Sudan Media Forum **Weekly Briefing**

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A curated weekly update on the most significant news from Sudan.

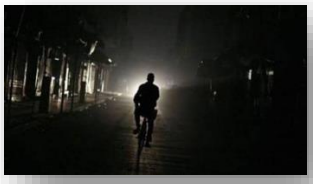
Hello,

Welcome to your weekly briefing. This week, most of Sudan's states are increasingly plunged into darkness as drone attacks target electricity facilities, while civilians face worsening hardship caused by disrupted healthcare services, malnutrition in displacement camps and a shortage of shelter. From patients struggling to access life-saving dialysis to children facing hunger, displacement and lost opportunities for education, the human and economic costs of the war continue to mount. Meanwhile, allegations of foreign military involvement are mounting, as the country's economic and security divisions deepen.

Top Story of the Week

Sudan's Drone War: Power, Water and Civilian Lifelines Under Attack





Much of Sudan has been plunged into a total blackout, while several water supply sources have been knocked out of service following repeated and systematic attacks by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), targeting electricity and fuel facilities. In recent days, the RSF has intensified its attacks using kamikaze and long-range drones, striking electricity and energy infrastructure across the states of Khartoum, North Kordofan, Gedaref, Al Jazirah, Sennar, White Nile, Red Sea, River Nile and Northern. The Minister of Energy said that 14 electricity generation and distribution stations had been targeted.

In Blue Nile and South Kordofan, the RSF also targeted mining sites. At least five people were killed and several others injured last Tuesday when drone strikes, believed to have been carried out by the RSF, hit three mining sites in the Al-Liri area of South Kordofan. This was the third attack on gold mining operations in the state.

On Thursday, the commissioner of Wad Al-Mahi locality in Blue Nile Region said that around 13 drones had targeted mining sites, markets and public service facilities in the area. Meanwhile, five people, including two women and a child, were killed in RSF drone attacks on several areas of Kernoi locality in North Darfur. On Wednesday, the Sudan Doctors Network reported that 21 people had been killed and more than 40 injured in an initial death toll following shelling of a market in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur, which is under RSF control and administered by the Tasis government.

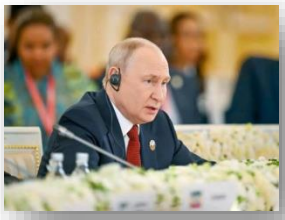
The attack followed an airstrike by the Sudanese army on Monday evening, 26 October, targeting the Tanjuq night market in the Dumaya area, west of Nyala. The strike took place while the market was crowded with shoppers and vendors. Media reports said it was part of a wider wave of air raids targeting several locations across the city, which is controlled by the RSF.

The recent escalation in drone attacks has drawn widespread condemnation from local and international actors, who have warned that strikes on civilian infrastructure are deepening the suffering of the civilian population.

The Emergency Lawyers group said that around 13 electricity stations had been targeted during October 2026, further aggravating the humanitarian consequences of the war and undermining the basic conditions necessary for daily life. UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have also expressed grave concern over the continued drone attacks in Sudan, which are targeting critical civilian infrastructure and disrupting essential services for millions of people.

Political & Security Update

Burhan Offers Russia Mining and Red Sea Investment Opportunities





Sudanese army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has offered Russia investment opportunities in Sudan's mining sector, including gold, copper and other mineral extraction, alongside a proposal to establish a free economic zone on the Red Sea coast. The proposed zone would allow Moscow to set up facilities for storing fuel and wheat. The proposals were presented during Burhan's participation in the Russia-Africa Summit in Moscow.

According to Russia's TASS news agency, Burhan put forward the proposals during a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on Friday. They also included an invitation for Russian companies to take part in developing Sudan's railway infrastructure, expanding the rail network and establishing logistics chains to facilitate the transportation of goods.

For his part, Putin said Moscow was exploring ways to help ease tensions in Sudan, calling for an end to military operations and a transition towards a political settlement of the crisis. He expressed Russia's readiness to cooperate

with Sudan in several fields, including digital development, healthcare, education, logistics and industry. Putin said he had handed the relevant Russian authorities a roadmap identifying promising areas for cooperation between the two countries. The Russian president also highlighted the growth in trade and economic relations between Moscow and Khartoum, saying bilateral trade increased by 25 per cent between January and August 2026.

