosecutor's report on the arrest warrant for President Al-Bashir, saying China and Russia will block any anti-Sudan move.

MFA Acting Undersecretary Ambassador Ali Yousuf in an interview to the paper said the ICC Prosecutor would report to the SC in June on the arrest warrant for President Al-Bashir. He did not rule out that the ICC might request the SC's help to enforce the warrant, saying Sudan is counting on the support of international and regional organizations.

Meanwhile, **Ajras Al-Hurriah** reports the NCP has described the ICC Prosecutor Ocampo's statements that he gathered his evidence from the Sudan and "with the help of the Sudanese government as lies". NCP Information Secretary Kamal Obeid said Ocampo obtained his information from Sudanese nationals abroad. Obeid said the ICC Prosecutor Ocampo visited Sudan as part of an African tour and that he did not meet government officials.

Sima Samar praises the human rights situation in Darfur

Akhbar Al Youm reports the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Sima Samar has praised the situation of human rights in the Sudan especially the improvement of the situation in Darfur. Samar made the remarks during her meeting yesterday with the north Darfur governor Osman Kibir. According to **Al-Wifaq**, Samar requested lists of cases which had been decided that involved members of regular troops.

NEC agrees to international support

Sudan Tribune website 28/5/09 – NEC Wednesday signed a document laying the foundation for international support to the 2010 elections, which had been scheduled for 2009 as stipulated in the north-south peace deal. NEC expressed commitment to a UNDP project document on support to elections and democratic processes. The project contains an initial budget of US\$68.7 million to cover support to NEC, the Political Parties Affairs Council, civic and voter education, domestic observation, media training and monitoring and vital stakeholders such as women and youth.

Outgoing UNDP Country Director Jerzy Skuratowicz signed on behalf of the agency, and State Minister Elias Nyamlell Wakoson signed on behalf of the Ministry of International Cooperation.

The signing ceremony took place on the final day in office of the UNDP Sudan Country Director.

President Al-Bashir to visit Zimbabwe

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports President Al-Bashir will lead Sudan delegation to participate in COMESA summit 7-8 June. A source told **SMC** that the President would address the summit on Sudan's commitment towards COMESA.

Sudanese lawmakers agree to drop fine from press law

Sudan Tribune website 29/5/09 — Sudanese parliament agreed to remove the heavy fine imposed on the journalists in a draft law discussed currently by the legislators, the head of Sudanese journalists syndicate said.

Mahi Eddin Titawi, said Thursday they had agreed with a National Assembly subcommittee reviewing the contested press draft law to drop the fine of 50,000 Sudanese pound (21,500 US dollars) that journalists could face for unspecified offences.

SPLM official denies attempts on Kiir's life

Al-Sahafa reports that SPLM has dismissed recent reports that the FVP Kiir survived an attempt on his life two months ago in the South. SPLM Deputy Secretary General Yassir Arman dismissed the report which was published by unnamed website.

Threat of rape still stalks Darfur refugees in Chad - physicians

Sudan Tribune website 30/5/09 – Women in eastern Chad who years ago fled the conflict in Darfur continue to face sexual violence, post-traumatic stress and other hardships, says a new report based on a field visit conducted in November 2008 by four female researchers including three physicians.

In the study by Physicians for Human Rights, investigators report that 46 of 88 women interviewed in Farchana, Chad, feared ongoing sexual violence around the refugee camp.

"The issues around violence are really ongoing and palpable," said Dr. Lin Piwowarczyk, co-investigator of the report.

In an interview, Dr. Lin Piwowarczyk said, "All of the women that we interviewed really are suffering. They're suffering from the memories of their experiences in Darfur, and as they fled Darfur, and also ongoing issues in the camps where they're living, related to intimidation, sexual violence when going out for firewood, or physical assault, issues related to food insecurity, concerns for their children, lack of education and educational opportunities."

The study based on a non-probability sample of 88 women in Farchana camp, combines quantitative and qualitative analysis. Researchers acknowledge that the findings of their study cannot be generalized to the entire population of Farchana nor to Darfuri women in other refugee camps.

Deputy Governor rejects census results for N. Bahr El Ghazal

Sudan Tribune website 31/5/09 – The deputy governor of Northern Bahr El Ghazal state issued a formal complaint about the recently released national census results, saying he was shocked by the inaccuracy of the population figure for his state.

Arkangelo Athian Teng, in a letter to the FVP obtained by **Sudan Tribune**, expressed "disappointment and dissatisfaction" with the results. He had directed the activities of the

Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation (SSCCSE) in Aweil, the state capital.

According to the census, the population of Northern Bahr El Ghazal is 720,898, lower than five other states in the south. Teng says that the state should not be sixth.

"Myself and the entire state were shocked by these results," stated the official.

The deputy governor, who currently serves also as the Minister of Local Government and Law Enforcement Agencies, offered five explanations for his suspicion that the state's population is higher than reported in the final census results.

First, during the house hold survey/census mapping, the state was leading the whole south in term of households and the number of Enumeration Areas, he said.

Second, in the recruitment, training and deployment of field staff, Northern Bahr El Ghazal state was leading the whole south, with field staffs not less than 1,670.

Third, upon retrieval of census materials, the cartons parked in the state were more compared to other states.

Fourth, during the manual verification and scanning in Rumbek, the state was leading the weekly updates.

Fifth, the number for the out-of-state population of Northern Bahr El Ghazal – those living in Juba and Khartoum – was supposed to be added to the end result, but in fact they were not added to the state population.

