



SUDAN MORNING NEWS



Nashrat Al-Sabah

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Bashir and Kiir to meet today

The Government of Southern Sudan's Minister of Presidential Affairs, Luka Biong, said President Bashir and First Vice President Salva Kiir will meet today to discuss implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Biong said the meeting comes ahead of a high level meeting in Addis Ababa on December 5 in the presence of foreign ministers from the region and Secretary Rice. The meeting is also part of an initiative by Washington to help resolve the dispute over implementation of the CPA. (*Al-Ayaam*)

AEC Commission chief resigns

Tom Vraalsen is resigning as head of the CPA Assessment and Evaluation Commission. Vraalsen presented his resignation on December 1. Norway, as chair of the AEC, is expected to nominate a replacement. Vraalsen is due to leave Khartoum later this month. (*Al-Ayaam*)

UN, Sudan agree on some aspects of UNAMID

In a meeting with the AU/UN on December 2, Sudan pledged to allocate the necessary land for UNAMID in Darfur. Mutrif Sidiq, head of the Sudanese government technical committee for the implementation of the hybrid operation, said Sudan also agreed to release all communication equipment from customs before the end of the week. The two sides agreed to finalize a Status of Forces Agreement. The government, however, reiterated its rejection of UNAMID night flights until El Fasher airport is upgraded, but said medical evacuations would be allowed from the airport. (*Al-Ayaam*)

Mubarak Al-Fadil released

The Minister of Justice has repealed charges against Mubarak Al-Fadil for lack of evidence and has

ordered his immediate release. Mubarak Al-Fadil, who heads the Umma Party (Reform Agenda), was in detention on suspicion of involvement in a foiled attempt at sabotaging the government. (*Al-Hayat et al*)

Cabinet endorses draft budget, fiscal year 2008

The 21 billion pound draft budget for fiscal year 2008 is on its way to parliament following endorsement yesterday by the Council of Ministers. Among major features of the draft is an increase in the value of Value Added Tax from 12% to 15%. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has expressed reservations about the draft budget on the grounds that defense spending is greater than health and education spending. The SPLM has also called for a revision of all oil contracts signed before the CPA. (*Al-Sudani*)

Arab tribes strike deal with Darfur rebel groups

The Sudanese Front for Progress and Development (SFPD), an umbrella group comprised of Arab tribes of Darfur, declared in Juba yesterday that it will coordinate with all armed factions in Darfur to reclaim the rights of the people of Darfur to power and wealth. Al-Haj Ali Osman Mikhier, who heads the SFPD, said in a statement that the NCP-led government had used them as "fodder" for the war in southern Sudan. The Arab tribes in Darfur have an illiteracy rate of 90% and are among the most marginalized people, he complained. He said that the SFPD advocates for unity of the country and is now coordinating with newly formed United Front for Revolution. (*Al-Ayaam*)

The Sudan Morning News is compiled as a service by the Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Khartoum, Sudan. It presents a partial survey of the current Sudanese press and international reporting about Sudan. Material reported here does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government.