

4th -10th Nov. 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 affect human development and vice-versa.

Media Outlets:

1. Eye Radio South Sudan
2. Radio Tamazuj
3. Gurtong
4. Xinhua Net
5. The Dawn
6. The Star
7. Juba Monitor
8. Africa Times
9. UN News Centre
10. Relief Web

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WEEKLY MEDIA ECONOMIC DIGEST SOUTH SUDAN



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BUSINESS

No commercial banks operational in Yei town

[Radio Tamazuj- 7 Nov. 2016](#)

At least two Kenyan commercial banks KCB and Equity have shut down their services in Yei town over lack of clients and continuous insecurity in the area. One of the workers at Equity Bank branch in Yei explained, "We can no longer tolerate to operate in an unfavourable business environment. So we have decided to close down our operations in Yei River State until the security situation gets better." He said they are experiencing high operating costs which the bank can no longer bear to sustain. He says some of their staff will be laid off from work whereas others will be transferred to work in the capital Juba. Earlier, State Information Minister Stephen Ladu Onesmo said that the government had issued an order directing all commercial banks to continue providing services to the people as the government is working hard to restore peace and stability in the region. "All commercial banks and financial institutions operating in Yei River state to resume their full operations as usual immediately. Secondly, all bank officials who have fled the state to the neighboring countries or states of South Sudan are hereby directed to report to their work stations otherwise they will lose their positions," the order read.

Equity Bank In Torit Suspends Operations Indefinitely

[Peter Lokale Nakimangole: Gurtong- 8 Nov. 2016](#)

Equity bank in Torit has suspended its operations indefinitely effective Monday following logistical and operational challenges according to the bank. In a notice at the banks entrance put on Friday last week it states that the bank has suspended its operations until further notice and has instructed its clients to access their money in one of its ATMs across the country. The bank's notice adds that the Eazzy 247 mobile apps will be available and can be accessed by the clients, countrywide. The Eazzy 247 is access to bank services

using your mobile phone. The notice further directs the clients to additionally get access through internet banking services. Bank clients say there was no notice prior to the closure which has seen many frustrated over the move. "The rest of us who went to the bank venue today; Monday, with an intention to getting accessible

to our own money through individual accounts, only to learn through the notice we are blocked. The boring notice directs us, the clients, to get access to our accounts and ATMs in its outlets across the country, Eazzy 247 mobile apps and also get through internet banking."

Kenyan traders resume business to South Sudan

[Xinhua Net- 8 Nov. 2016](#)

Kenyan traders have resumed business to South Sudan amid returning peace in the war-rocked country. Traders from Kitale and Eldoret towns in northwest Kenya have in the past weeks flocked back to Juba and Torit towns to deliver supplies after their businesses were interrupted by violence triggered by the fallout between president Salva Kiir and his former vice president Riek Machar. For some days now, there has been a beehive of activities at the open field belonging to Kenya Railway in Kitale town as traders park goods destined to South Sudan. Several trucks loaded with supplies have in the recent week been spotted transporting the goods to the country through Lokichoggio town at the Kenya-South Sudan border. Kenyan loaders who had been rendered jobless due to insecurity in South Sudan are back to their normal duties. "Our source of income had been cut by the violence

but we are happy that peace has returned and goods are delivered to the country. Now we are able to put food on the table for our families," loader James Simiyu told Xinhua in Kitale on Tuesday. Some of supplies parked in lorries destined to the war-torn country includes food stuff, households and furniture. Traders interviewed said the relative peace in the neighboring country has given the opportunity to resume the business they abandoned when war broke in South Sudan. "We almost lost hope doing business in South Sudan. We are happy that that peace has returned in the country and this has given us the opportunity to deliver supplies to the country," said Mary Waithera, a cereal trader at Matisi. [Also reported in The Dawn- 9 Nov. 2016: Kenyan traders resume business to South Sudan](#)

S Sudan crisis cuts KCB deposits by Sh34 billion

[Richard Mungai: The Star- 9 Nov. 2016](#)

