

15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Apr. 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. The New Times
2. The Dawn
3. Juba Monitor
4. The National Today
5. Xinhua
6. The Daily Vision
7. Africa News
8. All Africa
9. China Daily
10. The Citizen
11. The Gulf Daily
12. Radio Tamazuj
13. The Nation Mirror
14. Eye Radio South Sudan

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## WEEKLY MEDIA ECONOMIC DIGEST SOUTH SUDAN



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### PRICES AND MARKETS

#### Availability of fuel continues to deteriorate in Juba

Joseph Athian: [The Dawn- 20 Apr. 2016](#)

The shortage of fuel all over South Sudan and Juba in particular has continued to worsen in recent days. Most refill stations have run out of fuel and have since closed down their operations. The few stations working are not enough to supply the whole city. Petrol dealers blame the shortage of the fuel on the scarcity of the US dollar to import fuel from neighboring Kenya. One US dollar trades at 30.2 SSP in the black market while at the central bank, 1 dollar trades at 30 SSP. Although there is shortage of fuel, Taxi drivers say there is fuel but the problem is the way it is being managed. They say petrol dealers sell it to black marketers who in turn charge them expensively. The accusation leveled against the petrol dealers by taxi drivers has prompted the government oil firm; NILEPET Managing director to blame security agents for failing to control the sale of fuel at the black market.

#### Ban fake goods from S. Sudan – Traders.

Clement Aluma: [The Dawn- 15 Apr. 2016](#)

Traders and consumers in Yumbe District- Uganda have appealed to the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) to punish those flooding their markets with fake products from South Sudan. The traders made the call during a consultative meeting with officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Uganda National Bureau of standards in Yumbe Town on Tuesday. Mr Brahan Viga, a trader in Yumbe Town Council, said a lot of counterfeit goods from South Sudan are coming into Yumbe unchecked. "UNBS should establish an office here to ensure our safety from unhealthy products," Mr. Viga said. Ms. Madinah Yusuf, who operates a business stall at Elegu, a border point with South Sudan, said cheap and fake products were affecting local traders and wondered why the Ministry of Trade and UNBS do not intervene.

### **Juba City Mayor bans sale of dollars in black market**

Benjamin Takpiny: [The Dawn- 20th Apr. 2016](#)

The mayor of the Juba City Council, H.W Stephen Wani Michael issued an order banning the sale of US dollars on the streets of Juba, which he termed as black market. In the order, the Mayor directed security organs to crack down on sellers of the US dollars all over Juba streets. According to the Mayor, the Order has been effected immediately and those who fail to comply will face arrests and imprisonment for two months. He said this is not the first time for the sale of dollars in the black market has been banned, as it was banned several times but the sellers kept violating the order. We're going to use a non-stop

operation to an extent that there is not any dollar or any currencies being sold in the streets this time," said Stephen Wani Michael. He informed sellers of the dollar in the black market to comply with the order so as to avoid blame game on the government when their dollars are confiscated. "I want everybody to respect this order and if you are not respecting the order and lose your money in the operation one day, don't blame the government, you are the one who is guilty because the authority informed you before the operation kicked off," the mayor said.

### **Chamber of commerce to ease market prices**

Oyet Alfonse: [Juba Monitor- 16 Apr. 2016](#)

The sporadic market prices are what worries South Sudanese business community. The harsh market prices have forced the chamber of commerce and giant South Sudanese businessmen to emanate an initiative to purchase food commodities to reduce the market prices. The Secretary General of South Sudan Chamber of Commerce, Agriculture and Industry, Simon Akuei Deng said in a press conference yesterday businessmen must be honest to the poor local population. "First the issue of food, we talked to our colleagues in the market, people like Lukak,

Bol-Mel, Obach Kurajing, Kuol Maluth and Adim Adim among others to volunteer and buy dollars from the black market which they did. This week we have received over 200 trucks," Akuei said. "Our business people have decided to bring food by themselves; there is no LCs, there is nothing. It is because we are seeing the situation is becoming tough, and therefore our business people volunteer to use the little money they have to purchase food for our people," stressed the Secretary General of the chamber of commerce.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Equity Bank Introduces US Dollar Visa Debit cards**

Robert Nyawanda: [The National Today- 16 Apr. 2016](#)

