

WEEKLY MEDIA ECONOMIC DIGEST SOUTH SUDAN



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5th – 11th Feb. 2015

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. The Nation Mirror
2. This Day
3. Juba Monitor
4. The National Today
5. Radio Tamazuj
6. Eye Radio South Sudan
7. All Africa
8. Gurtong
9. The CS Monitor
10. The Dawn

Disclaimer:

These are extracts from the news media outlets, they are NOT UNDP News.

PRICES AND MARKETS

Increase of newspaper prices curtails information

Daniel Majack Kuany: [The Nation Mirror- 10 Feb. 2016](#)

The vendors and news readership in Juba have expressed numerous concerns over the latest increase of newspaper prices from five South Sudanese pounds to 10. The Nation mirror newspaper, the leading information source and promoter of the freedom of expression in the country went out yesterday to gather various opinions from both distributors and readership to find the reactions. Variety of the opinions indicates the disappointment in the latest increase which they argued will curtail the information flows that educate the public. Kiir Akwang a news vendor operating at around University of Juba said he has been working in the field since 2012 before he could move again to Aweil and later return to pursue the same business. He said the business was profitable.

Traders ordered to reduce prices

Memoscar Lasuba: [Eye Radio South Sudan- 11 Feb. 2016](#)

The Ministry of Trade has directed traders to reduce the prices of basic goods by 40 percent in line with the reduction of taxes the government declared last month. The subsidy is on good such as maize flour, sugar, cooking oil and rice. Others include formula, sorghum, and salt. The undersecretary in the ministry of trade, industries and investment says the move was meant to reduce prices. Biel Jok told Eye Radio that law enforcement agents have been directed to implement the order. "Since we've reduced duties at the border, any trader who brings maize flour has to sell it at 450 pounds. This is a government policy and it must enforce it," he said. In November, the government gave \$10 million to Ivory and Alpha banks to import basic goods with the aim of reducing prices. In November, the government gave \$10 million to Ivory and Alpha banks to import basic goods with the aim of reducing prices.

Editorial: Has central bank caught up with Black market?

[The Nation Mirror- 8 Feb. 2016](#)

Whether it is euro or dollars, issue of hard currency continue to be mind boggling every now and then and there seems to be no remedy. It so looks like there are no alternatives after trial by government to regulate the market yielding no fruits. Attempts to keep exchange rate fixed at 2.9 attracted enormous black markets, and all streets of the city almost have umbrella forex bureaus. A lot of corruption loopholes on obtaining hard currency. When government announced abolition of fixed rate, the opposite

happened; instead prices hiked more than what people can afford, with serious effect on the transportation sector. An economist who is a member of the National legislative Assembly has earlier cautioned about the margin of the leap of the exchange rate. He said this can encourage hyper and could also lead to galloping inflation. It was hard to believe him, but we are coming closer to believing, because, from 18.5 pounds per one US Dollar, we are now moving towards 30 pounds for one dollar!

Trade Ministry to reduce prices of essential commodities

[Bech Takpiny: The Dawn- 8 Feb. 2016](#)

The Undersecretary in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investment, Hon. Biel Jock Thichon on Friday issued a ministerial circular on the reduction of prices of essential consumable commodities in the market. In the Order, Hon. Biel Jock drew the attention of the public and the business community in general announcing that the prices of consumable

commodities have been reduced by 40 % and will be effective from the date of the signature. Hon. Biel informed the general public, particularly the business community that prices of consumable commodities should come down forthwith with rates that will accommodate the subsidies made by the government in January at the border to be reduced by 40%.