Sudan Accuses Ethiopia and Ukraine of Fueling RSF War Effort





Sudan's Foreign Ministry has accused both Ethiopia and Ukraine of assisting the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) by providing access to their territories, weapons, military equipment and fighters. Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Muawiya Osman said Ethiopian authorities had facilitated the use of their territory as a launchpad for drone attacks targeting critical infrastructure in Sudan, including electricity and water stations, fuel facilities, hospitals and other vital installations. He warned that such attacks had escalated in recent months.

Speaking at a briefing for heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Sudan on Saturday, Osman said the meeting was intended to alert the international community to its responsibility to respond to what he described as "blatant aggression originating from Ethiopia". He also called on the international community to address what he characterised as a "proxy war" being waged on behalf of various parties, foremost among them the United Arab Emirates. Osman further claimed that Ethiopia's Asosa airbase had become a hub for supplying the RSF with weapons and military equipment, as well as facilitating the movement of foreign fighters into Sudan.

Sudan's Foreign Minister, Mohieddin Salem, meanwhile, said his country had conclusive material evidence that Ukrainian snipers and military trainers were providing direct support to the RSF, which is fighting the Sudanese army. Salem added that Ukrainian nationals were training RSF fighters to operate drones used in attacks on civilian infrastructure. He said some Ukrainian fighters had been captured or killed, while Sudanese authorities had seized weapons linked to them. He also said Sudan had officially documented these activities in United Nations Security Council records through its permanent representative in New York. Salem further stated that a Sudanese delegation had presented the United States with evidence last year indicating that US-made weapons, which had allegedly been diverted from Ukraine and other locations, were being used in the conflict.

UN Fact-Finding Mission Warns of Escalating Civilian Risks and Foreign Military Support in Sudan

The United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan has warned of growing risks facing civilians in El Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan State, and across the country. Mission Chair Mohamed Chande Othman said on Wednesday that the mission had issued a new paper documenting repeated attacks, including RSF

drone strikes, as well as a climate of fear and intimidation created by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and their allies.

The report said the mission had reasonable grounds to believe that the external transfer of weapons, military technology, logistical support and foreign personnel had strengthened the military capabilities of both warring parties and facilitated the growing use of sophisticated weapons systems, particularly long-range drones. “We also found reasonable grounds to believe that a transnational network operating across several countries has enabled and strengthened the RSF’s military operations,” Othman said.

Evidence gathered by the mission points to the involvement of individuals and entities operating from the United Arab Emirates, Chad, southeastern Libya and Puntland in Somalia, who facilitated the transfer of weapons, drone-related technology, logistical support and personnel to areas under RSF control. Addressing UN member states during a meeting of the Third Committee of the General Assembly, Othman said the fact-finding mission had found that Colombian contractors had played a significant role in the capture of El Fasher last year. The mission had also identified foreign fighters from neighbouring countries operating alongside the RSF in El Fasher and other areas. “Investigations into external support for the Sudanese Armed Forces are still ongoing,” he said.

A report submitted by the mission to the UN Human Rights Council in September found reasonable grounds to believe that the SAF had used foreign-supplied drones in operations that caused harm to civilians and civilian objects. The report also described a climate of fear and intimidation created by the SAF and its allies in El Obeid, including arbitrary detention and intimidation by security agencies linked to the Sudanese military. It noted that October had witnessed the deadliest individual attacks across Sudan since the conflict began.

UAE Court Sentences Eight Sudanese to Life in Arms Trafficking Case





The Abu Dhabi Federal Court of Appeal on Thursday sentenced eight Sudanese nationals to life imprisonment, including Yasser al-Atta, assistant commander-in-chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces, and former Sudanese intelligence chief Salah Abdullah Gosh, in a case involving the illegal trafficking of weapons and ammunition allegedly intended for delivery to the Sudanese army. The case also involved money laundering charges.

According to the UAE's official Emirates News Agency (WAM), the court ordered the confiscation of the seized ammunition, mobile phones and communication devices used in the alleged crimes. It also ruled that those convicted would be deported from the UAE after serving their sentences. Most of the individuals named in the case were not present at the trial.