KCB Group's customer deposits fell by Sh34.2 billion in nine months period through September, the lender reported yesterday, blaming devaluation of South Sudan's currency. The country's largest lender by market share said group's deposits stood at Sh436.8 billion in September 2016, a seven per cent drop from Sh471 billion a year earlier. KCB Bank Kenya deposits, however, posted a growth of 14 per

cent as a "result of customers seeking to place their money where they felt safe", chief executive Joshua Oigara said. "The pressure on the South Sudan pound has continued to grow since December 2015 when the currency was floated. But there has been a continued resilience in other six markets that we operate in," he told an investor briefing yesterday. The group's total assets also declined from Sh607.25

billion in September 2015 to Sh570.10 billion this year, but Oigara was optimistic the asset book would bounce back to steady growth as the bank makes investment in technology systems and digital platforms. The financial statement showed strong growth for Kenya, largely helped by prudent cost management initiatives. This helped push up net profit by 15 per cent to

Sh15.94 billion from Sh13.92 billion the year before, helping it stay ahead of fierce rival Equity which posted Sh15.1billion in the same period after an 18 per cent growth. Net interest income rose 27 per cent from Sh28.4 billion to Sh36.1 billion after net loans and advances increased by five per cent from Sh347.5 billion to Sh364.5 billion.

Telephone networks in Yei go off air

[Radio Tamazuj- 7 Nov. 2016](#)

All mobile telecommunication networks have gone off air in Yei town, the administrative of headquarters of state capital on Friday, according to residents. The cause of the interruption in the network remains unclear. Others attribute it to administrative matters while others are keen to link it to security situation in the area. John Tombe told Radio Tamazuj that access to communication has currently become a big challenge to communicate with their relatives both within and outside the world. "I really don't know what is wrong with the government on its own people. Why it is that communication networks are frequently being switched. Are we not part of this

country to also access communication services like other people in other parts of the country?" Tombe questioned. Tombe says when phone networks are switched off; there is a plan to kill people during brought day and night times. "We don't want bad things like killings to happen again." Meanwhile another resident, Joice Tabu complained that she could no longer access her family relatives in Yei and outside Yei area. "We all know that mobile phones ease communication and reduce travel costs. Now there is no network again, this means that there will be another killing of innocent lives in the town like what happened sometimes back.

Eastern lakes impose 2000% household tax hike

[Radio Tamazuj- 6 Nov. 2016](#)

Authorities in the newly created Eastern Lakes state have introduced an exorbitant tax by 2000%, sparking concerns from citizens complaining hike in commodity prices and lack of income. The rise from 25SSP to 500SSP was approved by the state cabinet on Friday. The tax was first introduced in 2009 and is collected annually by the local authorities in the area through Executive Chiefs, who levy it on

individuals living in their areas. State Information Nelson Makoi confirmed introduction of the policy and said the rate hike was necessary to account for the severe inflation affecting the economy. [Also reported by Mabor Riak Magok in Gurtong- 6 Nov. 2016: Eastern Lakes State, Adjusts Poll Tax from 25 SSP to 500 SSP, by Mabor Riak Magok in Juba Monitor- 5 Nov. 2016: Eastern Lakes state adjust social service taxes](#)

Prices of Goods Drop in Wau Town

James Deng Dimo: [Gurtong- 4 Nov. 2016](#)

Prices of goods in Wau town have slightly reduced after the business community begun importing goods from neighbouring countries. The conflict that rocked the country in the past months had seen prices of goods shoot up as there was a shortage of both food and non-food items in the markets. Traders were forced to stop importing goods following insecurity along the roads as most of the trucks were being looted. Mohamed Zain Ahmed Zain is a business man in Wau. He says Wau town begun receiving goods from Sudan and Uganda in the month of October and the prices have since reduced. He gives an over view of the new prices in the market. "There are enough commodities in the market that even the prices of goods have slightly dropped. A bag

of flour was 3,200 South Sudanese pounds but now it is 2,600 SSP sugar was 6,200 South Sudanese pounds but now it goes for 4,800 SSP rice was 3,000 SSP now it is 2,500 SSP. A jerry can of cooking oil was 2,200 SSP it now goes for 1,950 SSP. A box of soap was 2,600 SSP but is now 1,950 SSP while a box of tea leaves was 1,800 SSP but is now 1,300 SSP. The drop in prices of these goods has left the population happy as they can now at least afford some of the items," said Ahmed. Asha Osman a tea seller in Wau said most of the tea vendors are back to business following the drop of prices. [Also reported in Juba Monitor- 5 Nov. 2016: Prices of goods drop in Wau Town](#)

