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15 - 21 January 2013



1. Al-Shabab & internal violence
2. Humanitarian concerns & freedom of the press
3. Governance
4. International relations

Note from monitor: Sabahionline.com is a source that suddenly began appearing this week across the Internet. It is sponsored by the United States African Command and it seeks to support American interests throughout the region. Though based out of Washington DC, the monitor believes the research and writing is conducted mainly by local correspondents.

1. Al-Shabab & internal violence

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 16 January 2013

“Amisom to investigate Leggo incident”

- There are early reports that civilians were caught between AMISOM and Al-Shabaab forces exchanging fire in Leggo town, west of Mogadishu
- AMISOM is investigating the incident and reiterated its commitment to “ensuring the safety and sanctity of life in the country” while fighting Al-Shabaab

Shabelle Media Network, dated 17 January 2013

“Somali security forces round up more than 700 in Mogadishu”

- This is the first report to be released acknowledging the third day of security operations in Mogadishu conducted by Somali security forces, which saw the arrest of 790 people suspected of committing violent acts
- The majority of detainees were released later in the day, however 84 continue to be held by police
- The tenses in this article are unclear but it appears they are being held until they are able to prove they are not members of Al Shabab

Foreign media**The Observer (Kampala), dated 15 January 2013****“Stabilising Somalia – now mission possible” by Richard Mugisha**

- This pro-AMISOM article (by a journalist “attached to AMISOM”) attributes any semblance of security and future of stability in Somalia with the Ugandan AMISOM forces
- He suggests that efforts by AMISOM prior to Ugandan forces joining the mission were stagnant and failing

***Monitor’s observation: It is important to note that one of the author’s indicators of less violence occurring are fewer regular, horrifying newspaper headlines: however as Somalia has become more and more dangerous for journalists, we can question whether the lack of headlines is simply a lack of neutral journalists alive or willing to risk their own safety*

Pro-Puntland media**Garowe Online, dated 15 January 2013****“Over 1,700 terrorism suspects arrested’ in Mogadishu”**

- Garowe Online is reporting alternate numbers of suspected Al Shabab members arrested and detained by police in Mogadishu’s Wadajir district
- The police commissioner of the region told Garowe 100 men were being detained on evidence of being affiliates of Al-Shabaab of originally 1700 originally arrested

Garowe Online, dated 15 January 2013**“Puntland begins military operations against Al Shabaab in Galgala”**

- Fighting continues in the Galgala region of Puntland as Puntland forces push to disperse Al Shabaab toops throughout the area
- The area’s residents have mainly dispersed, leading to (not reported in the article) an assumed larger problem of internally displaced persons increasing throughout the region

Garowe Online, dated 19 January 2013**“730 persons detained in Mogadishu security sweep”**

- After last week's arrest of 1,700 people suspected to be affiliated with violence or Al-Shabaab in Mogadishu, a further 730 were detained from Wadajir district [where a journalist was assassinated]
- Of the 730, forty were further detained in an open camp for further investigation

Garowe Online, dated 19 January 2013

"Seven killed as Al Shabaab attack Afmadow town"

- Fighting broke out in Afmadow town in southern Somalia between Kenyan AMISOM troops and Al-Shabaab forces
- At least seven people were killed including an undisclosed number of civilians

2. Humanitarian concerns & freedom of the press

Pro-American interests media

Sabahi (Washington, DC), dated 17 January 2013

"Returning diaspora triggers wave of land disputes in Mogadishu" by Adnan Hussein

- Land rights in Mogadishu have recently come into contention with the return of diasporic and occasionally refugee Somalis who return home – after sometimes decades – to discover that land previously owned by them has changed hands, often repeatedly since their flight
- Land ownership has been legally a murky area as violent conflict, destruction, and constant movement of peoples has resulted in the loss or counterfeit production of land titles and proof of ownership
- The government has asserted that anyone inhabiting a space not legally theirs, including government buildings will be arrested, and the law will be updated to ensure that all property is returned to the hands of the original owners

**Note from the monitor: it is unclear exactly how this will go forward, but it introduces the possibility of an impending wave of more internally displaced persons*

Sabahi (Washington DC), dated 17 January 2013

"Somali police say alleged rape victim fabricated story"

- The name of the woman whose account of being raped led to the arrest and detainment of journalist Abdulasis Abdinuur Ibrahim last week has been released by Police Commissioner General Sharif Sheikhuna Maye, who announced her story made "false allegations against the police"
- Police Commissioner Maye stated the woman was examined (by which medical authorities, it does not say) and she "showed no evidence of rape" and then confessed she was bribed with promises of extra camp rations if she lied about the story by "several Somali women's rights groups"

- There is no report of where the woman is now, or what has happened to the journalist who interviewed her

Sabahi (Washington, DC), dated 20 January 2012

“Somalia defends arrest of journalist reporting on alleged rape”

- Minister of Interior and National Security Abdikarim Hussein Guled defended the arrest of journalist Abdulasis Abdinuur Ibrahim for interviewing Lul Ali Hassan about her alleged rape at the hands of Somali police because her story was “simply baseless” based on a medical examination conducted by an unnamed doctor at an unverified time

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 18 January 2013

“Gunmen kill Shabelle journalist in Mogadishu”

- Abdi Hared Osman Adan, a radio and television journalist with Shabelle Media Network, was assassinated by several anonymous gunmen in the Wadajir district of Mogadishu while leaving his house on the way to his place of employment
- Shabelle Media Network demands journalists be better protected in Somalia,

Shabelle Media Network, dated 18 January 2013

“British ambassador condemns murder of Shabelle journalist” by Maalik Eng

- Abdi Hared Osman was the first journalist to be assassinated this year in Somalia
- In 2012 18 journalists were killed in the country

