

1st September 2008

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Media Monitoring Report

United Nations Mission In Sudan/ Public Information Office

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Highlights

Local Arabic and English language press

Census results to be announced by the end of the year

Al-Sahafa reported that census results in southern Sudan would be announced by the end of this year.

Chairman of the southern Sudan's census commission told the newspaper that the first phase of the fifth census exercise kicked off well pointing out that the \$1.2m budget from donors has been allocated for results analysis processes and the analysts were waiting for the Ministry of Finance to pay the equivalent of \$ 1.3m. They said the amount should have been paid since July.

Non-Muslims Commission urges respects for rights during Ramadan

Ray Al-Shaab quoted the Commission for the Rights of Non-Muslims in the National Capital as saying that it would take measures to ensure that the rights of non-Muslims are guaranteed during Ramadan.

The chairman of the Commission told Miraya FM that authorities would allow restaurant to operate during the day in Ramadan in return for charges levied by the Localities.

Interior Ministry embarks upon integrating 1120 SPLA personnel in police in Southern Kordofan

Al-Intibaha newspaper reported that the Ministry of Interior began implementing programme for integration of SPLA forces in the Southern Kordofan's police.

Chairman of the Integration Committee Gen. Adil Al-Ajib said the Ministry of Interior began integrating the SPLM forces in southern Kordofan who have been assembled in Sirdaba and Julok areas. He said about 1120 SPLA personnel have been transported to Kadogli to be trained and then returned to their areas to beef up the police forces.

South Darfur Governor: 150,000 IDPs returned to their villages

Sudan Vision carried a report stating that the South Darfur State announced that more than 150000 IDPs have returned to their original regions. The state attributed the success of voluntary return program to improvement of security conditions there.

The governor of South Darfur State, Ali Mahmoud Hassab Al-Rassoul affirmed implementation of Nyala water project at a cost of \$50 million, rehabilitation of 30 water stations in the localities and digging of 15 new water stations in rural areas.

In an interview with Al-Raya newspaper, the governor disclosed new plans for water in rural areas, rehabilitation of Nyala-Babanusa railway and construction of another parallel railway to connect Nyala with Babanusa, which is estimated to cost \$100 million. He said that the railway project is a major boost to the movement of goods, fuel and strategic goods to the three Darfur states.

The governor vehemently denied the rumors that some remembers of his government are putting signatures to dismiss him.

Mahmoud said that Kalma IDPs camp has become a harbour for criminals where elements of non-signatory armed groups live, assassinations, drug and arms trade take place. As such, the camp directly threatens the security of IDPs and inhabitants, said the governor. Accordingly, the government is trying to reorganize the camp in a better manner.

He described the hijacking of Sun Air's plane as a criminal act and serious precedent in Darfur and the hijackers had lost hope and were used in agendas irrelevant to Darfur.

SPLM Ministers and MPs suspend participation in Darfur governments

Local dailies of today reported that three SPLM ministers and fifteen MPs decided to suspend their participation in the GoNU in the three Darfur States to protest incidents in Darfur particularly in Kalma IDPs camp.

The statement issued by the group said search of Kalma IDPs camp was carried out without their knowledge as members of States' governments. They emphasized the need for seriousness on the part of NCP to resolve the crisis and the implementation of all agreements concluded with Darfur movements.

Websites/International News Coverage

Chief of Abyei Administration and his deputy sworn in

(Sudan Tribune) — Chief Administrator of the interim Abyei Area and his deputy were sworn in before the Sudanese president Omer Al-Bashir at the Republican Palace today.

Al-Bashir appointed on Friday 8 August, Arop Mayak Monytoch of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) as Chief Administrator of the interim Abyei Area Administration and Rahama Abdel-Rahman Al-Nour of the National Congress Party (NCP) as Deputy Chief Administrator.

Addressing the sworn in ceremony, the Sudanese president called on the two head of the new administration to work as one team to achieve the ambitions and aspirations of the people of the region.

Monytoch asserted that strengthening security and stability, provision of the needs of citizens in addition to reconstruction and resettlement are at the top of the priorities of his administration.

He added that the achievement of these goals depends on concerted efforts and support from all the parties.

For his part, Rahama pointed out that their priorities are provision of security for the citizens, rehabilitation of Abyei besides boosting development and services.

He further added "We will work together with all our strength to perform our national obligations to the citizens of Abyei."

The row over the definition of Abyei border stalled the implementation of a protocol specific to the area since three years. But the two peace partners reached on June 8 a roadmap to implement the protocol and to end their difference over the conclusions of Abyei Boundary Commission.

Chinese president backs efforts to overcome ICC move against Sudan's Bashir

(Sudan Tribune) —Chinese President Hu Jintao has stressed his country's support for Sudan to overcome International Criminal Court (ICC) move against the Sudanese president through political and diplomatic efforts.

Sudanese President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir received on Sudan at his office in the presidential palace a message from his Chinese counterpart handed by the visiting special envoy to Sudan, Liu Guijin. The meeting was attended by Ali Karti, the state minister for foreign affairs.