Equity Group, Kenya's biggest bank by market value has introduced visa debit cards for US dollar account holders at its South Sudan unit, the first of its kind in the country, to address the needs of customers dealing with dollars. Due to scarcity of the US Dollars in the country, the debit cards are "especially tailor made for salaried customers for

the time being," Paul Gitahi, managing director for the bank's South Sudan unit, said in a press conference at the Bank's Supreme branch at Hai Amarat yesterday. "We've been bankers to UN and aid agencies, their staffs are paid in hard currency and so for the purposes of convenience, to be paid their salaries in good time, to save

them from making queues in the banking halls, we have introduced these USD debit cards where customers can be able to access their salaries through USD ATM,” Gitahi said. “This is a visa

card and customers will be able to access their dollars worldwide where visas are acceptable,” he added.

### **Traders Re-erect Demolished Shops**

[Alison Lemer Francis: The Daily Vision -20 Apr. 2016](#)

Traders in Yei Sobe market yesterday started rebuilding their destroyed shops after the municipal authority allowed all those with residential plots to re-establish businesses. Earlier this month, the municipal authority in an order seen by The Daily Vision directed traders with poorly built shops and street vendors selling in wheel barrows to relocate to Lutaya main market. The demolition exercise involved the

police monitoring the implementation of the order at the time. Violators of the order would face upto five months imprisonment or a fine of SSP 3000 or both, part of the order warned. However yesterday, some traders could be seen hiring workers to re-erect their business premises despite what they described as huge costs incurred in the reconstruction of their shops.

### **Shops Run out of Vivacell Mobile Scratch cards**

[The National Today- 15 Apr. 2016](#)

Customers of the telecommunication company Vivacell have not been able to get scratch cards (airtime) at many shops in Juba for several days now, with only higher value cards available for purchase. Many shops have only scratch cards for 50 SSP and 100 SSP and some citizens cannot afford to buy these cards. Previously, Vivacell Company sold scratch cards for 2 SSP, 5 SSP, 10 SSP, 10 SSP and 25 SSP but all are at the moment

not in the market. Vivacell users are seriously concerned about the trend. Sources said the company scheduled a meeting today to address the shortage in the country. Alongside Zain and MTN, Vivacell is one of the leading mobile network providers in South Sudan. MTN recently announced it was scaling back its activities and may need to shut down owing to the continuing weakening of the South Sudanese pound.

### **Vivacell to fill the market with Scratch cards over the weekend**

[Joseph Athian: The Dawn- 15 Apr. 2016](#)

South Sudan’s largest telecommunication company- Vivacell has said it will fill the market with much needed scratch cards over the weekend. This follows complaints from the subscribers that there is scarcity of scratch cards in the market. Many shops have only scratch cards for 50 and 100 SSP and some citizens cannot afford to buy these cards. Speaking to the press at the Vivacell premises yesterday, the Ag. Managing Director, Samah Hassan said Vivacell is

doing everything possible to ensure that scratch cards are back into circulation. “On Saturday we will receive a truck loaded with scratch cards and immediately we will fill the market with the scratch cards,” he said. Mr Samah admitted the lack of airtime in the market, but said the scarcity was caused by the truck, which broke down en-route to Juba from Kenya. [Also reported by The Daily Vision- 15 Apr. 2016: Vivacell to fill the market with Scratch cards over the weekend](#)

### South Sudan officially joins EAC, pledges to make the bloc vibrant

Tian Shaohui: [Xinhua- 16 Apr. 2016](#)

South Sudan on Friday officially joined the East African Community (EAC), becoming the sixth member of the regional bloc after Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. By joining the bloc, the Horn of African country opened a new chapter of hope and opportunities in social and economic spheres. South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and his Tanzanian counterpart John Magufuli signed a Treaty of Accession into the regional bloc. Speaking shortly after the signing ceremony in the east African nation's commercial capital Dar es Salaam, President Magufuli paid tribute to South Sudan, saying the event was historic as it was done in Tanzania, the current chair of the EAC. "A new chapter of diplomatic relations has been opened," said the head of state, adding that South Sudan has been in close relations with EAC members in areas of culture, trade and economic ties. He said the joining of South Sudan in the

