

11th -17th Mar. 2016

The digest provides highlights of economic issues in the print and electronic media on South Sudan. UNDP's interest is on how the economic issues affects human development and vice-versa.

Media Outlets:

1. Voice of America
2. The East African
3. AA
4. Sudan Tribune
5. The Gulf Today
6. Radio Tamazuj
7. Juba Monitor
8. Eye Radio South Sudan
9. The Daily Newspaper
10. The National Today
11. The Dawn
12. Bloomberg Business
13. African News
14. UReport
15. The Star
16. The New Times
17. Radio Miraya
18. Reuters
19. IPP Media
20. Gurtong
21. Geeska Afrika Online
22. The Nation Mirror
23. The daily Vision
24. The Eye
25. The National Saturday
26. This Day

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WEEKLY MEDIA ECONOMIC DIGEST SOUTH SUDAN



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PRICES AND MARKETS

National Bureau of Statistics reports record high inflation

[Radio Miraya- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

The National Bureau of Statistics says inflation increased by 202.5% between February 2015 and February 2016. According to the bureau, the Consumer Price Index stood at 8.5% in February 2015. The bureau says the sharp jump is mainly a result of rising prices of food and non-alcoholic drinks. The annual Consumer Price index in Juba increased by 193.4% and by 213.9% in Wau from February 2015 to February 2016. The leader of the Democratic Party is calling for the swift formation of the Transitional Government of National Unity as a step towards solving the current economic crisis. Speaking on Radio Miraya, Dr. Lam Akol said the country is entering the seventh month since the peace agreement was signed, but delays have made parties to missed timelines to form the government and that people are suffering. Dr. Lam says the interim government is needed to seek solutions for the deterioration economic situation. "The formation of the Transitional Government of National Unity today not tomorrow, will be the salvation." [Also reported by Kidega Livingstone in Juba Monitor- 16 Mar. 2016: Inflation increased by 202.5%- Report, by Denis Dumo in Reuters- 14 Mar. 2016: South Sudan inflation at 202.5 pct yr/yr in February, by Okech Francis in The National Today- 15 Mar. 2016: Hyperinflation hits 205.5 percent](#)

Market prices increase two-fold

[Junior Ali: Eye Radio South Sudan](#)

The average prices of goods and services in the market have doubled since February last year, the National Bureau of Standards has said. It says the annual growth in the prices increased by 200% over this period compared to 8.5% between 2014 and 2015. In its recent assessment, the NBS says there was a sharp increase in the prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages. The bureau also says the prices increased by almost 20 percent since February this year. It says this increase was mainly caused by higher prices of bread and cereals. In the evaluation, the NBS warned that that the figures are subject to variation because of seasonal products entering and exiting the markets.

Dollar with its devastating fallout on our economy

James Mading Gol Akech: [The Dawn- 12 Mar. 2016](#)

On seeing the constant sailing rates of the foreign currency (Dollar) against our South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) as a result of the country's economists' decision to devalue the local currency, consequences gradually grow with every increment. Nevertheless, no glimpse of rate decline appears as it was expected to be the solution by our national economists. I'm too small in this regard to say anything bigger than me, but it's my hope and many others- whom I sometimes hear their discussions on the dollar issue- that we shall

see the expectations getting materialized as soon as possible. Many say if it wasn't for scarcity of dollars in the country as a result of the 2013 conflict compared to some years back, what should have been done would be to put strict rules on how the dollar is supposed to be given to beneficiaries: and this has been seen as one of the reasons which the decision was taken to curb the situation of others who get millions of pounds without sweating a minute.

EAC: Juba to benefit from stable currency

Allan Olingo: [The East African- 12 Mar. 2016](#)

Foreign companies operating in South Sudan are expecting financial relief in the long run following the country's admission into the East African Community. Under the EAC Monetary Union, member states must adhere to the convergence criteria spelt out in Article 5 of the Monetary Union protocol. The criteria touch on monetary and exchange rate policies, inflation, taxation, deficits and regulation of financial systems. South Sudan has three years to work on the legal procedures to meet the obligations of the Community Treaty, and bring under control the currency devaluation that has affected companies' bottom line. Last year, foreign companies lost more than \$136 million due to the 84 per cent devaluation of the currency in December. The loss is expected to be the

same or even worse into the year as the South Sudanese pound has further lost its value by 72 per cent, moving from the 18.5 units to the dollar in December to 32 units to the dollar at the end of January this year. READ: Juba devalues currency, regional companies face losses. Kenya Commercial Bank, Equity, UAP Holdings, East African Breweries Ltd, CFC Stanbic Bank and Co-operative Bank have already registered losses. CFC Stanbic, which has operations in Juba, booked a \$70 million loss also attributed to the devaluation that saw its net profit dip by 14 per cent. [Also reported in The National Today- 15 Mar. 2016: EAC: Juba to benefit from stable currency](#)