Hu Jintao, expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by the Sudanese government during the last period to strengthen the peace process in Darfur, the official SUNA reported.

He invited the international community to support Sudan's efforts in this direction.

However, it didn't oppose the UN Security Council decision to refer Darfur crimes to the International Criminal Court. But it supports the African Union effort to suspend the prosecution of the Sudanese president.

For his part, President Bashir expressed his appreciation for China's position and the role it has been playing with various parties and within the U.N. Security Council and General Assembly to address the issue of Darfur and overcome the negative effects.

The Chinese envoy told reporters after the meeting that Jintao's letter addressed bilateral cooperation and friendship between Beijing and Khartoum, which have many common interests of both countries

He added that the letter referred to the political developments in Sudan especially the ICC proceedings against the Sudanese president.

The envoy stressed the need to focus on regional and international efforts to promote lasting peace in Darfur and address all the security and humanitarian situations created by the state of instability instead of attempting to obstruct these steps.

He said that the movements of his country and consultations with other countries and regional or international organizations aimed at explaining its consistent position towards the peace process in Darfur, the need to support it and not to take any action that hampers or adversely affect them.

He also pointed to the need to focus, during the coming stage, on efforts to negotiate with the rebel movements and strengthening of national process to achieve peace in Darfur.

UNAMID chief calls for truce in Darfur during Ramadan

(Sudan Tribune) — The head of the hybrid peacekeeping mission in Darfur has called on the Sudanese parties to declare truce on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan that will begin on Monday.

Rodolphe Adada, Joint Special Representative and Chief of UNAMID, appealed on the Sudanese government and rebel movements to "cease hostilities, put an end to the suffering of the Darfurians, and pave the way for a lasting peace in this beleaguered region."

Adada reminded the Sudanese parties that in this holy month of Ramadan "the relentless pursuit of peace should guide our thoughts and shape our acts, but this peace can only be achieved by the Sudanese themselves."

He further said that the African Union - United Nations mission and the international community will provide the necessary help to revive peace process but it's the Sudanese who will ultimately achieve peace and stability in the five year war torn region.

This week the newly appointed joint mediator for peace in Darfur, Djibril Bassolé has started his full time job from the capital of North-Darfur, El Fasher. He also called upon the parties involved in the conflict to halt all sort of hostilities in order to create conducive environment for political dialogue.

Government, Darfur Minawi agree to resolve pending issues

(Sudan Tribune)— Sudanese government and the former rebel Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) - Minawi agreed to resolve the outstanding issue in the implementation of Abuja peace agreement by the end of September.

Minni Arcua Minawi, the Senior Presidential Assistant left the Sudanese capital 4 months ago and informally suspended his participation in the government to protest over the ill implementation of the peace deal that he signed since more than two years.

Omer Rahama, the rapporteur of the operations room in charge of implementing the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) said two delegations from the government and the SLM-Minawi reached an agreement to draw up a road map to complete the DPA implementation.

He further affirmed the parties have agreed to implement the outcome of the meetings by end of September.

He added that what was agreed upon would put things in their right framework in the future.

Speaking to Sudan Tribune four days ago Minawi said that he has no intention of returning "until there is good will from the dominant National Congress Party".

He had said that talks between him and Khartoum to resolve outstanding issues are far from complete.

Minawi also downplayed the 'People of Sudan' initiative launched by President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir during his tour of Darfur last month.

"The principle is not bad but other political parties must take the lead on it. The NCP cannot be in charge of it" he stressed.

Darfur IDPs angered by new mediator tour

(Sudan Tribune) — Darfur displaced reacted angrily to a meeting held by the newly appointed mediator with some IDPs in North Darfur. They said the people he met are not their legitimate representatives.

In his first official steps as Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, Djibril Bassole met the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of Zam Zam and Abu Shouk camps in North Darfur on Friday 29

August.

Hussein Abu Sharati, the spokesperson of Darfur refugees and IDPs regretted in a statement to Sudan Tribune that Bassolé had met with "some alleged Darfur IDPs representatives" in Abu Shouk camp.

"We reject this conduct in the same way we had rejected Salim Ahmed Salim attempts to create fictitious structures to pretend realizing peace in Darfur" Abu Sharati said.

He further added that the delegation that Bassolé had met could be any thing but not representatives of "the victims who lost their land."

To cope with their traditional structures, the IDPs have elected Sheikhs in the camps who are former Sheikhs of villages or designated by the camp population to organize issue of food distribution and other matters.

The issue of camps delegates has caused problems among the traditional chiefdoms and elected representatives. Also, foreign NGOs and international actors have been blamed by the local population for promoting people against their will or belonging to other ethnic groups.

However Abu Sharati said "people that Bassolé met were designated by the government."

The new mediator who is touring Darfur states was not reachable to know how he met Abu Shouk delegation; but he was accompanied by the head of the joint mission, Rodolphe Adada, who introduced him to the IDPs.

