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Highlights

Parliament endorses Security Act

Local dailies report the National Assembly yesterday endorsed the National Security Act by majority vote, empowering NISS to carry out detention for 30 days and authorizing NISS DG to extend the duration of detention for a period not exceeding 15 days.

According to *Sudan Tribune website* 20/12/09 – SPLM blasted the passage of the National Security bill in the Parliament despite objections it raised along with other opposition parties on portions of the new law.

SPLM bloc voted against the bill while other opposition parties' representatives walked out in protest including the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the Eastern Front and the Beja Congress.

The contentious point in the law revolved around the powers of the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) in arrest, search, seizure and length of detention.

Opposition parties say that the CPA limited the NISS role in gathering and analyzing intelligence with executive powers assigned to law enforcement and judiciary.

However, the NCP argued that the security organ would not be able to function efficiently without the power to arrest and detain suspects.

Sudan ruling party accuses south of vote fraud

Reuters 21/12/09 - Sudan's ruling party accused southern authorities of election fraud on Monday after figures showed five southern states had managed to sign up more than 100 percent of their estimated electorate in a voter count.

South Sudanese officials dismissed the accusations saying official estimates of the electorate were inaccurate because they were based on a faulty census.

Figures seen by Reuters showed elections staff in south Sudan's Unity state collected the names of 522,196 voters during a six-week registration exercise, almost twice estimates of the state's entire electorate, according to an earlier census.

Five other states -- Warap, Lakes, Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal in south Sudan, and Southern Kordofan in north Sudan -- also signed up between 107 and 140 per cent of their estimated electorates, according to the document compiled by the country's National Elections Commission.

Figures published by the Rift Valley Institute showed southern regions only managed to register between 1 and 23 per cent of their total populations in previous elections.

"There was very clear forgery in most of the registration stations. There has been double registration and underage people were registered," Ibrahim Ghandour, a senior member of the governing National Congress Party told Reuters.

"There is one main party in the south. They control everything. Our first accusation must go to our brothers in the SPLM."

The southern parliament is dominated by the SPLM who fought as rebels in the civil war conflict.

Ghandour said the count in Southern Kordofan had also been high because of SPLM involvement in the border region.

SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum dismissed the accusation, saying the registration was carried out by the elections commission, not his party.

"These new registration figures are proof that the census was wrong," senior SPLM official Anne Itto told Reuters.

The SPLM rejected the results of last year's census -- used to calculate the electoral estimates and the borders of constituencies -- saying it undercounted southerners in the south and around Khartoum and over-counted northerners.

The SPLM and opposition groups have also accused the NCP of fraud during the registration that ended on Dec. 7.

Sudan's National Elections Commission said it was investigating the registration data. "We are trying to find out the reasons for these high figures," Commission deputy chair Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah told Reuters

LRA attacks in Sudan, Congo may be crimes against humanity - UN

AF 21/12/09 - The U.N. reported Monday that the Ugandan-based Lord's Resistance Army killed, mutilated and raped villagers in Sudan and Congo in 2008 and 2009 in what may have been crimes against humanity.

The rebels killed at least 1,200 people and abducted 1,400, including children and women, in northeastern Congo from September last year to June, said a report by the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights.

A separate report by the U.N.'s rights office said that, in at least 27 attacks on villages in southern Sudan, the Lord's Resistance Army killed more than 80 civilians and kidnapped many others to use as child soldiers, sex slaves and spies.

The report called the attacks in Sudan, which it said took place between December 2008 and March 2009, deliberate and brutal.

Both reports were based on hundreds of interviews with survivors and several field trips to the remote areas by U.N. employees, said Rupert Colville, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights.

One survivor in Sudan told U.N. employees that he found the mutilated body of a fellow villager. "The villager's leg had been chopped off, his jaws had been dislocated and his teeth had been pulled out," the report said.