BUSINESS

Still no trade in some areas after reopening of North-South border

[Radio Tamazuj- 5 Feb. 2016](#)

Businessmen and citizens at two border areas of South Sudan say they have not yet seen any signs of revived cross-border trade after President Omar al-Bashir announced the reopening of borders with South Sudan for the first time officially since the independence of South Sudan in 2011. Abraham Garang, head of the traders union in Warawar in Northern Bahr el Ghazal near the border with Meiram on the Sudan side told Radio Tamazuj on Tuesday that they have not seen any physical signs of borders reopening at the crossing at Majok-Nyithiu. "Am now standing on the road of

Majok-Nyinthiu but I have not seen any changes like vehicles and people coming from Sudan," he said. He admitted that they just heard of the reopening of the border through media but have not yet experienced the movement of vehicles between the two countries. But Garang pointed out that it will take time for goods to reach South Sudan through Warawar if it was true that the two governments have reached a deal to reopen the borders. [Also reported in The Nation Mirror- 6 Feb. 2016: Still no trade in some areas after reopening of North- South border.](#)

Company to shut down if economic hardship persists

[Modi Gilbert: Gurtong- 11 Feb. 2016](#)

The General Manager of Yei Electric Cooperative- YECO says that the company may close down if the economic

crises in the country persist. Malish Lawrence Taban, told Gurtong "that is a factor that eventually we will go

to". According to the manager, the company is faced with shortage of engine oil for maintaining the generators alongside the high prices of fuel. He adds that the company that used to supply them with the engine oil has no supply of oil anymore in stock. "I have been contacting them to get engine oil because we do service those generators regularly. they are over loaded so the engine oil needs to be changed routinely, but now the engine oil that is being used is almost not there in the country" he said "our main suppliers in

Juba are completely out of it, and also 'HASS' could supply us, but 'HASS' has run out of it too." Adding "those generators cannot also run without some necessary parts, when it comes to time that we are unable to get these parts then it will be very difficult to operate the generators, given that we are only allowed to run 250 hours after that we are to change the oil, the water separators, the filters and many other parts that are needed to be replaced."

Repair of four bridges in Imatong and Namorunyang states completed

[Peter Lokale Nakimangole: Gurtong- 9 Feb. 2016](#)

Rhino Star Supplies and Construction Company Ltd has successfully completed the repair of four bridges in Torit. The rehabilitation of Idolu, Hoss, Hochokio and Galerio bridges which are located on the Torit-Kapoeta Highway began last year in July. Galerio and Hochokio now falls under Namorunyang State while Idolu and Hoss now falls under Imatong State. The four bridges were officially opened in the presence of the two Governors of the States, Louis Lobong Lojore and

Nartisio Loluke Manir last week. Witnessing the historic handing over was the National Transport, Roads and Bridges Ministry's Undersecretary, Mr. Gabriel Makur on behalf of the central (Juba) government. Makur's tour to the two States of Namorunyang and Imatong, according to him was to purposely officiate the handover ceremonies and officially open the four bridges.

ECONOMY AND PUBLIC FINANCE

SPLM Taskforce to recommend solutions to economic crisis

[The Nation Mirror- 8 Feb. 2016](#)

The ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) said its economic task force is working to address the current economic hardship the country is going through. Bol Makueng, Secretary for information, Culture and communication who also served as Deputy Minister of Education Science and Technology told media yesterday that the party's economic task force kicked off discussion on ways to alleviate the suffering brought about by economic hardship. The taskforce will identify areas, which need urgent response and then the government will intervene accordingly. Makueng

believed the recent salaries structure increment announced by the Government currently in final stages in the Ministry of Finance will salvage lowest paid government work force undergoing hardship countrywide. He explained that the reopening of the border with neighboring Sudan will mitigate the high commodities prices hikes and enhance effective chain of demand and supply. "So we will have goods coming from East Africa and Khartoum then we will get a lot of goods coming into the country markets and commodities prices will be cheaper," Makueng noted.

For South Sudan, new challenge looms: bankruptcy

[Justin Lynch, Contributor: The Christian Science Monitor- Feb. 2016](#)

Analysts say that the South Sudanese economy could collapse in a matter of weeks if an agreed upon unity

government is not implemented. For Adam Loi, business has never been better. As a roving black-

market money trader, demand for US dollars have hit a new high as many here in South Sudan's capital lose faith in their own currency. Asked if they know someone who can exchange money, Juba residents throw out three or four options, an indication that traders like Mr. Loi represent a thriving business in a stuttering economy. Since December, the value of the

South Sudanese pound has tumbled by more than 90 percent amid protracted negotiations between President Salvia Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar over forming a unity government after more than two years of civil war. Opinion is divided in Juba over whether the negotiations will be successful.