Currency devaluation, salary increment & dollar auctioning, all contradictory

Emmanuel Arieche Deng: [Juba Monitor- 14 Mar. 2016](#)

The author of this opinion piece is not an economist by profession but since economy is part of life and not limited to books only, any mere person can understand the doctrines or economic policies that are deemed to rob the nation of resources that should have been used to build schools for children, drill boreholes for the clean water in the villages and make food available at affordable prices across South Sudan. There has been no sign of benefits felt from currency floating and no objective achieved since the

pound was devalued too. According to the master-minders, it was in the name of Black-market control but what has been felt all over South Sudan is the negative impact of it on all types of people; the employed, the unemployed and the vulnerable. The only objective achieved is the life of ordinary people made more miserable at the expense of a few. When the pound was devalued, the beneficiaries applauded it that it would control the black-market! Has it controlled the black market now?

Tough times as prices of goods soar

Paska Alfred Akwoch: [The National Today- 17 Mar. 2016](#)

Life is a hustle in Juba to people like Elizabeth Kiden, a peanut trader at Custom market who has to toil in the scorching sun to put food on table for her family. Kiden's small business has not been spared from the inflationary pressures exerted on businesses caused by the more than two-year civil war in South Sudan. With her small capital of 350 South Sudanese Pounds, she decided to buy a bucket of ground nuts which in the past used to sell at SSP75. But Kiden says she

barely earns profit from her small business due to high costs of goods. "I decided to do this business because life has been so bad. I cannot afford anything for my family. I still get less than what I pay for in the market", Kiden says. "I remember the past three days my family only depended on a cup of maize flour to make porridge because of price increase. Everyday 50 SSP cannot buy food to feed a family", she decried.

The mirage of catching the Black market

David Ariic: [The Eye- 17 Mar. 2016](#)

It matters not, whether Mr. Deng, a shopkeeper, Mr. Ali, a fuel supplier, or Mr. Wani, a farmer, cares about the type of the exchange rate in existence in South Sudan. But in one way or another, their businesses are directly or indirectly affected by the official exchange rate used by South Sudan. An exchange rate is the price of a local currency in terms of a foreign currency, most commonly the United States dollar. In the case of South Sudan, it is how much the South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) IS WORTH in terms of the currencies of other countries such as the U.S. dollar, the Ethiopian Birr, the Ugandan and Kenyan Shillings among others. If the value of the SSP is fixed to the U.S dollar,

then Mr. Deng, Ali and Wani can be certain that the price of their products would not change abruptly over the coming periods. But if South Sudanese Pound keeps changing, then Mr. Deng, Ali and Wani may be forced to raise or lower the price of their products. If we extend this simple example of Mr. Deng, Ali and Wani to the wider economy of South Sudan, you can see why an exchange rate is a very important price that can affect the whole is a very important price that can affect the whole economy of a country such as South Sudan. Policy makers must therefore consider it as one of the most fundamental issues in the national economic policy agenda.

BUSINESS

Companies hoarding fuel in Yei warned

Modi Gilbert: [Gurtong- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

Bidal Cosmas Wori-kojo, the Mayor of Yei municipality has issued a provisional order warning fuel companies of hoarding fuel in the State. The warning comes as reports have circulated of an alleged impending fuel shortage and thus the government is trying to regulate fuel distribution. The Mayor said that the hoarded fuel is usually sold at high prices later in the black market. Last year Yei faced transport challenges due to fuel scarcity. A liter of petrol skyrocketed to over SSP.100. The Boda-Boda business was greatly affected with some individuals

opting out of the business. The Mayor blamed those who were selling fuel at high prices in the black market. "We realize time and again that when we are predicting shortages of fuel there are individuals who also predict the same, and will immediately hijack the little we have and hold it somewhere and sell it in a manner that cheats the public" said the Mayor. According to the order which Gurtong obtained a copy, anybody found hoarding fuel will be liable for a fine not less than SSP.10, 000 or imprisonment not less than six months.