The rebels frequently cross into Congo and Sudan and are notorious for mutilating and murdering civilians and kidnapping children to use as fighters.

Survivors in Sudan told U.N. investigators that armed Lord's Resistance Army rebels arrived in groups of between five and 20, and attacked people with axes, bayonets, hoes, knives and machetes known as "pangas." They reserved the use of firearms for those who tried to flee, the report said. "The LRA attacks may amount to crimes against humanity," it said.

The report on Congo said thousands of homes, dozens of shops, hospitals, churches and at least thirty schools were looted and set on fire in various parts of Orientale Province. Villagers were mutilated, tortured and raped, the report said.

The widespread abuses may have been war crimes and crimes against humanity, it said.

The Lord's Resistance Army has been fighting the Ugandan government for over 20 years, accusing it of discriminating against the country's northern tribes.

The Ugandan military, along with forces from Congo and southern Sudan, launched a joint operation against Lord's Resistance Army rebels in Congo from December 2008 to March 2009. The offensive came after rebel leader Joseph Kony failed to turn up last year to sign a peace agreement.

Kony and other top Lord's Resistance Army members are accused by the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Kony is still at large, as are many of his commanders, although the rebels have splintered into several smaller groups.

In some attacks, the Congolese army helped the Lord's Resistance Army, the report said, adding that the country's security forces terrorized some of those who fled. People faced "harassment, extortion, rape and summary executions committed by the Congolese security forces," the report said.

Opposition parties reject endorsement of the security law

The opposition parties (Juba Conference) have rejected the National Security Act which was endorsed by majority vote of the National Assembly yesterday, saying the law is not binding on them, **local dailies** report. The group, at a meeting yesterday, decided to speak out against the manner in which the law was passed.

Parliament lifts Lam Akol's membership

The National Assembly at a session yesterday stripped Lam Akol and Abdallah Chol of their parliamentary status by revoking their membership, **local dailies** report. However, the Parliament retained Ghazi Suleian (SPLM) and Manaw Aliga as MPs (SPLM) when their membership was put to vote.

"Serious attempts ongoing to remove Kiir"

Southern groups have stepped up pressure to remove FVP Salva Kiir Mayardit from all his posts, Mr. Ishaq Ahmed Fadulallah, editor-in-chief of **Al-Wifaq**, writes editorially. "Due to the pressure, Kiir was forced to form a supreme SPLM Military Council to overrule the SPLM Council of Leadership's decision to nominate him as presidential candidate to compete against Al-Bashir which will mean separation with his current posts" he said. The SPLM Council of Leadership has earlier nominated Kiir as presidential candidate but Kiir rejected. Kiir suggested that SPLM Deputy Chairman Maliq Aqar should run but the Council refused on grounds that there were leaders senior to Aqar.

Misseriya chieftain spearheads “initiative for peace” with Dinka Ngok

Miraya FM website reports that the Misseriya Chieftain, Babo Nimir has launched an internal peace initiative to resolve disputes between the Dinka Ngok and the Misseriya ethnic groups. Chief Nimir said that the two tribes had agreed to permit herdsmen to carry one gun each during seasonal migration in the summer. He further reiterated the Misseriya’s stance of their right to vote during the Abyei referendum.

Sudan ruling party accuses south of vote fraud

Reuters (Khartoum) 21/12/09 - Sudan's ruling party accused southern authorities of election fraud on Monday after figures showed five southern states had managed to sign up more than 100 percent of their estimated electorate in a voter count.

South Sudanese officials dismissed the accusations saying official estimates of the electorate were inaccurate because they were based on a faulty census.

Some analysts had warned Sudan would struggle to organize the ballots across its vast territory, and many voters in remote areas of the underdeveloped south might be left out.

Figures seen by Reuters showed elections staff in south Sudan's Unity state collected the names of 522,196 voters during a six-week registration exercise, almost twice estimates of the state's entire electorate, according to an earlier census.