EAC has expanded the regional market of 160 million people. President Magufuli said in order for the EAC to have sustainable development it should nurture peace and urged the new comer to continue with talks aimed at ending strife in the country. [Also reported by Ken Karuri in Africa News- 15 Apr. 2016: South Sudan officially joins East African Community, by James Karuhanga in The New Times- 15 Apr. 2016: South Sudan assents to EAC Treaty, by Rose Athumani in All Africa- 15 Apr. 2016: East Africa- Magufuli, Kiir to sign Protocol on South Sudan Today, by Lucie Morangi in China Daily- 15 Apr. 2016: South Sudan joins the EAC block, in The Citizen- 15 Apr. 2016: Kiir to ink EAC in Dar, in The Citizen- 16 Apr. 2016: New kid on the bloc S. Sudan pledges to pick up EAC speed, in The Gulf Today- 16 Apr. 2016: S. Sudan officially joins E. African community, by Nichola Mandil in Eye Radio South Sudan- 15 Apr. 2016: Kiir signs EAC Treaty](#)

### New bill empowers Revenue Authority

Emmanuel Akile: [Eye Radio South Sudan- 21 Apr. 2016](#)

A bill that empowers the Revenue Authority to take control of financial duties, including customs and taxations has been passed. The Chairperson for the Economic and Finance Committee at the National Legislative Assembly, Goch Makuach, says the bill had been in the parliament since last year. It states that the Revenue Authority will be collecting all taxes and customs duties and later pay a share of states concerned into respective accounts managed by the Ministry of Finance. This means state agencies will no longer be

collecting levies on their own. "The employees of those institutions will be employees of the ministry of finance," Hon Goch said. "So now some will go back to the ministry of finance and others will join the new institutions by virtue of their merits." Hon Goch said the bill has been passed into law, pending the assent of the President. He added that the Ministry of Finance will lead other government agencies in implementation once the bill is signed into law by the President.

### **South Sudan seeks solution to financial difficulties**

Oyet Alfonse: [Juba Monitor- 19 Apr. 2016](#)

In the eve of the formulation of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU), a solution to the financial difficulties it is enduring. The team that left to Washington Dc to attend the IMF- World Bank spring conference last week said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is expected to come to Juba within the coming month of May to assess solutions to the financial difficulties South Sudan is undergoing. Finance Minister, David Deng Athorbei told journalists

upon their arrival at Juba International Airport yesterday that they are looking forward to receiving that they are in Juba by May so that together they find a way forward to solve the country's current financial difficulties. But the return of economic experts to the country did show some hope that international financier like the World Bank will intervene to ease the financial constraints in the country.

### **Police in Aweil detain their own boss over salaries**

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

Several police officers in Aweil have confirmed to Radio Tamazuj that they have detained their boss yesterday morning after discovering that a promised increase of 11% of was missing. They said their boss Mathiang Garam was briefly detained in his office but later made a called to the SPLA commander of Division 3rd Major General Santino Deng Wol. "What happened this morning is that Mathiang Garam in our morning parade has told that our salaries for February has come but we will be paid without increase. So we felt angry and locked him in his office with some officers," said one source. The SPLA Division Three commander sent MI officers to the scene

"we refused to listen to them. So they returned back to their base at Mathiang," said the source. The same sources said they released the boss after the commander of SPLA 3rd Division Santino Deng and deputy governor Aweil intervened. They added the deputy governor of Aweil state said he will pay give the missing money 180,000 SSP for the police to be given their salaries. "We are now waiting as our finance officers went to the bank to bring the money and pay us. The deputy governor adds 180,000 SSP so that our salaries be given to us." Workers' union in Kuacjok calls on employees to accept pay without increases.

### **Economic Reforms, Constitutional Amendments, Should be priority for TGoNU- Official**

Chuty Anyar Michael: [The Nation Mirror- 16 Apr. 2016.](#)

The Deputy Chairperson of South Sudan Peace Commission, Peter Garang Akich, yesterday explained the significance of peace to the recovery of the economy from the devastation caused by two years of conflict in the country. Garang who was speaking at a round-table meeting about the priorities of the upcoming government of national unity said the country needs to prioritize economic reforms,

constitutional amendments and repatriation of the Internally displaced persons (IDPs) who continue to languish in hardship at the camps. He said, the constitution is the dictionary which keeps all rights of citizens and stressed that the unity government once formed should hurry to set the constitution which encourages national healing and reconciliation. "If you want to contribute to the national healing you need also

to know what is required in healing, likewise when you are talking on sensitive issues you need to put it in a way that will not provoke other people and should be able to be received," he stated. He also stated that economic reforms

need more to be done by the government of national unity. He said the citizens expect economic recovery to bring the prices of commodities to affordable levels.