The full time mediator, who should work his difficult mission from Darfur where he is based, is touring the three states of Darfur to meet the IDPs and assess their situation and plight. Before his arrival to Darfur he met with the chiefs and delegation of Darfur rebels in Paris, London and New York.

Sudanese accused of US killing are extremists-lawyer

(Reuters) - Five Sudanese men accused of murdering a U.S. aid worker are religious extremists who plotted to attack foreigners at New Year's Eve gatherings, Sudanese prosecutors told a court on Sunday.

The five defendants chanted "God is great" as they walked into the East Khartoum court and were greeted by a crowd of supporters who shouted religious slogans and "Down, down, USA".

Granville was the first U.S. government official to be killed in Khartoum in more than three decades.

Prosecutor Mohamed Al Mustapha Moussa told the court the five men last year rented a property in Atbara, a town north of Khartoum, trained there and bought weapons, including a Kalashnikov, a G3 rifle and pistols, according to a copy of the prosecution's opening statement seen by Reuters.

Later they moved to a house in Omdurman, a Khartoum suburb, where they rented a vehicle and started identifying New Year's Eve celebration venues to attack, the prosecutor said.

On New Year's Eve they drove out but found the venues either empty or too heavily guarded, said the prosecutor.

"The prosecutor said it was then that they decided to drive around and look for victims who were coming out of New Year's celebrations," Adil Abdel Ghani, one of the five's defence lawyers, told Reuters after the 30-minute hearing.

The prosecution said the five men were religious extremists who had been misled by "Satan" into thinking their attack was in line with the teaching of the Koran, and that they chanted religious slogans after killing Granville and Rahama.

The prosecutor asked the judge to find the men guilty of murder under Chapter 130 of Sudanese law, and also asked him to try them under firearms laws, Abdel Ghani told Reuters. The murder charge carries a possible death sentence, he added.

The judge adjourned the case to Sept. 11 to allow Granville's family to appoint a lawyer and to find a larger courtroom, at the request of the defence.

At an earlier hearing, the defendants were identified as Mohamed Osman Yusuf Mohamed, 29, a former Sudanese army officer, Abdel Raouf Abu Zaid Mohamed, 23, a merchant and son of an Islamic preacher, Mohamed Makkawi Ibrahim Mohamed, also 23, a civil engineering student, Abdel Basit al-Hajj Hassan, 29, a trader and Morad Abdel Rahman, 35, a driver.

Days after the attack, a previously unknown group calling itself Ansar al-Tawhid (Supporters of Monotheism) in Sudan, posted a message on a website used by militants claiming responsibility for the killings.

Sudan delays trial for suspected assassins of US diplomat

(Sudan Tribune) — The trial for five suspects accused of murdering a US diplomat earlier this year has been delayed for another two weeks in a hearing marred by chaos.

The prosecution alleged that the suspects, who came from the town of Atbara North of the capital Khartoum, randomly picked the target after meeting among themselves and agreeing to strike Western targets on New Years Eve.

"They rode their car and wandered in the streets of Khartoum on New Years looking for their prey and they went through different locations they monitored before where they thought New Years Party would be held" prosecutor Mohamed Al-Mustafa Musa said in remarks reported by the daily Al-Sharq Al-Awsat published in London.

Musa said that the group modified their plan after failing to locate any places celebrating New Years.

"They randomly came across the victims' car...they drove parallel to it and fired a round of bullet" the prosecution said.

Following that, the assailants chanted "God is great" then took another car to Atbara where they posted a statement on the internet claiming responsibility for the attack.

Reuters reported that the five defendants chanted "God is great" as they walked into the East Khartoum court and were greeted by a crowd of supporters who shouted religious slogans and "Down, down, USA."

All five men wore beards and traditional white gowns, and Reuters reporter at the court saw two of them spit in the faces of two Western women journalists before walking into the building with iron shackles on their ankles.

Among those in the dock was a 23-year-old son of the head of Ansar al-Sunna, a pacifist Muslim sect in Sudan that has no political affiliations but has links to the orthodox Wahhabi sect dominant in Saudi Arabia.

The others were listed as an engineering student, a merchant and a former security officer from Khartoum and a driver from Atbara, in northern Sudan.

The judge adjourned the case to September 11 to allow Granville's family to appoint a lawyer and to find a larger courtroom, at the request of the defense.

The suspects were part of a cell that is believed to have been formed last year after Sudan's president, Omar al-Bashir, vehemently rejected the idea of a United Nations peacekeeping mission to Darfur.

One journalist who attended the trial today told Sudan Tribune on condition of anonymity that security was very lax unlike usual and no screening was made by the police.

"I think they did that on purpose to intimidate the Western diplomats so they can convey to their governments the scenario of what would happen if an arrest warrant is issued for the Sudanese president by the International Criminal Court (ICC)" the journalist said.

"At other trials I have been to we were searched at least five times before we were allowed in" he added.