Five other states -- Warap, Lakes, Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal in south Sudan, and Southern Kordofan in north Sudan -- also signed up between 107 and 140 per cent of their estimated electorates, according to the document compiled by the country's National Elections Commission.

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"There is one main party in the south. They control everything. Our first accusation must go to our brothers in the SPLM (the south's dominant Sudan People's Liberation Movement)."

The southern parliament is dominated by the SPLM who fought as rebels in the civil war conflict.

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Police announces plan to secure Christmas celebrations

Local dailies report Khartoum State police has announced an exceptional security plan to secure Christmas and New Year celebrations. Khartoum State Police Criminal Desk Chairman Maj. Gen. Atte Abdul Hamid said that public and private parties would be allowed

until 11:00 pm but no excesses would be tolerated.

Mbeki to brief the UNSC on the AU roadmap for Darfur

Sudan Tribune website 20/12/09 – The chairman of the AU Panel on Darfur Thabo Mbeki will address the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Monday regarding the report he compiled this year containing a roadmap for resolving the crisis in Sudan's Western region.

The former South African president has just concluded a visit to Sudan where he met with different political parties and government officials on the mechanisms to implement the recommendations of the African Union High Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD).

This week Mbeki in Khartoum denied that he is pressing Khartoum to accept the idea of creating hybrid courts for Darfur suggesting that the matter is up for negotiators to decide on it and denied that the proposal violated Sudan's sovereignty as some officials have said.

"We should remember that these proposals, endorsed by the AU, are matters that are still going to be negotiated by the Sudanese themselves," Xinhua news agency quoted him as telling reporters at a press conference following talks with Bashir.

The head of the AU office in Khartoum Mahmoud Kane in an email to Sudan Tribune denied any change in Mbeki's position with regard to implementing the recommendations particularly with regards to the hybrid court and emphasized that the AUPD report makes it clear that no solution should be imposed on the Sudanese people.

Telar Deng declares his candidacy for Lakes state governor

Sudan Tribune website 20/11/09 reported that Telar Deng Ring, declared his candidacy for Lakes State gubernatorial position against sitting Governor Lt General Daniel Awet Akot amid preparation for endorsing his candidacy on SPLM ticket.

So far, Telar Ring Deng and Daniel Deng Monydit, the current chairperson for security at Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, have publicly declared their intentions to contest Lakes state gubernatorial position comes elections in April 2010.

Skin disease outbreak hits Yei prison

Gurtong 20/12/09 - The Legal Aid Officer for South Sudan Law Society Monday Helen told Radio Emmanuel 89 FM that the sanitation situation at the correctional institution of Yei is deteriorating by the day amid an increasing number of prisoners facing different criminal charges. She added that inadequate sanitation has led to the outbreak of several other diseases, including skin diseases among the prisoners, adding that it could escalate if unchecked. Radio Emmanuel 89 FM reported that the legal aid official said there are about 200 prisoners, including juveniles, who are serving sentences of between five and twelve months.

South Sudan Chiefs in Juba for Human Rights conference

Gurtong 20/12/09 - The Southern Sudan Human Rights Commission (SSHRC) is conducting a 3-day chiefs' conference to enlighten the local administrators on human rights in their areas of jurisdiction in South Sudan. The conference that kicked off on Friday is being attended by all the chiefs in South Sudan, including those from Khartoum, Southern Blue Nile, Southern Kordofan and Abyei.

Speaking during the opening session of the conference, Government of Southern Sudan Minister of Internal Affairs Major General Gier Chuang Aluong said the role of the chiefs is

paramount in addressing the security situation in South Sudan.

“We strongly believe that the traditional leaders are the leaders most close to the people on the ground. The policy of bringing the chiefs on board in resolving conflicts that is currently claiming lives in South Sudan is one of the most important issues that must be taken into account by our leadership”, he said.