Our Jobs Will Not Be Taken Over By Foreigners, Igga Assures

[Chuty Anyar Michael: The Nation Mirror- 14 Mar. 2016](#)

Vice President James Wani Igga has assured the public that the job market in the country will not be taken over by foreigners after ascension to the East African Community. While briefing the Legislature on Thursday about the recent ascension of the country to the regional bloc, Igga said people should not worry on the issue of illiteracy and jobs. He said the foreigners will only come for business but jobs will be exclusively for nationals. South Sudan submitted its

application expressing interest in joining the regional trading bloc four months after gaining her independence in 2011. VP Igga said member states were critically examining documents of the young state to determine whether all requirements for membership were met, before it was approved early this month. He said it was now the responsibility of leaders to sensitize the public on the new membership and explaining the benefits to the citizens.

Gum Arabic: A valuable but neglected resource

[Stephne Omiri: The Eye- 17 Mar. 2016](#)

Other sectors of the economy such as the harvesting of gum Arabic will get the required attention when peace is restored to the country, an official has said. The gum Arabic, also known as acacia gum, is a natural gum made of hardened fluids of various species of the acacia tree. The cash crop has several uses but it is mainly known for its universal usage as a soft drinks stabilizer. It is being used widely used in beverages such as sodas like coke, pepsi and others. In South Sudan, large quantities of the gum Arabic trees are found in the Upper Nile region, in areas including Wadakona, Lul and Maywut. In an exclusive

interview with the Eye, the chairman of Democratic Change party Dr. Lam Akol Ajawin, said gum Arabic can generate a lot of income for the government and individual harvesters. He said this would have also minimized dependency on oil. "If we had used the money from oil to develop agriculture and forestry like gum Arabic, we would have now ended up with a lot of (oil) reserves", Dr. Akol stated. In South Sudan, gum Arabic tree is plenty in the belt around Wadakona southward through Lul, south of Kodok and north Malakal on the Western bank of the Nile in Shiluk Kingdom.

Eye Media launches weekly newspaper

[Mabior Philip: Eye Radio South Sudan- 17 Mar. 2016](#)

The Eye Media has started publishing a weekly newspaper, The Eye, a sister publication of the Eye Radio. The paper covers news, features and analysis on a variety of topics and provides a platform for

debate. The first free issue is now circulating in the market. Eye Media is the non-governmental organization managing Eye Radio.

ECONOMY AND PUBLIC FINANCE

South Sudan to cut embassy staff due to cash crunch

[The East African- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

South Sudan will cut the number of staff at its embassies across the world to save costs, its foreign affairs ministry said on Tuesday, as conflict and low oil prices take a toll on government finances. The world's newest nation plunged into civil war in late 2013 when a political crisis provoked fighting between forces

loyal to President Salva Kiir and rebels allied with his former deputy, Riek Machar. South Sudan's economy has taken a beating since then, and its currency has weakened, inflation has spiraled and revenues from oil dropped due to falling production and falling world prices. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

international cooperation is planning to reduce or downsize staff in its embassies abroad," it said in a statement. "The country is not closing its embassies but rather reducing the number of staff to cut down expenditures due to the economic crisis in the country." South Sudan's 2015/16 budget was set at 10.3 billion South Sudanese pounds, down from 11 billion in 2014/2015. It has 28 embassies worldwide. Both sides of the conflict, under pressure from Washington, the United Nations and African Union, signed a preliminary peace deal in August and agreed to share out ministerial positions in January. Also reported by Parach Mach in [AA- 15 Mar. 2016: South Sudan could ax embassy staff, by John Tanza in Voice of America- 15 Mar. 2016: South Sudan to cut Embassy staff due to cash crunch, in Sudan Tribune- 15 Mar. 2016: South Sudan denies embassies closure, says only reducing staff, in The Gulf Today- 16 Mar. 2016: S. Sudan cutting embassy staff in cash crunch,](#)

[in African News- 16 Mar. 2016: S. Sudan to scale down staff in its foreign embassies, in Radio Tamazuj- 15 Mar. 2016: South Sudan to lay off foreign embassy staff due to cash shortage, by Okech Francis in Bloomberg Business- 15 Mar. 2016: South Sudan to cut embassy staff as economic crisis bites, in Sudan Tribune- 14 Mar. 2016: South Sudan to close down its embassies abroad due to lack of funding, by Opio Jackson in Juba Monitor- 16 Mar. 2016: S. Sudan embassies staff to lose jobs, by Junior Ali in Eye Radio South Sudan- 15 Mar. 2016: Gov't tackles overstaffing at embassies, in The Daily Newspaper- 16 Mar. 2016: South Sudan to lay off foreign embassy staff due to cash shortage, by Richard Sultan in The Dawn- 16 Mar. 2016: We are not closing down embassies- Govt, by Parach Machin The National Today- 16 Mar. 2016: Economic crisis forces- Government to throw out embassy staffs](#)