### **Finance Minister, Central Bank Governor misled government on economy- Minority Leader.**

**Aurelious Simon Chopee:** [The Nation Mirror- 15 Apr. 2016](#)

For Hon. Onyoti Adigo Nyikwec, leader of minority in the National Legislative Assembly, no other decision rather than firing the people managing the national economy could save the country from economic collapse because "they are too deformed to be reformed". "No, they will not. They are too deformed to be reformed because they think they know. The best thing is to fire them, have new people to have new monetary policies; people have to accept to work with people" Onyoti said. The Minority leader was speaking in the context of the state of the economy after decision to float the exchange rate of the national currency against the dollar that triggered unprecedented hikes in the commodity prices in the country. "The Minister (Minister of

Finance) and the Governor of Central Bank together with Economic Advisor have taken the country to the situation in which we are now. They misled the government when they devalued and floated the currency" Onyoti said in an Exclusive Interview with The National Mirror yesterday. "It was welcomed by the government because they were getting a lot of money by selling out the hard currency so they get a lot of SSP, but the impact on the common man was not thought about. It is now that they realize that by floating the currency, they have caused a bad impact on the common man, because currently people die of hunger due to high prices" he added.

### **Igga Launches Yei River County Development**

**Daniel Friday Martin:** [Juba Monitor- 16 Apr. 2016](#)

South Sudan's Vice President James Wani Igga has launched a five year plan for Yei River County. The five year development plan aims at rendering basic services to the people of Yei River County through community participation and effective utilization of the available resources in respect to equal rights and opportunities for peaceful co-existence. The five year plan was produced by the centre for democracy initiative- South Sudan, a civil society organization operating in Yei River County with funding from the Open Society initiative for Eastern Africa- (OSIEA) which will

cost 195,000,000 SSP. The 97 paged document looks into improvement in the areas of education, health, agriculture, rural water and sanitation, revenue generation, infrastructure, public works, social development, youth empowerment among others. Speaking at the launch, the country's Vice President James Wani Igga appreciated the county's efforts towards enhancing development through participation of the citizens. [Also reported by The Daily Vision- 16 Apr. 2016: Igga launches Yei River County Development.](#)

### **Gov't concerned over oil deal with Sudan**

Parach Mach: [The National Today- 18 Apr. 2016](#)

Sudan has threatened to confiscate South Sudan Oil if Juba fails to pay oil transit fee due to the latter, an official said. The two former civil war foes under the signed 2012 Cooperation Agreement, Juba is supposed to pay US dollar 25 to Sudan due to its crude pipeline through port Sudan besides Post-Secession financial and debt arrangements. South Sudan won independence in 2011. "The minister of petroleum and mining briefed the cabinet on how Khartoum has written a letter notifying the government that they will

confiscate South Sudan Oil if the government fails to pay oil transit fees," Michael Makuei told Journalists on Saturday after the cabinet meeting. South Sudan depends on 98% on oil export to finance its fiscal budget which has seen production decline in its Unity and Upper Nile states oil fields from 350,000 barrels to less than 160,000 bpd due to the outbreak of the December 2013 conflict that ransacked oil infrastructure leaving foreign oil workers evacuated.

### **Workers' union in Kuacjok calls on employees to accept pay without increases**

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

The workers' union office in Kuacjok is urging all employees of the new Gogrial government to accept payment of their salaries without the increase that had been promised by the Council of Ministers in Juba in response to devaluation of the South Sudanese pound. The union's chairperson Dut Gop made his appeal in a meeting called by the deputy governor on Thursday to discuss salary issues with heads of different institutions. On Wednesday this week the fire brigade police protested and rejected payments of their salaries without increase. State

Workers' Union Chairman Dut Gop urged workers to accept the payments and the percentage of their increase will be paid as arrears in the future. "This is not the problem of workers here in Gogrial state alone, but all workers in 28 states of South Sudan and I called my colleagues from other states and they told me that they have received their salaries with no increments, therefore I want you to accept your salaries and the remaining percent you will receive it as arrears once it is sent," he said.