

WORLD & NATION

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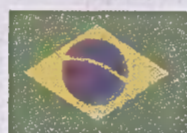
NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA

THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA ENDED ABRUPTLY on Wednesday after the North Korean delegation walked out of the room and left the meeting. The two sides have not spoken since the North bombed a South Korean Island, leaving four dead, reports the BBC. South Korea said it hoped that the talks would lay the groundwork for more significant and important meetings. However, after the unsuccessful talks, concern about the six-nation talks involving North Korea's nuclear program is likely to intensify.



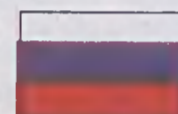
CANADA

VANCOUVER IS HOME TO THE ONLY "SAFE INJECTION SITE" IN NORTH AMERICA. Recently, this program has been receiving international attention because Canadian AIDS infection rates are decreasing while most of the world's AIDS infection rates get worse. Drug addicts are offered clean needles, aggressive H.I.V. testing, and inject themselves under the supervision of a nurse, according to The New York Times. As a result, this controversial treatment option has helped not only individuals, but communities as a whole.



BRAZIL

JUST ONE MONTH AFTER THE DEVASTATING LANDSLIDES killed almost 850 people and left almost 8,700 homeless, a fire in Samba city has been added to the list of hardships to hit Brazil this year. The fire started in a warehouse, almost ruining Rio de Janeiro's annual Carnival parade. The fire destroyed three Samba schools, floats, and almost 8,400 costumes, reports The New York Times. The Carnival parade is considered to be a sacred ritual to much of Rio's population, and it receives heavy international attention. Although it is still unclear what started the fire, it is not believed to be intentional. Despite the setback, city officials insist the show will and must go on.



RUSSIA

THE MAN ALLEGEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVASTATING BOMB ATTACK on Moscow airport is in custody. Chechen warlord Doku Umarov has claimed responsibility for the attack on the Moscow airport last month, as well as the Moscow metro suicide bombings in 2010 and the bombing of a train in 2009. Umarov is the leader of an Islamist militant group, "Caucasus Emirate," and explained that his fighters are "waging jihad in the Caucasus today to establish the word of Allah," according to the BBC.

In preliminary count, Southern Sudan votes for independence

By Abbey Brinkey
STAFF WRITER

Two decades. Two million deaths. One referendum.

Beginning in 1983, Northern and Southern Sudan underwent a civil war that persisted for two decades. Many Sudanese found their childhoods uprooted during these tumultuous years.

"I saw my home burned down," said Emmanuel Jal in an interview with CNN. Jal, now 31 and a successful hip-hop artist, was a child soldier at age seven with the Sudan People's Liberation Army. "At the age of five I saw my aunt raped in front of me. All my aunts died in the war, including my mum. All my uncles died in the war, except two. I saw my mother beaten in front of me and racially abused."

Originally, Jal did not "think twice" about joining the army.

"I wanted revenge for my family," said Jal. "I wanted to know who killed my mother."

Today, he recalls the horrifying details of his early adolescence.

"The most difficult thing was that you didn't know when you were going to die," Jal reminisced. "For me, my biggest fear was being injured. I didn't want to get shot in the eye or the leg or any other place that would leave me disabled."

When he was 12, Jal and 400 other soldiers escaped to Waat. Due to obstacles during their travels, ranging from minefields to starvation, only 12 others survived, reports CNN. It was in Waat where Jal met a British

however, the Sudanese civil war continued.

In 2005, a peace agreement was signed that ended the war. One of the stipulations of the agreement was that a referendum take place to potentially secede Southern Sudan



Sudanese citizens wait to cast their vote. Ninety-nine percent of voters favored Southern Sudan's secession from Northern Sudan. If the final tallies reflect the initial polls, Southern Sudan will be officially independent in July 2011.

air worker, Emma McCune. McCune successfully smuggled Jal to Kenya, where he was able to receive an education and fell in love with music. During these years,

from its northern counterpart.

According to Voice of America, in a preliminary count, 99 percent wanted to declare Southern Sudan's independence.

"I voted for separation because I want to be a first-class citizen in my own country," explained Jal.

"You have a government that declared jihad against the people of Southern Sudan and has set up a system based on wrong foundations," Jal told CNN. "A first-class citizen is a Muslim Arab and a second-class citizen is his wife, a third-class citizen is an African who has converted to Islam and a fourth-class citizen is his wife. A fifth-class citizen is a non-believer and a sixth-class citizen is his wife."

If the preliminary results turn out to be supported by the final tallies, Southern Sudan will declare its official independence on July 9, reports BBC News.

Southern Sudan will not have an easy road if they do gain independence, reports CNN. There will be discussions over the oil reserves — the majority reside in Southern Sudan — as well as the national debt and how much the new nation should take on.

Despite these debates, voters arrived as early as 4:30 a.m. on January 9, CNN reveals.

"I had to come early," Mary Dennis tells CNN. "This is a vote for our country."

"I am on a mission," John Baptiste, resident of Southern Sudan, told CNN. "My mission is to vote. We have waited 50 years, and we want to be separate. We have planned for many days to be here first."