Unemployment rates increase as economy deteriorates

Paul Bul and Nancy Keji: [This Day- 16 Mar. 2016](#)

Job seekers wander in the ministry complex daily as the economic situation deteriorates. As member of the unemployed youths are on the streets looking for jobs, the decline in the economy has forced many organizations and companies to reduce the number of workers. This crowding of the unemployed youths can be seen in the few institutions, which still seek young employees, and many job seekers scramble over job adverts to see where they fit in. David Richard who

graduated in 2014 with a diploma in procurement and logistics management told reporters of This Day newspaper, "I have applied with many organizations but the result wasn't positive. They can shortlist you for an interview and after that, none of you can be called for the job." Richard embarrassingly calls upon the NGOs and the companies to employ right people in the right positions.

JICA and Finance Ministry sign technical agreement

Richard sultan: [The Dawn- 11 Mar. 2016](#)

The Japanese International Cooperation Agency yesterday signed an agreement with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to enhance the capacity of South Sudan Custom Service through initiation of the project for Introduction of Harmonized System Code. Speaking before the signing ceremony, the Undersecretary for planning in

the Ministry, Wani Buyu said the Harmonized System Code is an international recognized system which put the capacity and efficiency of our customs department on the same level with our neighboring countries "I would like to thank JICA for this initiative because through the success of this, we will be at par with our East African Brothers," Wani Said.

S. Sudan Joins EAC for Economic Survival, Igga.

[Oyet Alfonse: Juba Monitor- 11 Mar. 2016](#)

With the economic hardship the country is undergoing and the continued suffering of South Sudanese, South Sudan has joined the East African Community (EAC). Addressing national parliamentarians yesterday, Vice President Wani Igga said joining the EAC bloc is for survival. As he was enlightening the national legislature on the impacts of joining the EAC bloc on the new nation, he stressed that for South Sudan to be strong, it has to get a friend to ally with politically, economically and culturally.

"Flies are not attracted by ginger but are attracted by sugar and honey; you can see how all these countries are clamoring to join this bloc because they know it's important and beneficial," said Igga. "The fact remains that there is no country which is an island, economically you will find reasons why countries form alliances, like in Europe they come together to form the European Union (EU). Why countries join AGOA, why countries join Great Lakes and why Countries Join COMESA, the Northern Corridor? Igga asked.

Sudan Threatens to Close Border with South Sudan Again

[Voice of America- 17 Mar. 2016](#)

Sudan will close its recently reopened border with South Sudan once again if that country persists in its support for armed rebel groups, presidential aide Ibrahim Mahmoud said on Thursday. Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir ordered the opening of his country's border with South Sudan in January for the first time since the south's secession in 2011, paving the way for better economic links between the two nations. The threat to shut the border again comes just one day before peace talks are set to begin

in Addis Ababa between the Sudanese government, the country's largest opposition party and several major armed rebel groups. Khartoum accuses Juba, the capital of South Sudan, of backing a rebellion in its Darfur region and a separate but linked insurgency in Blue Nile and South Kordofan. South Sudan denies the allegations. "If the South Sudan government does not refrain from supporting the rebels, we will be forced to close the border with the south once again," Mahmoud said on Thursday.

S Sudan parliament summons Central Bank governor and finance minister over economic woes

[Radio Tamazuj- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

South Sudan's National Legislative Assembly on Monday summoned the Central Bank governor and the minister of finance to appear on Wednesday before them to answer questions on the country's biting economic situation. Oliver Mori Benjamin, the chairperson of the parliament's information committee, said finance minister David Deng Athorbei or his representative will be present on Wednesday, though the minister was in India attending the Indo-Africa meeting. "There are going to be a lot of queries from the honorable members which can only be clarified by the two institutions, that is to say the ministry of finance and then the governor of Bank of South Sudan," Mori said. Separately, Mori said the parliament's finance committee will on Wednesday present on an urgent

motion to design a strategy for improving the economy. The motion, proposed Monday by Pascal Bandindi the chairman of the agriculture and land committee, holds for review current fiscal and monetary politics regarding the realignment of the South Sudanese Pound to the USD, by bounding the currency's official value between 18.5 and 10.0 SSP to the dollar. Currently the SSP trades at around 36 to the dollar. While Bandindi proposed that the parliament create an ad-hoc committee on the matters, most members agreed it should go straight to the finance committee, Mori said. [Also reported by Sudan Tribune- 14 Mar. 2016: S. Sudanese MPs summon finance minister, bank governor, by Joseph Oduha in The Dawn- 17 Mar. 2016: Finance Minister, Central Bank governor fail to appear in parliament](#)