WAM reported that the court sentenced Rashid Omar Abdelgadir Ali, Salah Gosh, Ahmed Abdullah, Maher Abdeljalil, Othman Babiker, Khalid Youssef Mokhtar and Ahmed Khalafallah Abdullah to three years in prison each. The ruling also imposed a fine of AED 1 million on each of those sentenced to three years in prison for money

laundering, in addition to the confiscation of AED 1.545 million in seized funds. The agency further reported that the court revoked the licences and registrations of six companies, fined each of them AED 1 million for money laundering, and ordered the confiscation of their frozen assets.

Malnutrition Cases Surge in Darfur's Kalma Camp Amid Worsening Humanitarian Crisis





The General Coordination for Displaced Persons and Refugees in Darfur has warned of alarming developments at Kalma displacement camp in South Darfur, amid severe shortages of humanitarian aid, continued rises in the prices of basic commodities and living costs, and climate-related impacts associated with the El Niño phenomenon. These include declining rainfall and the failure of the agricultural season.

In a press statement, the coordination's spokesperson, Adam Rijal, said the warning signs were not confined to Kalma camp, but that the camp reflected the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in other displacement camps across Darfur. He said Kalma camp was recording worrying health indicators, with around 20 children admitted to hospital every day due to severe acute malnutrition. Health centres had also received approximately 2,750 cases of malnutrition over the course of a single month. The centres are also reporting the spread of several diseases, including malaria, acute diarrhoea, typhoid, anaemia and other blood-related conditions. Between 200 and 300 patients visit the health centres daily, despite limited capacity and shortages of medicines and essential medical supplies needed to provide treatment. Rijal expressed deep concern over what he described as the Sudanese army-aligned government's downplaying of warnings about the risk of famine in Darfur. He called for immediate intervention to provide food and emergency food assistance to displaced people in Kalma and other camps across the region.

❤Humanitarian Focus

Kidney Patients in Khartoum Face Life-Threatening Disruptions to Dialysis Services





Patients with kidney failure at hospitals in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, are facing a sharp deterioration in healthcare services as dialysis sessions become increasingly irregular. The disruption follows a rise in power cuts caused by drone attacks carried out by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on electricity generation stations.

One patient said delays and the accumulation of missed dialysis sessions had led to serious health complications among patients. Meanwhile, relatives accompanying patients at Al-Naw Hospital in Al-Thawra, Omdurman, issued an urgent appeal to both warring parties to end the war immediately. They also strongly condemned RSF drone attacks on civilian objects and vital infrastructure.

In an earlier report, the Sudan Doctors Network documented extensive destruction across the private healthcare sector in Khartoum. It said that 90 per cent of private healthcare facilities — an estimated 73 out of 80 hospitals — had been subjected to destruction and armed looting, with some converted into military bases in the capital. The network accused the RSF of carrying out most of these attacks, describing them as "deliberate" and "systematic".

Displaced Families in El Obeid Face Dire Shelter Conditions Amid Growing Humanitarian Crisis





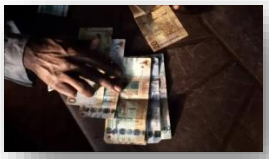
A joint field report by the Darfur Victims Advocacy organisation and Hope and Shelter has revealed a severe deterioration in humanitarian conditions and shelter facilities in displacement camps in El Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan State.

The report found that most families lack even the most basic means of protection and decent living conditions. More Than 23 per cent of the camp villages have tents, while 76 per cent rely entirely on makeshift shelters built from straw, wood and plastic sheeting, leaving them vulnerable to rain, flooding and insect infestations.

The report also highlighted overcrowded shelters and acute shortages of bedding and sleeping materials, with women and children particularly affected. The few tents available have deteriorated after being distributed more than a year ago, with no maintenance or replacements provided since. The two organisations called for urgent humanitarian intervention, including the provision of adequate tents. The report also stressed the need to supply essential food items and non-food relief materials, including blankets, mosquito nets and household utensils. It further called for an urgent assessment of healthcare services and water supplies to prevent a further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis.