He added that the role that they play is more effective than the role played by the government at the grassroots. “As a Minister of Internal Affairs, I consider chiefs to be part of the security team and the police”, Major General Aluong said.

“Now we are moving into organising the community policing to help with information that will assist the organised forces in detecting crime and preventing it. Security is a requirement that everyone needs”, he said.

The Chairperson of SSHRC Mrs Joy Kwaje Eluzai said her commission will enlighten the chiefs on human rights in the cultural context in order to ensure that the chiefs are the custodians and beacons of human rights promotion.

Meanwhile Major General Aluong has admitted that the security instruments in South Sudan are not ready to handle the forthcoming general elections.

Red Cross calls for unconditional release of kidnapped staff members

Sudan Tribune website 20/12/09 - The president of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Jakob Kellenberger, called yesterday for unconditional and immediate release of ICRC staff members detained in Darfur and eastern Chad.

A French aid worker of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Gauthier Lefevre was abducted by a group called "the Freedom Eagles of Africa" near El-Geneina the capital of western Darfur state on October 22.

The Darfur based gunmen on November 9 kidnapped other two French aid workers in the northeast of the Central African Republic. They were seized in Birao, a town located near three borders where the Central African Republic adjoins Sudan and Chad.

"I appeal today to the sense of humanity of the abductors of Gauthier Lefèvre and Laurent Maurice. There can be no possible justification for harming a humanitarian aid worker," Mr Kellenberger said.

The ICRC chief further stressed that the hostages do not work for or represent the interests any country but their sole purpose is to help those in need in the war affected areas.

The group said last November they target the French government for its support to the Chadian government and for hosting a Darfur rebel leader. However there are doubts on the claims of the gunmen as they are already asked the ICRC to a ransom that the Red Cross refuses to pay.

Chadian delegation to visit Khartoum

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports informed diplomatic sources as saying that a high-level Chadian delegation headed by the Foreign Minister will visit Khartoum during the few coming days as part of efforts to normalize relations between the two countries. According to the sources, Khartoum and N'djamena have shown determination to normalize their relations.

SLM-MM requests to be registered as a political party

SLM (Minni Minnawi) has called on the Registrar of the Political Parties to register the movement as a political party. SLM spokesperson Mustafa Teirab said their movement wants to register as a political party to contest upcoming elections, *Al-Wifaq* reports.

Uganda-Sudan border to be remarked

The *New Vision website* (Uganda) 20/11/09 - The Uganda-Sudan border is to be redrawn in January 2010, the foreign affairs state minister, Okello Oryem, has said.

He said a team of experts from Uganda and Sudan would embark on the remarking exercise on January 19, 2010.

"We have invited our brothers from Sudan and the borders will be redrawn as they were demarcated by the international community," the minister told The New Vision in an interview last week.

Oryem rushed to Moyo on December 12 to calm tempers following claims by the Kajo Keji commissioner, Muki Batali Bulli that parts of Moyo and Yumbe districts were in Southern Sudan.

"My position is that we should listen to each other and follow the principles of fair justice," Oryem said.

Bulli, in a 17-page document, said the Sudanese land extends to Kelenderia through Opiro, all in the heart of Moyo town.

He added that the land continues westward to West Eria Hill, Lefori and down to Wano, which are all in Moyo and had previously been free of controversy.

Other areas include Dwani Wano, Goburi land, Bori, Liwolo, Koriwa and several hills and streams.

Oryem said during the meeting, the Ugandan team refuted the claims by Bulli, saying they were not factual. "We are going to get the papers from London to show how that part of the border was demarcated and remark the border accordingly."

He said the papers were already in the country but due to the Christmas period, both governments could not mobilize everybody for the exercise.

The minister explained that normally a representative from the African Union Commission would be invited, but said Sudan was free to pick anybody from the international community.

University student killed his colleague in Khartoum

A student of the University of Khartoum killed his colleague who was a student of the University of Holy Quran due to a row over a mobile charger, *local dailies* report.