Fuel Stations Resuming Operations In Wau

James Deng Dimo: [Gurtong- 10 Nov. 2016](#)

The Mayor of Wau town, Mel Aleu Goc has said that the State from the beginning of November started receiving fuel tankers which were stranded along the Juba – Wau road for at least three months now. "Since they started arriving in Wau town, right now five out of the number of fuel stations in Wau town started have resumed their operations selling a litter of fuel at 70 South Sudanese pounds as compared to the 36 South Sudanese pounds per litter in June." He said so far 27 tankers have arrived the State since last week while others are still on the way to Wau State. "However the fuel station managers were proposing 95 pounds per litter. The price of a

litter to be sold at 70 pounds was reached between us as the State government and the fuel station managers," said Mel. "They were demanding 95 SSP per a litter because they said that they have encountered a lot of loses along the way to Wau and spent more than four months due to bad roads," Mel added. "We have rejected the demands because the price was very high compared to 36 pounds per litter by then," said Mel. "The agreement of selling the fuel at the agreed amount is a temporary agreement," he said. According to the Mayor the prices of fuel in the State will be revised after a month.

ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

South Sudan directs oil Companies to recall Employees

[Africa TVC News-3 Nov. 2016](#)

South Sudan's ministry of Petroleum has directed the Joint Operating Companies, a consortium of oil companies operating in the oil sector in the country, to reinstate all their former employees who previously abandoned their jobs due to the outbreak of civil war in the country. The Minister of Petroleum, Ezekiel Gatkuoth, explained that the directive came in accordance with the presidential order which called for

reinstatement of civil servants to their former jobs which they left due to the war. While many former employees in the private oil sector left their jobs in the aftermath of the civil war, others were systematically laid off by companies when their operations were disrupted by war. It is unclear whether the oil companies which have not resumed their productions in Unity state will be able to reinstate their former employees.

Activists demand sacking of South Sudan bank governor

[Sudan Tribune- 5 Nov. 2016](#)

Leaders of the alliance of the civil society Saturday have issued a strongly worded statement calling on President Salva Kiir to immediately sack the governor of the central bank and take him to court to face justice. The activists further threatened to mobilize the population and to take to the street in protest against the increase in the prices of basic consumer goods in the country if no immediate action is taken. Keluel Agok Kuch, Secretary General and Spokesperson South Sudan Civil Society Alliance, called in a statement circulated in the media and addressed to President Salva Kiir to sack the governor of the central bank, and to dismiss from their positions undersecretaries in the ministry of Finance and planning. The statement has called for "allowing presidential

advisor on economics affairs, former finance minister, governor of the Bank of South Sudan to appear before court to face justice for misleading the nation as a result the citizens are suffering on daily basis and many have already died of hunger due to order of December 2015 on currency devaluation". Kuch warned that civil society groups may organize mass protests against the government which "has deprived the will of the people as it is the transitional constitution of the republic of South Sudan if it failed to relief the Governor of the Central Bank and his two deputies immediately". [Also reported by Oketayot Santo in The Dawn- 4 Nov. 2016: Rights group urges dismissal of Central Bank governor over economic crisis](#)

TZ cuts fees on residence permit for EA state nationals

[Junior Ali: Eye Radio South Sudan- 4 Nov. 2016](#)