Economic Snapshot

Sudan's Warring Sides Wage a Parallel Economic War as Currency Markets Diverge





The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are waging a quiet economic war alongside their intensifying military confrontation. The economic and monetary divide between areas controlled by the two sides is widening by the day, driven by competing measures to restrict cash circulation, currency exchange and parallel foreign exchange markets.

The divide is particularly evident in the stark differences in foreign currency exchange rates across the two territories. On Sunday, the US dollar traded at between SDG 9,800 and SDG 10,200 on the parallel market in areas controlled by the Sudanese government. By contrast, in RSF-controlled areas, the cash dollar rate ranged from SDG 4,600 to SDG 5,500, while the rate for digital transfers exceeded SDG 6,500. The disparity reflects a severe shortage of physical cash and restrictions on the movement of money.

Sources in Nyala told "Sudan Tribune" that the RSF relies on a “hybrid” monetary system combining different denominations of the Sudanese pound, including older banknotes, with limited use of some neighbouring countries’ currencies, such as the Chadian franc, the South Sudanese pound and other currencies in daily commercial transactions. The sources also revealed heavy reliance on banking applications and digital transfers operated by parallel financial intermediary networks that charge steep commissions, amid disruptions to telecommunications networks and difficulties transporting cash between cities and rural areas.

Multiple sources in several locations confirmed that the movement of cash and banknotes between territories controlled by the two sides is subject to tight security surveillance and stringent inspections at contact points and military front lines.

In response to these restrictions, the sources said, informal intermediary and trading networks have emerged to move and circulate money through unofficial channels, using desert roads and alternative routes in exchange for hefty commissions deducted from the amounts transferred.

They also pointed to another practice involving clearing arrangements, whereby electronic transfers are made in SAF-controlled areas in exchange for the delivery of physical cash in RSF-controlled areas, and vice versa. These transactions involve substantial exchange-rate differences, calculated according to the availability of physical cash and the volume of each transfer.

In-Depth & Culture

Sudanese Novelist Mohannad Al-Dabi Wins Katara Prize for Arabic Novel





Sudanese novelist Mohannad Rajab Al-Dabi has won the 12th edition of the Katara Prize for Arabic Novel in 2026 for his novel "The Siege of the Gazelle Wau", in the Published Arabic Novels category. The award ceremony was held on Thursday at the Katara Cultural Village Opera House in Qatar's capital, Doha.

Al-Dabi will receive a cash prize of $30,000, and his novel will be translated into English as part of the award's efforts to promote Arabic literature and make it accessible to a wider readership beyond the Arab world. The Sudanese novelist was among three winners in the Published Arabic Novels category. The other recipients were Egyptian writer Samar Nour, for her novel "Asha, the Scarab and the Moon", and Saudi writer Maha Abdulaziz Al-Yamani, for her novel "My Hands Do Not Tremble".

The 12th edition of the award attracted a record 2,610 entries, according to the organisers — the highest number since the prize was launched. The figure reflects the expanding scope of competition among Arab novelists and growing interest in cultural initiatives promoting Arabic fiction.

Further Reading

Kosti: Life Becomes a Daily Struggle in Sudan's Southernmost City





For Qasim Ibrahim, a resident of Kosti, the drone strike did not just hit the Umm Dabakar power station; it struck at the very fabric of daily life in the city, with its impact rippling across every aspect of living. He says four days without electricity were enough to expose just how closely power is linked to even the most basic needs. The blackout worsened the drinking water crisis, fuel shortages and the lawlessness gripping markets across Sudan. Read the full story

Between Return, Integration and Resettlement: Sudanese Refugees in Uganda, Hardships of Exile and the Fear of War

For Sudanese people who fled the war that erupted on 15 April 2023, crossing the border did not bring an end to their suffering. After a long journey in search of safety, they found themselves facing new challenges in Uganda, where harsh living conditions intersect with difficulties integrating into society. While resettlement in a third country remains a distant hope they continue to hold on to, returning to Sudan remains fraught with fears that the war could erupt again. Read the full story

A Year Out of School: Displaced Children from El Fasher Face an Uncertain Educational Future





In the city of Nyala, Shiraz Musa, a displaced woman, is struggling to provide for the daily needs of her three children. But ensuring that her eldest daughter can continue her education has become one of her greatest challenges amid displacement and the loss of the family's source of income. Read the full story

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