Economists say Sudan's border trade slow to restart due to southern instability

[Radio Tamazuj- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

Economic experts in Sudan and South Sudan says it is difficult to resume border trade between Khartoum and Juba amid the weakening local South Sudanese Pound and insecurity at the border due to continued fighting in the south. President Omar al-Bashir ordered the opening of Sudan's southern border in January of this year. Al-Haj Hamad Mohammed, executive director of the Consultative Group for Development, told Radio Tamazuj the decision to open the border between Khartoum and Juba for trade is difficult to implement because Sudanese are wary about investing in the south due to economic

volatility and fighting. He said these factors are hampering resumption of border trade despite improved relations between the two countries. For his part, the Dean of Faculty of Economics at the University of Juba Dr. Marial Awou said the economic situation in South Sudan is deteriorating following the recent action taken by the Central Bank of South Sudan to float the rate of local currency against the dollar which has led to significant price rises. He called on the government to reverse the decision to sell dollars to commercial banks in South Sudan.

South Sudan's Kiir to sign to join EAC next week as Igga defends decision

[Radio Tamazuj- 11 Mar. 2016](#)

South Sudan's Vice President James Wani Igga says President Kiir will sign the final document on the decision to join the East African Community (EAC) next week. Igga represented South Sudan at the EAC meeting in Tanzania recently where it was decided to admit South Sudan into the East African trade bloc. In a briefing to members of SPLM party parliamentary caucus on Thursday, Wani Igga said the country's membership in the East African Community will benefit the people of South Sudan. Igga stressed that South Sudan joining the EAC would lower the cost of goods imported to the nation, while also improving health, education, taxation, ICT, peace and security, migration, industrialization, agriculture and rural development. "From the depth of our mind and our hearts we are convinced that this is the correct

decision," he said. "It will actually pull us out of many problems that we are facing today." Igga said joining the EAC would bring benefits to the people of South Sudan in similar ways to when the British colonized southern Sudan, and that Kiswahili will be introduced in South Sudanese schools. He further said they intend to connect South Sudan with the East African nations by a railway so as to provide consumer goods in the market at affordable prices. [Also reported by Sekou Toure Otondi in UReport- 15 Mar. 2016: S Sudan's entry into EAC portends good for the bloc, by Ayuen Akuot Atem in The National Today- 11 Mar. 2016: SPLM MPs clash over EAC admission- This came after 2nd VP Igga briefed law makers on the membership](#)

Admitting South Sudan to EAC was Premature

[Andrea Bohnstedt: The Star- 12 Mar. 2016](#)

The media noise about Greece, its bailout package and whether or not it would or should leave the EU has died down. Even at the height of the discussion, I can't quite remember there having been much debate on what the East African Community could learn from Greece. For example, whether a common currency really works when economies are very different, or to what extent member states are obliged to bail out

another country when it runs into (self-inflicted?) trouble. This is not to argue that regional economic integration doesn't have advantages – but I think the EAC missed an opportunity here. So I was more than a little surprised to read in the news that Southern Sudan has now been admitted to the EAC. The country had applied for membership back in 2011 when it became independent from Sudan. But it

seems very odd timing to grant it admission just now. South Sudan's President Salva Kiir had recently reappointed opposition/rebel leader Riek Machar as vice president, effectively restoring the status quo

before the (re)outbreak of civil war in late 2013. When you look at the past decades of South Sudan/Sudan's history, there is so much déjà vu, it will make your head hurt.

Juba should be ready to make East Africans feel at home

[Allan Brian Ssenyonga: The New Times- 13 Mar. 2016](#)

Now that the East African Community has grown bigger with the addition of South Sudan some things need to be made clear from the onset. My column last week was rather diplomatic and only focused on welcoming our South Sudanese brothers and sisters to this wonderful community. However other columnists and regional commentators were not so pleased by the decision to admit South Sudan at a time when the Burundi question is still such an elephant in the room. I do understand where they are coming from with their criticisms. You see the EAC is

still basically a fragile work in progress and the people in it expect a lot from Arusha. The five East African countries have achieved quite a lot along the integration path but more still has to be done. Tanzania is still cagey on the issue of movement of Labor for example while Kenya and Uganda keep shifting goalposts regarding the trade of some goods like sugar. Migingo Island also remains an unsolved issue. Burundi has taken a lot of steps back with its political crisis while Rwanda seems to be so far out of the blocks that others struggle to keep up.