Civil Society Alliance roots for Agriculture, to avoid dependence on aid agencies

[Achol Achien Kiir: The Nation Mirror- 6 Feb. 2016](#)

South Sudan Civil Society Alliance (SSCSA) on Friday called on citizens to avoid over dependence on humanitarian relief but to embark on agriculture. Akuoch Ajang, the Chairperson for Civil Society Alliance told reporters after meeting with Joseph Bol Chan, the Speaker of the Council of States that the country cannot rely on relief food from UN agencies and purchase food from neighbors. The meeting which was described as successful with the Speaker of Council of

States focused on production of own food for the country. "We have discussed the production that South Sudanese must produce, we cannot rely on neighbors all of the time, we cannot rely on UN reliefs after all even the relief that we are receiving, these are taxes payers who are paying for that," Ajang stressed. [Also reported by Dau Kur Bol in This Day-6 Feb. 2016: South Sudanese must produce their own food: Civil Society Official.](#)

Government requires revenues paid in designated commercial banks

[Achol Achien Kiir: The Nation Mirror- 5 Feb. 2016](#)

The Ministry of Finance and economic Planning has entered into agreement with eight Commercial Banks for receiving and processing Government revenues on behalf of the Government of South Sudan. The Ministry of Finance, Commerce, Investment and Economical Planning Directorate of Revenue on Thursday in a press release extended to the Nation Mirror said persons making remittance of national Government taxes, Customs duties, or fees charged by other National Government agencies are now able to make their

payments of those taxes, duties or fees at any one of the eight commercial banks. The authorized banks to received and process National Government Revenues are Equity Bank, KCB Bank of South Sudan, Eden Commercial Bank, Cooperative Bank of South Sudan, Stanbic Bank, Buffalo Commercial Bank, Nile Commercial Bank and Mountain Trade and development Bank. [Also reported by Richard Jale in Juba Monitor- 11 Feb. 2016: Taxes to be paid in commercial banks.](#)

Government welcomes resumption of river transport

[Deng Machol: The National Saturday- 6 Feb. 2016](#)

The Government has welcomed the resumption of river transport and trade between Juba and Khartoum, describing it as a positive move that will play a role in helping the recovery of the deteriorating economy in South Sudan. Sudan's President Omer Hassan AL Bashir made the announcement in a speech in the capital White Nile state, Rabak on Thursday. This comes after the government of South Sudan reached an agreement to supply Sudan with crude oil for its refineries and for

domestic use. "It will have a positive economic impact on both countries", Information Minister Michael Makuei Lueth told the National Saturday by phone yesterday. Makuei urged the armed opposition to respect the river trade route. [Also reported in This Day- 6 Feb. 2016: President Bashir announces resumption of river transport with South Sudan, by Robert Nyawanda in The National Today- 11 Feb. 2016: S. Sudan, Sudan border opening to reduce cost of living.](#)

Uganda: AU to Join S. Sudan Border Demarcation Team

[Risdei Kasasira: All Africa- 11 Feb. 2016](#)

An African Union (AU) team will work with two technical committees from South Sudan and Uganda to demarcate the disputed borderline between the countries. The Chief of Military Intelligence, Brig Charles Bakahumura, told a meeting of the two committees currently educating communities living on the border that a continental team would soon join them to start re-mapping the 470km boundary between the countries. "There will be a team from the African Union which will join you to help end this dispute," Brig Bakahumura, who chaired the meeting,

said. The technical committees have identified Moyo and Lamwo districts as hotspots of clashes between Ugandans and South Sudanese. The CMI boss, who represented President Museveni, said the disputed border is a security issue and that's why the army is involved in the demarcation process of the borderline drawn by the colonialists in 1913. The Ugandan team is headed by the commissioner of surveys in the Lands ministry, Mr Wilson Ogalo, while the South Sudanese side is led by Mr Jerome Gama Surur, a Member of Parliament.