

Referendum Watch

NCP accepts preliminary referendum results

Al-Ayyam et al Khartoum, 31/01/11 - NCP figure Gutbi Al-Mahdi told the press in Khartoum yesterday that his party accepted the outcome of the referendum even before the vote. He assured that Sudan would continue to cooperate with the nascent state on security, the economy and social issues in such a way as to make of the referendum a mere political decision.

He lauded FVP Salva Kiir's speech following the declaration of the referendum results yesterday.

[VP Taha later appeared live on national television at a press conference in the Friendship Hall in Khartoum around midday saying that the government accepts the outcome of the referendum but pointed out that the Presidency would officially announce its position later].

UN, African Union meet on Sudan, Somalia

AFP Addis Ababa, 31/01/11 - UN and African Union leaders, gathered here for the second and final day of an AU summit, were discussing post-referendum Sudan and the future of Somalia after the transitional government's mandate expires in August, officials said Monday.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon is chairing the meeting. Those taking part include Sudan President Omar al-Bashir, south Sudan leader Salva Kiir, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and African Union Commission chief Jean Ping.

Also in attendance are South African President Jacob Zuma and officials from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a six-member regional grouping.

"What is important at this time, is that the parties should engage immediately to address all the post-referendum issues," Ban said, citing border demarcation, citizenship, security matters and the sharing of wealth, as well as the status of the contested border district of Abyei.

"The United Nations will engage, whatever the results may be, with the people and government of Sudan."

The officials will also discuss Darfur, the troubled region of western Sudan, on the understanding that a return to calm there is a prerequisite for peace in the new south Sudan.

We have post-referendum security arrangements in place – Defence Minister

Al-Sudani Khartoum, 31/01/11 – Defence Minister Abdurraheem Mohamed Hussein says all issues pertaining to the post-referendum security arrangements have been resolved. He said that the SAF and the JIUs would embark on resolving the issue of the status of southern Sudanese combatants within its ranks as soon as the final results of the referendum are announced. The minister said that his ministry is also prepared to sign a joint defence protocol with the nascent southern Sudanese state.

JDB convenes in Juba today

Al-Ahram Al-Youm Juba, 31/01/11 – The Joint Defence Board convenes its 35th meeting today in Juba. JDB Spokesperson Mjr. Gen. Ahmed Abdallah Al-Nou says the JDBs would receive a brief on the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs), on the financial status and on the redeployment of JIUs to the Abyei area.

Haroun denies reports of having received military ware from Khartoum

Al-Khartoum Khartoum, 31/01/11 – Southern Kordofan Governor Ahmed Haroun has denied recent SPLA allegations that Khartoum has dispatched military hardware to his state. He described the allegations as baseless and pointed out that there is a joint committee in place that is charged with addressing such issues. The committee, he said, has not received any official complaint to that end.

He also denied reports that the electoral register in the state may be reviewed against the background of allegations of irregularities.

South Sudan awaiting world nod on vote outcome: Kiir

AFP Addis Ababa, 31/01/11 - The leader of South Sudan leader, Salva Kiir, said Monday he looked forward to the international community confirming his region's referendum in which voters overwhelmingly chose to secede from the north.

"We expect this outcome to be confirmed by members of the international community, beginning with those present in this august assembly," Kiir told African Union (AU) leaders at a summit in Addis Ababa.

"We must therefore begin preparing to welcome the consequences of this historic decision and we are now presented with the opportunity to cement the transition towards an era of long-term peace and stability in the Sudan and the wider region," Kiir said.

Kiir spoke at a special AU meeting on Sudan attended by UN chief Ban Ki-moon, Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir, AU commission chief Jean Ping and officials from an east African peace bloc.

The South Sudan leader reiterated his Sudan People's Liberation Movement's position that the contested region of Abyei should hold a referendum to determine its future or be handed to the south through by a presidential decree.

"I shall be remiss if I do not express our disappointment that the referendum required by the CPA on Abyei did not take place..," said Kiir, referring to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended a 20-year civil war between north and south, Africa's longest.

"For us, we continue to forecast two possible outcomes: The holding of a referendum consistent with the provisions of the CPA, or the administrative transfer of Abyei by presidential decree to the south," he added.

Popular Consultations Watch

7 injured in popular consultations station in Rosseires

Al-Ayyam Rosseires, 31/01/11 – The Commissioner for Rosseires confirms that seven people have been injured in clashes at the Wad Al-Mahi popular consultations station in the county. Shukrallah Ahmed revealed that the Popular Consultations Commission has suspended work at the Wad Al-Mahi and the nearby Um-Dersa stations. He said that the clashes were as a result of heightened tensions between the people and started when one citizen requested another to not smoke in the public space.

NCP leader in Blue Nile area dies of injuries

Al-Ahram Al-Youm 31/01/11 – The head of the NCP in the Bagan area, Bau locality of Blue Nile State, died yesterday following violent incidents in the area last Saturday. The late Hameeda Al-Dou is said to have been beaten alongside two other party members by what the NCP believes were SPLA elements.