Tanzania has reduced to 500 US dollars, residence permit fees, for nationals of the East African Community member states, which South Sudan is part. Before the reduction, all foreigners seeking to live in Tanzania paid 2000 US Dollars

for resident permits annually. The country's Immigration Services Commissioner for Border Control and Management told Tanzanian local media yesterday that the change was in line with the government's commitment to implement

the EAC protocol. "These changes seek to provide preferential treatments to citizens of the EAC member countries, as compared to those coming from other countries," he told the Daily News. The daily reports that there have been complaints by foreigners from the East African

countries of being overcharged for the residence permits. Kenyans, Ugandans, Burundians, Rwandese and South Sudanese wishing to reside in Tanzania, will now pay 500 US dollars. [Also reported in The Dawn- 5 Nov. 2016: TZ cuts down on residence permit fees for EA state nationals](#)

Kampala & Juba agree to settle \$41M debt

[Juba Monitor- 4 Nov. 2016](#)

Uganda and South Sudan have reached an agreement to settle the payment of 41 million USD to Ugandan traders. The agreement is to strengthen strong political, cultural, social, strategic and economic ties between the two countries. South Sudan has emerged in recent years as the largest importer of Ugandan goods including food items. Challenges to Ugandan trade and business in South Sudan include concerns over non-payment on time for the food

items delivered by Ugandan traders. On Saturday, October 29, 2016, a High Level Delegation from the Government of Uganda headed by the Attorney General, Hon William Byaruhanga arrived in Juba to discuss issues related to trade and bilateral relations between two sisterly countries. Speaking to the media, Finance Minister Stephen Dhieu Dau expressed commitment of the government of South Sudan to deepen relations.

Workers Trade Union Federation Urges Government to reduce working hours

[Dau Majok John: This Day- 10 Nov. 2016](#)

South Sudan Workers Trade Union Federation has urged the government of South Sudan to consider the hardship workers are undergoing and put more emphasis to reduce the working hours in the Republic of South Sudan. The workers in South Sudan work for Eight (8) hours daily in order to execute their daily duties and after eight hours the workers go home late due to the scarcity of public means of transport across the country. "This issue has been very serious since the country attained its independence on 9th July, 2011, said Bona Ajieng Angok, the Chairperson of the Workers Trade Union steering committee yesterday during his media briefing at the union headquarters office." "For this matter, we are callin g upon the

government to reduce working hours from 8 to 5 working hours in the republic of South Sudan due to unbearable situation the workers are going through every single day and hour," Angok said. He further stressed that the former Worker Trade Union Federation has been dissolved immediately upon the signing of the workers trade union law in the year 2015 by the President of the Republic Gen. Salva Kiir and the steering committee is working hard in order to elect the union strong body that will address all the conditions that are affecting the workers in the Republic of South Sudan. [Also reported by Atem John in The Dawn- 10 Nov. 2016: Trade union urges government to implement new salary structures](#)

Fuel price increment rumors is risky

Omuno M. Oto: [Juba Monitor- 8 Nov. 2016](#)

The capital of South Sudan, Juba and the rest of the areas in the country are facing fuel shortage. These days, the price of one and a half litres of fuel which is normally sold at 33 petrol stations has risen to around 140-150 SSP in the black market. In some areas within Juba city, the amount mentioned above. Fuel prices in the black market have risen badly because there are no enough petrol stations, which belong to the Nile Petroleum Operating

Company (Nile Pet). Almost all the petrol stations within the city are not functioning. I got some rumors that the oil companies want to increase the price of fuel from current 22 SSP per litre. Perhaps their target is to double or even triple the current price of 22 SSP per litre. [Also reported by Sidonia Abuk in The Dawn- 8 Nov. 2016: Fuel price hikes in Juba](#)

Gov't urged to fix exchange rate

Memoscar Lasuba: [Eye Radio South Sudan- 3 Nov. 2016](#)

The Civil Society Alliance has called upon the government to fix the exchange rate of the pound against foreign currencies, saying there is no capacity to manage the floating rate. The alliance says the middle class and ordinary citizens are living below poverty line. Last week, the World Bank said 66% of people in the country are leaving in poverty due to difficulties to secure their livelihoods. In a statement signed by its Secretary-General, Keluel Agok Kuch, the Civil Society Alliance says some people are extremely poor and yet there has not been a change of the economic

situation. The alliance calls on the government to establish its own companies to sell commodities at lower prices so that many people can afford. It also urges the government to pay salaries of civil servants for the last two or three months. Among other recommendations to improve the economy the Alliance recommended was the apprehension of business owners who could be hoarding US dollars. It also recommended the construction of oil refineries and scale up food production in the country.