EALA MPs laud S. Sudan EAC membership.

[The Guardian Reporter: IPP Media- 12 Mar. 2016](#)

The East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) has commended South Sudan for becoming the sixth member state of the East African Community (EAC), urging the world's youngest country to expedite signing of the Treaty of Accession and strengthen peace and security within its borders. In their House contributions on Wednesday, the legislators passed a resolution congratulating the new member of the regional bloc. The Motion for the resolution to congratulate the Republic of South Sudan upon admission into the EAC was tabled by Peter Mathuki

and Dora Byamukama. Mathuki noted that for South Sudan to join the Community, the bloc has gone extra mile in promoting business and economic development as well as bringing the continent closer to the coveted African Unity. "I wish to take this opportunity to whole heartedly welcome our new member South Sudan to EAC. I congratulate the Summit (Heads of State of EAC) for granting membership to South Sudan...this was a move in the right direction," Tanzania's MP to EALA Shyrose Bhanji said in his contribution to the House.

Koryom, Athorbei fail to front MPs over economic crisis

[Mayen Deng: Eye Radio South Sudan- 16 Mar. 2016](#)

A parliamentary sitting to discuss the current economic crisis has been cancelled due to the absence of the minister of finance and the governor of the central bank. The two officials were summoned to the house on Monday. The sitting was also expected to discuss pay rise for civil servants. On Monday, the Chairperson of the Information Committee, Oliver Morri, said bank governor Kornellio Koryom must attend personally while Finance Minister, Deng

Athorbei, who is on an official trip, could be represented by any of his deputies. In December 2015, the Minister of Finance and the Central Bank Governor abandoned the fixed rate of pounds against all foreign currencies and left it to be determined by market demand and supply. Since then, prices of basic commodities have been rising. It's unclear whether the parliament will reschedule the discussions or not. According to the Assembly Business Conduct, an

official faces contempt of parliament if he fails to respond to the summon for three consecutive times. Also reported in [Geeska Afrika Online- 15 Mar. 2016](#): S. Sudanese MPs summon finance minister, bank, in [Radio Tamazuj- 15 Mar. 2016](#): S. Sudan parliament summons Central Bank and finance minister over economic woes, in [Sudan Tribune- 14 Mar. 2016](#): S.

Sudanese MPs summon finance minister, bank governor, in [Radio Tamazuj- 16 Mar. 2016](#): South Sudan's central bank governor not under house arrest: officials, Opio Jackson in [Juba Monitor- 17 Mar. 2016](#): Economic crisis hits parliament hard, in [Juba Monitor- 17 Mar. 2016](#): Minister of Finance and Governor of Central Bank fails to front MPs over economic crisis

S Sudan parliament sitting on economic crisis delayed by fuel shortage

[Radio Tamazuj- 16 Mar. 2016](#)

South Sudan's parliament failed to hear testimony from the central bank governor and finance minister today after the latter two failed to show up to the assembly, which suffered a power outage. "There is no power in the parliament," said Oliver Mori Benjamin, the chairperson of the parliament's information committee. "People have gone to look for fuel." Earlier this week the parliament had summoned the central bank governor to appear today to answer questions on the country's biting economic situation. MP Mori, asked about the power outage and whether the parliament would resume today or not responded vaguely, "Administration has sent the

staff to bring fuel... as soon as we have fuel and we have lights from that time I will be able to say something." The parliament today also appeared to lack quorum given that few MPs were seen in the darkened building. MP Onyoti Adigo Nyikwec, the parliamentary minority leader, blamed the blackout of power at the parliament for delaying the business in the parliament. He complained of lack of fuel and even lack of money for the specialized committees to run their business. He said that the finance minister and central bank governor should be held responsible for the ongoing economic crisis in the country.

Army salaries restructured, to be paid today

[Deng Machol: The National Today- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

The low income earners in the army will receive their salaries, restructured by a 300percent, today, the Defence Ministry said. The delay in the salaries of the soldiers had become a subject of discussion among people in the country. In January, the Council of Minister approved the increment of salary of low paid earners in the country by 300 percent and said it would be effected beginning with the February payment. Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and privates, who comprise of the majority of the soldiers, were

among those whose salaries were to be restructured. The Minister of Defense, Kuol Manyang Juuk confirmed to the National Today by phone yesterday that the money was already available. "It is true, the salaries have been increased and have entered into account of the Ministry of Defense, of SPLA and these salaries will be paid by tomorrow", Juuk said. Like everywhere else, when army payments are delayed, shivers ripple through the public.