Athian Teng further appealed to the recipient of the letter, Salva Kiir Mayardit who chairs the SPLM, to recall that SPLM mobilization in the state had been more than 777,000 above 18 years of age who were registered. Three counties, namely Aweil North, South and West had populations above 60,000 each. Aweil East numbered above 400,000 people excluding children below 18 years of age.

Teng said "if under age and other parties' members are included NBGS (Northern Bahr El Ghazal state) should be above the whole south."

US envoy met SLM leader Abdul Wahid

Local dailies report the US Envoy for Sudan Scott Gration met with SLM leader Abdul Wahid in Paris. According to **Al-Ayyam**, Abdul Wahid said the meeting gave him an opportunity to explain his movement's position to the US envoy. Abdul Wahid expressed readiness to consider taking part in peace talks with Sudan government if civilians were protected and humanitarian assistances were delivered.

30,000 employees rendered jobless in the south

Al-Ahdath reports the Federation of the Sudanese Workers Trade Union has criticized what is described as a regular dismissal of employees in GoSS without being paid their gratuities. The Trade Union said about 30,000 employees had been dismissed and authorities in some states started filling the vacancies by persons with SPLM loyalty. The Union has called on the FVP Kiir and VP Machar to intervene to address the issue.

Sudan tribal clashes kill 244, including police

Reuters 29/5/09 - Scores of policemen and nearly 200 tribesmen were killed in clashes this week between two pastoralist groups in Sudan's South Kordofan area, Sudan's state news agency SUNA reported on Friday.

Sudan's Internal Affairs Minister Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamad put the total number dead after the fighting at 244, according to **SUNA**.

"The death toll is 89 among the Misseriya, 80 among the Rizeigat and 75 policemen," Hamad told a cabinet meeting in Khartoum.

Some 3,000 armed horsemen attacked police positions on Tuesday where the police were trying to provide a buffer between the two tribes who are frequently in conflict, often in cattle raids and over grazing land and water in the semi-arid area.

The oil-producing state's Information Minister Ali Kuku told **Reuters** that although he could not give exact death tolls local estimates put the police death toll at about 80 and similar numbers for warriors from each of the tribes.

"We didn't expect this big thing to happen," he said, adding that the fighting began as a small conflict between a few individuals from each tribe but spiraled out of control. "The war has stopped now, but we're investigating what happened," he said.

Meanwhile, **The Citizens** reports fighting between two nomadic pastoralists of South Kordofan and South Darfur at Meram near Northern Bahr el Ghazal state has resulted into the closure of roads in Aweil and Abyei. A hospital in Meram is filled with those wounded and killed.

The road from Meram to Warawar and other key roads to Meram are now shut cutting the state off from supplies.

The Interior Minister Ibrahim Mohmoud Hamid said yesterday over the radio that the security is worsening between the nomadic pastoralists.

Abducted children returned to Juba

Angelina Achiro, the Social Affairs Supervisor for the Trauma Control Centre in Juba reports that in the past two days, UNMIS air-lifted from the DRC to Juba eight children abducted earlier by the LRA, reports **Al-Rai Al-Aam**.

40 Jordanian police officers arrive in El-Fashir to join UNAMID

SMC 29/5/09 – UNAMID has described as relatively calm the security situation in Darfur in the last 24 hours. In a news release it issued yesterday in its HQ in El-Fashir, the UNAMID said its elements have carried some 53 routine confidence building and protection military patrols and protection as well as 133 police night patrols.

Meanwhile, the UNAMID announced the arrival of the last batch of 40 Jordanian police officers who will join the mission in Darfur, saying that they will be deployed within two weeks.

Chad's Deby wants solution to feud with Sudan

AFP 28/5/09 - — Chad's President Idriss Deby Itno wants a "definitive solution" to his country's conflict with Sudan, he said in Sabratha west of the Libyan capital Tripoli.

Speaking after attending a regional summit, Deby said: "We are leaving with a note of hope that

the two neighbouring countries, brothers and friends, will manage in days or months to come to reach a definitive solution to this crisis.

He hoped this would happen "under the auspices of the guiding brother (Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi), the United Nations and other friendly countries."

Deby told **AFP** late on Friday he wants Sudan's troubled region of Darfur to "regain its peacefulness" and said he believes Chad is "the country most disadvantaged" by the fighting in the western province.

"We use our right to defend ourselves," Deby said, referring to air raids against Chadian rebels based on Sudanese territory, which have sparked protests from Khartoum.

"But at the same time we are men of peace and we are seeking peace with all our neighbours, in particular with Sudan," he added.

"Rebels, there aren't any," Deby said. "They are mercenaries who came to attack us and we completely defeated them.

"Nothing remains (of the rebels). Those who fled went back to Sudan. They are being held by the Sudanese authorities," he said.

OPINION: Ninety political parties?!?

Al-Ayaam columnist *Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi Al-Shareef* – 31/05/09

The Political Parties' Affairs Council is to hold a press conference today to hand over certificates of registration to some 30 political parties thus legally qualifying them to contest the forthcoming elections. A further 59 political parties are yet to complete registration but are likely to do so soon. This will bring the number of political parties registered in the country close to 90.

The UK (population over 61 million) has three active political parties out of a total of about five; France (population 64 million) has seven political parties three of which are the more active; the US (population 307 million) has three political parties of which the two more active are the Democratic and the Republican parties.

This shows that it is not in the national interest to have such a large number of political parties. This also neither serves national cohesion nor social coexistence. The large number of political parties is an indication that these parties have weak bases. The fact that these parties were formed because of splits within the parent party is a further confirmation that they only represent a small constituency.

The elections season is a big season. It will be funded by US with \$25million, UN with \$30 million in addition to the government's contribution. What a season?