Meanwhile attacks on NCP members continued yesterday in Rosseries locality with some 50 people wielding knives and bludgeons raided the Wad Al-Mahi area, injuring 5 people in the process. An eyewitness said that the attackers wore civilian attire and raided the station in the pretext of wanting to participate in the exercise. NCP members blamed the SPLM for the attacks.

Other Highlights

Sudan student dies after protests, activists say

Reuters Khartoum, 31/01/11 - Sudanese protesters on Monday said a student had died from his injuries after being beaten by security forces that brutally broke up demonstrations inspired by protests in neighbouring Egypt.

Protests continued late into Sunday night as students in Khartoum University were beaten back and tear gassed in their dormitories with at least five injured, activists said, as Sudanese youth took to the streets.

Police and security forces surrounded universities in Khartoum and other cities on Monday, witnesses said.

"You are our martyr Mohamed Abdelrahman," activists wrote on the social networking site Facebook, on a group called "Youth for Change" which has more than 16,000 members and calls for an end to President Omar Hassan al-Bashir's government.

Three activists told *Reuters* that Abdelrahman, a student from Omdurman Ahaliya University, died in hospital from his injuries late on Sunday night and had been buried. The university has been closed down indefinitely.

"Medical sources confirmed to us that the student died yesterday from his injuries inflicted by security forces," Yassir Arman, a senior official with south Sudan's main party the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), told *Reuters*.

Sudanese police clash with students in Khartoum

Reuters Khartoum, 30/01/11 - Sudanese police beat and arrested students on Sunday as hundreds protested throughout the capital demanding the government resign, inspired by a popular uprising in neighbouring Egypt.

Armed riot police broke up groups of young Sudanese demonstrating in central Khartoum and surrounded the entrances of four universities in the capital, firing teargas and beating students at three of them.

Some 500 young people also protested in the city of el-Obeid in North Kordofan in the west of the country.

Police beat students with batons as they chanted anti-government slogans such as "we are ready to die for Sudan" and "revolution, revolution until victory".

Groups have emerged on social networking sites calling themselves "Youth for Change" and "The Spark", since the uprisings in nearby Tunisia and close ally Egypt this month.

"Youth for Change" has attracted more than 15,000 members.

"The people of Sudan will not remain silent any more," its Facebook page said. "It is about time we demand our rights and take what's ours in a peaceful demonstration that will not involve any acts of sabotage."

The pro-democracy group Girifna ("We're fed up") said nine members were detained the night before the protest and opposition party officials listed almost 40 names of protesters arrested on Sunday. Five were injured, they added.

Lawmakers call on security to clamp down on protestors

Al-Intibaha Khartoum, 31/01/11 – Parliament has downplayed the "limited" street protests in Khartoum and has called on the security to clamp down on any illegal gathering in order to safeguard lives and property.

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Hajo Gism-el-Sid, told reported yesterday that the Khartoum protests have nothing in common with what happened in Tunisia, pointing out that skyrocketing market prices are a current global trend that could not be reserved with protests.

Meanwhile, the head of the parliamentary committee on security, Markazo Kuku, has called for vigilance from the security organs urging them to clamp down on illegal gatherings. He said the opposition parties are to blame for these demonstrations because they had earlier called for such protests.

Sudan asks UNSC to suspend ICC warrants indefinitely

Al-Ahram Al-Youm Khartoum, 31/01/11 – The Sudan government has requested the UN Security Council to suspend indefinitely the ICC warrants on Sudanese nationals and reiterates its position not to hand over any Sudanese to the ICC. Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Khaled Musa told reporters yesterday that that the ICC is also to blame for supporting the Darfur rebels. Dubbing ICC Chief Prosecutor Louis Ocampo as "prosecutor-turned political activist", Khaled said the ICC has become a major obstacle to peace in Darfur.

Sudan demands end to U.S. sanctions after referendum

Reuters Addis Ababa, 31/01/11 - Sudan called on Monday on the United States to lift sanctions, a day after provisional results showed south Sudan voted almost unanimously to secede in a referendum.

The United States had declared the peaceful conduct of South Sudan's January independence referendum a top priority and offered the Khartoum government a 'roadmap' to full ties if it allowed the vote to proceed and made progress on Darfur.

While Washington has praised Sudan for the January vote, officials have said they are still concerned about the situation in Darfur, where violence continues to crackle.

"We have delivered what we promised. We now want all sanctions to be lifted," Foreign Minister Ali Karti told Reuters on the sidelines of an African Union summit in Ethiopia.

"Darfur should not be attached on this. We are providing our full cooperation with them to solve the issue," he said.

Karti hoped the peaceful conduct of the vote would provide an opening for economic opportunities for his isolated country, which has long faced embargoes.

"We want more investment in our country. We want to strengthen our trade, and enhance cooperation on all aspects," he told *Reuters*.

South Darfur Governor denies “no criminal alive” statement

Al-Ayyam Khartoum, 31/01/11 – Clashes between the police and outlaws in South Darfur have left one person dead and four others injured. South Darfur Governor Abdulhameed Musa Kasha called on the state judicial authorities to urgently bring the culprits to book and vowed to restore security to the state. The governor denied recent statements attributed to him ordering security authorities to kill criminals.

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