Parliament Denies Receiving Salary Increment Proposal

[Candiga Jacky: The Nation Mirror- 14 Mar. 2016](#)

Parliament has denied receipt of proposal to increase the pay of civil servants owing to the rising cost of living as a result of currency devaluation late last year. Manasseh Magok Rundial, Speaker of the National Legislative Assembly said that the allegation that

parliament has been deliberating on the proposal to increase salary of civil servants was baseless. He said parliament has never been informed of the proposal. "Our supplementary budget has not been brought to parliament" Magok stated. The Council of Ministers in

an extra- ordinary meeting in January agreed to increase pay for public servants to help them improve their life following the devaluation of the currency last year but this has not taken root as the salary for January has been paid on the old scale. Michael Makuei Lueth, Minister of Information and Broadcasting had told the media in January that, low paid public servants from grades 10 to 17, will get 300% pay rise, according to the public service employment grading system to help them in the difficult economic crisis. "People with lower income

and that this increment should be 300% that is the basic pay times three this is what was agreed and this will be in effect from February 2016" Makuei told the press. [Also reported by Deng Machol in The National Today- 11 Mar. 2016: Government employees' salary increments pending parliament approval](#), by Candiga Jacky in [The Nation Mirror- 12 Mar. 2016: Parliament denies receiving salary increment proposal](#), by Opio Jackson in [Juba Monitor- 12 Mar. 2016: parliament not aware of salary increment](#)

Foreign Affairs Minister Applauds UNITAR, Japan Government for Capacity Building

[Candiga Jacky: The Nation Mirror- 14 Mar. 2016](#)

Dr. Barnaba Marial Benjamin Minister of Foreign Affairs and International cooperation has applauded Japan government and United Nations Institute for Training and Research UNITAR for empowering civil servants and civil society organizations with necessary skills during the six months training program. Dr Marial urged Japan and UNITAR to further their training programs on psychosocial support training in order to consolidate the peace process. The Minister was speaking during the closing ceremony of 2015 UNITAR- South Sudan fellowship program aimed at imparting knowledge and skills to

the people of South Sudan on project development and implementation training. "South Sudan leaders do not aim at war but call on the Japanese government and other good friends of this country to support them with skills and knowledge to build our young nation," Dr. Marial said. In the same note, the minister called on citizens to embrace peace which can lead to infrastructural development of the country. He commended Japan government and UNDP for their support for life skills and knowledge to the public servant and civil society in order to strengthen them in various professional capacities.

Parliament to debate on economic crisis

[The Daily Vision- 14 Mar. 2016](#)

Parliament will be debating on the economic crisis today following the rising prices of commodities in the country. The Deputy Speaker, Mark Nyanpuoch said the parliament has seen the suffering of ordinary citizens and they as parliamentarians are also facing the same thing. Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) executive director, Edmund Yakani early on appealed to the parliamentarians to deliberate on the shocking, worrying and disturbing news from the Ministry of Finance and the bank of South Sudan to devalue the currency. The news received resistance from the entire nation as salaries have failed to match with the

current changes of prices of commodities. Nyanpuoch assured people that the parliament will address the issue. "The parliament is at the service of the people not to make them suffer but to deliver services to them", the deputy speaker said. Manasseh Magok Rundial, speaker of the National Legislative assembly together with Nyanpuoch in a press conference refuted rumors that parliament is seating on payment of new salaries which was brought to parliament for deliberation. [Also reported by Opio Jackson in Juba Monitor- 15 Mar. 2016: Onyoti calls for talks on economic crisis](#)

IMF tricks South Sudan on economic reforms

[Opio Jackson: Juba Monitor- 14 Mar. 2016](#)

The Executive Director of Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) Edmund Yakani has strongly criticized International Monetary Fund (IMF) over South Sudan's severe economic crisis. He said the organization has lured the country into economic meltdown through currency devaluation policy. Edmund said revising the currency devaluation decision is the only option now left for the government to do if it is to rescue its citizens after several attempts it used to normalize the South Sudanese currency and yet there is neither any industry that it aims to protect nor alternative to offer. "You cannot devalue your currency with the

intention that IMF will give you huge hard currency so that you change them in term of services to the people to reduce prices", Edmund said. "All over the world IMF has ever had any successful story of currency devaluation and I don't understand where the government is looking at when the IMF has failed in Latin America and Zambia", he asked. Edmund reiterated that IMF has no positive reputation with regards to currency devaluation which South Sudan can use as a case study or an assurance that the agreement with th IMF may not lead to the country's total economic failure.