Shabelle Media Network, dated 18 January 2013

“NUSOJ condemns murder of radio journalist” by Maalik Eng

- More details are released regarding the murder of Radio Shabelle journalist Abdirhared Osman Adan, who was assassinated by three men while leaving his home
- Most journalists working for Shabelle Media Network live within the parameters of the media complex, however Adan chose to live in Wadajir district with his family
- Shabelle noted that of all the journalists killed in Somalia, the highest number of deaths has been with their independent network

Shabelle Media Network, dated 19 January 2013

“Somali interior minister vows solid investigation into the killings of Somali journalists”

- Somali Minister for the Interior and Security Abdikarin Hussein Guled announced there will be an investigation into the murders of journalists –

- particularly from Shabelle Media Network, three of whom have lived in the Wadajir district
- There is no further report of what the investigation will entail or who will be responsible

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 17 January 2013

“MP accuses AMISOM of ‘massacre’, AMISOM ‘to investigate civilian killings’”

- After a number of civilians were caught in the crossfire between AMISOM troops and Al-Shabaab forces near Leego town, MP Dahir Amin Jisow called the event a “massacre” and demanded AMISOM be held accountable
- The number of civilians killed has not yet been released
- Civilians have been killed before when caught between AMISOM and Al-Shabaab

Foreign media

UN News Service, dated 18 January 2013

“UN official urges African Union troops to minimize child casualties”

- Children are regularly casualties when caught in the crossfire between AMISOM forces and Al-Shabab
- Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, urged the African Union to better protect children when engaging in conflict, and that protecting children must be a central aspect to AMISOM’s mission

3. Governance

Pro-American interests media

Sabahi (Washington DC), dated 16 January 2013

“Somali military court executes two soldiers convicted of murder, rape”

- The Somali military court executed police officer Jamal Ahmen Abdikadir (age 23) and military officer Abdi Osman Magan (age 32) who were indicted for murder and rape respectively.
- The execution was intended to set a precedent against these kinds of crimes happening in the future

Sabahi (Washington, DC), dated 17 January 2013

“Somali’s first think-tank launches in Mogadishu”

- Abdi Aynte, a former al-Jazeera English journalist has been named director of The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, intended to be an independent, non-profit, non-partisan research centre

- The Deputy Director is former Somali Minister of Public Works and Reconstruction Abdirashid Hashi. The HIPS opened on January 15

Foreign media

Government of Ethiopia, dated 21 January 2013

“Govt to relocate IDPs”

- Minister of the Interior and National Security Guled announced the beginning of operations to return or relocate internally displaced persons currently living in Mogadishu
- The government has stated it will provide food rations, clean drinking water, free education, and healthcare to families who return

4. International relations

Mareeg.com, dated 15 January 2013

“Somalia trapped in servile or abusive international relations” by Mohamud M Uluso

- This article argues that Somalia’s independence is hobbled by its international relations, it constantly extending AMISOM mission, and its dependence on foreign aid to restart its economy
- These are all viewed as factors that undermine the independence and success of Somalia, and instead support legacies of Western colonialism or dependence on decision of the AU and the UN
- It attempts to deconstruct the various issues but realizes that without foreign aid, Somali people will not be able to prosper
- It uses nationalist rhetoric to call for a greater, more independent Somalia, that is an equal in the international arena

Somalilandpress.com, dated 18 January 2013

“A third way for Somaliland and Somalia” by Jesper Carlsen Cullen

- Cullen suggests the formation some sort of loose, regional union to govern Somalia and Somaliland in order to collaborate on shared interests such as piracy and Al-Shabaab
- He interestingly notes that Al-Shabaab’s commitment to a single, unified Somalia may have an influence on the hesitation of the international community to recognize it as such, as a statement of support may increase attacks and internal instability

Independent media

Allafrica.com, dated 17 January 2013

“U.S. recognizes Somali government” by Trevor Ballantyne

- For the first time since 1993 the U.S. government officially recognizes the legitimacy and sovereignty of the Somali government

- Assistant Secretary for State Johnnie Carson stated it was due to increased levels of security throughout the country as AMISOM and Somali government forces continue to move against and defeat Al-Shabaab strongholds

Raxanreeb.com, dated 20 January 2013

“Leaders of the federal government may cause minimizing fragile security in Somalia after formation of pure Federal system” by Mohammed Ali Hersi ‘Dalmar’

- This op-ed highlights the concerns of clan politics in affecting the future of federalism in the Somali state
- As the government is now past its transitional state, it notes we must continue to watch the local clan politics that inform how the success of democracy will continue in Somalia

Privately-owned media

Shabelle Media Network, dated 17 January 2013

“Al Shabaab claims execution of French hostage”

- Al Shabaab announced via its Twitter account it executed hostage French agent Denis Alex in Bulomaraar at 7:30am on 17 January 2013

Shabelle Media Network, dated 16 January 2013

“Al Shabab – We will execute French hostage”

- Al-Shabaab announced via twitter it was planning to execute hostage Denis [sic] Alex due to the failed rescue mission attempted by France earlier this week

Pro-Puntland media

Garowe Online, dated 21 January 2013

“U.S. recognition of govt creates political storm in Somaliland”

- The government of Somaliland believes the U.S. formal recognition of Somalia’s government is a “slap in the face” as Somaliland has not been granted formal independence
- Some Somaliland politicians have called for the withdrawal of official talks with Somalia regarding their political relationship in light of the American announcements

Diaspora media

Horseedmedia.net, dated 20 January 2013

“Puntland commends U.S. diplomatic recognition of Somalia federal government”

- The Puntland government released a statement supporting and commending the American decision to recognize the current Somali government

- This is in stark difference to the reaction of the Somaliland government
- The government of Puntland hopes this is a step in the direction toward wider recognition of other “nations” around the world