Conflict and climate hit South Sudan crops, spike food prices

[Africa Times- 8 Nov. 2016](#)

Nearly a third of all people in South Sudan are facing severe food insecurity now, and that's expected to "rapidly deteriorate to massive proportions" in 2017, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said. The FAO issued an assessment report Monday explaining that harvest time in South Sudan traditionally means lower food prices and greater availability in the markets, but this year the seasonal reprieve is expected to be short-lived. The fighting in Juba and other regions of South Sudan has meant a spike of more than 500 percent in grain prices when compared with last year, the agency said. Half of all harvests in the

country's Equatoria region have been wiped out during the renewed violence, and farmers were unable to plant for a second harvest because fighting kept them from their fields. In some cases, people have fled for safety and left the fields behind. In the north, the sorghum crop has been cut in half, as some Bahr el Ghazal areas faced flooding and drought cycles in addition to conflict. "The renewed violence has had severe repercussions on agricultural production and stability needs to be restored to enable farmers to return to their fields," said FAO representative Serge Tissot in a statement. "We are seeing an

unprecedented number of food insecure people at harvest time and many more people at risk of

starvation in the months to come as stocks run out.”

South Sudan will face escalating food crisis in 2017, UN agriculture agency warns

[UN News Centre- 7 Nov. 2016](#)

As the conflict in South Sudan grinds on, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned today that 31 per cent of the country's population, or 3.7 million people, are facing a severe food security risk, despite the end of the lean food season and start of harvests – a major increase from the one million who were in a similar situation at this time last year. This time of year in South Sudan, people generally are more secure due to higher food stocks and lower market prices, but the FAO warned that the risk of famine is looming, especially for the most vulnerable communities. “The renewed violence has had severe repercussions on agricultural production and stability needs to be restored to enable farmers to return to their fields,” said Serge Tissot, FAO representative. “We are seeing an unprecedented number of food insecure people at harvest time

and many more people at risk of starvation in the months to come as stocks run out. There is a need to act now to prevent a catastrophe,” he urged. Part of the reason for the growing insecurity is due to the violence that has impacted the Equatoria region, which is responsible for over half of South Sudan's net cereal production. About 50 per cent of all harvests have been lost in areas affected by the violence. Many farmers have been unable to plant seeds for the second season due to not only armed conflict, but also displaced persons. Northern Bahr el Ghazal is one of the most fragile areas of the country. It has seen a protracted economic crisis, market failure, and the loss or depletion of livelihood assets. [Also reported in Relief Web- 5 Nov. 2016: South Sudan Price Bulletin, October 2016, by Atem John in The Dawn- 8 Nov. 2016: Food crisis to escalate in 2017, FAO warns](#)

Daily rise in Local Market Prices spark breadwinner's fury

[Albino Deng Jauch: This Day- 8 Nov. 2016](#)

The world inhabitants in their respective continents stealthily watch what is going on in a newly born nation whose birth pang scene is still flash on and off the memory. The new nation in the economic sphere is facing daunting challenges made worst by the raging political crisis in the country. The market prices are distressingly disturbing blue-collar workers, waged workers, pink-collar workers including daily paid bricklayers unable to meet daily basic need leave alone children schooling fees. In any way, the price-tags in the beleaguered community which disrupt normal healthy life style in a country which is still a

toddler have made many people in all wakes of life to raise their eyebrows. If a potential buyer goes from pharmacy to pharmacy, he will get differences buying the same medicine. The same applies to groceries, hosiery, haberdasheries, delicatessen, shops, laundries, bakeries, slaughter-houses. A piece of tomato is 10 SSP, pen 10 SSP, an egg 10 SSP, a pair of shoes is 800 SSP, a sauce of meat with bread or pan-cakes costs 150 SSP. Hell is breaking loose! The only consumable items which you can find at an affordable price are all sorts of greens, because they are plentifully produced by local community in their farms.