MPs reject formation of Committee

[Taban Ayul: The Daily Vision- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

The members of parliament in the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) yesterday rejected the formation of the Ad-Hoc committee in its sitting. The committee is supposed to look into the issue of the national economic crises. Speaking to the press, the Chairperson of information, Oliver Mori Benjamin said that the members of parliament rejected the plan because the formation of these committees are time consuming and thus can't solve the situation at the

moment. Besides, the committee may need money for its formation. He said that the motion being raised by the eight members of the Ad-Hoc committee will be referred to the committee of Finance and Economic Development in the NLA so that it is discussed. "All what the eight committees presented in their document is right because it touches the issues of all the sufferings which people are encountering now", he said.

"Gov't needs taxes", Yei Governor

[Alison Lemer Francis: The Daily Vision- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

Yei River State governor, Col. David Lokonga Moses, told his cabinet that intensive enlightenment of the citizens on proper utilization of the taxes of the citizens on proper utilization of the taxes is necessary to show transparency and accountability. The remarks were made during the conclusion of the three day d3developmental plan conference. He addressed this to his cabinet which included his deputy, advisors, ministers, director generals and other development actors like the church and nongovernmental

organizations. His comments followed the conference's intensive deliberation on ten key issues relevant to the state such as resource allocation, role of local government and civil society and other NGOs as the state develops its development plans for 500 days. As the new state seeks to mobilize resources for effective service delivery, Lokonga acknowledged that a proper system on handling of the resources should be embraced to ward off resistance.

Parliament set to pass resolutions to fix economic downturn

Daniel Deng Bol: [The Dawn- 15 Mar. 2016](#)

Amid the country's slumping economy, the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) is set to pass strong resolutions tomorrow to address the economic downturn that has traumatized the country. The decision taken by Central Bank last year to devalue the country's currency, adopting a floating exchange rate caused drastic increase in prices of basic commodities imported and locally produced such as fuel, food items, building materials, water, mobile phone tariffs etc. The Chairperson of the Specialized Committee for Agriculture and Land, Hon. Pascal Bandindi Ndura yesterday presented an urgent report

to parliament on behalf of the parliamentary Eight-Economic Cluster which prepared the report. The document that was unveiled designed a strategic framework for improving the current economic situation, and demanded the parliament should establish Ad-hoc committee- a move that has attracted heated debate among the MPs. However, the debate to bail out the country from the current economic crisis has been ongoing for a week now in an effort to workout solutions in addressing issues pertaining to the rising prices of imported goods and service.

South Sudan's controversial admission to the EAC

Junior Ali: [The Eye- 17 Mar. 2016](#)

Its admission as the 6th member into the economic bloc, made up of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi, is seen by the member countries as a massive potential to expand the regional market, to what is now a population estimated at 162 million people. South Sudan applied for membership in 2011, a few months after it acquired its independence from Sudan. But it was given an observer status due to instability in the country, and other matters relating to a shortfall in its governance. According to Article 3

of the EAC Treaty, a country can only be added into the community, if it adheres to universally acceptable principles of good governance, democracy the rule of law, observance of human rights, and social justice. The admission was delayed further due to the conflict that erupted between the country's president, Salva Kiir, and his former Vice President Riek Machar in 2013. In a joint communique issued on 2nd March 2016, the East Africa Community heads of State confirmed South Sudan's membership on the bloc.

Government seeks SSP 2.16M supplementary budget

- The money is to cater for salary restructuring of Government workers

Parach Mach: [The National Saturday- 12 Mar. 2016](#)

The government has requested parliament to approve SSP 2.16 million as supplementary budget allocation to meet the salary increment for its low paid civil servants. The salary increment proposal was agreed upon in January following the devaluation of South Sudanese pound by 84 that has seen exchange rate of the US dollar as high as SSP 40 from SSP 4. The Deputy Minister of Cabinet affairs Salwa Gabriel Berberi said this will cater for the unclassified staffs of grade 17-10 with 11 million. SSP 3.9 million has been

earmarked to cover what the government said are salaries for gov't classified staffs in States. If granted by parliament, the 2015/16 recurrent expenditure will stand at 10.41 billion South Sudanese pounds, down from 11 billion in 2014/2015. "The minister of finance submitted the proposal of t draft supplementary budget regarding the increment of salaries for unclassified workers of the government", Berberi told journalists after a cabinet meeting yesterday.