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, the scope of fighting in Sudan continues to expand, from Blue Nile to Kordofan and Darfur, as drone attacks on vital infrastructure persist and the war's toll on civilians grows, while international pressure mounts on military leaders. On the humanitarian front, the UN has warned that around 15 million people need shelter, amid a severe response shortfall, disease outbreaks and malnutrition. Economically, moves are under way to allow imports of sorghum and frozen poultry in an effort to curb rising prices. Meanwhile, Sudan has achieved international recognition, with the Share the Knowledge – Sudan initiative winning the 2026 Nature Awards for Inspiring Women in Science.

Top Story of the Week

Sudan's War Intensifies on Multiple Fronts as Civilians Continue to Fall





Fighting intensified over the past week in Sudan's Blue Nile region between the Sudanese army and an alliance of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N). Clashes also escalated in several areas of North and West Kordofan between the army and its allied armed movements on one side, and the RSF on the other. On Tuesday, the Joint Forces announced the death of their operations commander in the Kordofan theatre, Brigadier General Haroun Mirsal.

At least seven people were killed and 36 others injured on Tuesday when a drone, believed to belong to the RSF, struck a fuel station in South Kordofan. The attack comes amid a recent escalation in strikes targeting energy and electricity infrastructure in army-controlled areas. At least 17 power stations and energy facilities, as well as fuel depots, have reportedly been destroyed across more than ten states.

In North Kordofan, two women were killed and ten people injured on Wednesday in an airstrike by a Sudanese army aircraft targeting a water supply facility in the Um Bader area. The Emergency Lawyers group said in a statement that an army aircraft struck a water station in the area with three barrel bombs. The attack destroyed water tanks, pumps and the solar panels powering the facility. It also triggered a fire in Hilla Dar Bahr, killing two women and injuring ten others.

On Saturday, the Sudanese army announced that it had taken control of the strategic town of Ayal Bakhit in West Kordofan. The following day, the army said it was engaged in fierce fighting in the state. Ayal Bakhit lies about 100 kilometres from Al-Khowei, where the RSF maintains a heavy presence and from which it launches attacks on El Obeid. Sources also reported fierce clashes in which the army managed to seize control of the areas of Kazgeil and Al-Hamadi, south of El Obeid in North Kordofan, as well as Abu Qudud and Um Sumayma to the west of the city.

Meanwhile, fighting continued in Blue Nile state, where the RSF launched intensive attacks on Damazin, the regional capital, using suicide drones. The assault began on Tuesday night and continued until dawn on Wednesday, targeting military installations and civilian infrastructure.

Political & Security Update

Australia Sanctions Sudan's Army Chief, Al-Burhan and Hemedti Brigade Over War Abuses





The Australian government on Thursday imposed financial sanctions and travel bans on Sudanese army chief General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, Rapid Support Forces (RSF) commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), and the Al-Baraa bin Malik Brigade, over serious human rights violations linked to the war. The sanctions also targeted two other RSF commanders: Al-Tijani al-Tahir Karshoum, the former governor of West Darfur, and Hussein Barsham, a senior field commander.

According to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the measures were imposed in response to grave violations, including attacks on civilians, killings, torture and sexual violence. The sanctions include the freezing of assets subject to Australian jurisdiction and a ban on financial transactions with the targeted individuals and entity. The four individuals have also been barred from entering Australia.

Sudan's Former Ruling Party Chief Ahmed Haroun Arrested After Emerging from Hiding





Sudan's former ruling National Congress Party (NCP) said the army had arrested its acting chairman, Ahmed Haroun, who is wanted by Sudanese authorities and the International Criminal Court (ICC). Haroun had remained in hiding since the fall of Omar al-Bashir's regime in 2019. Multiple local sources said he was arrested in Kassala State in eastern Sudan.

In a podcast interview on Saturday, Haroun said that while the National Congress Party and the army might not share the same political outlook, they were united in the ongoing civil war against the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

In a statement issued on Sunday, the dissolved National Congress Party confirmed the arrest of its chairman, Ahmed Mohamed Haroun, describing it as an act of "arbitrary use of power" without providing any reasons or justification. The party called for his immediate release.

Haroun's public appearance sparked widespread controversy, given that he is wanted by the courts and should, according to critics, be taken into custody by the authorities. Meanwhile, supporters of the National Congress Party welcomed his emergence from hiding, describing it as a courageous move. However, they had not anticipated his arrest, given that the party and the Islamist movement support the army and back its military campaign against the RSF.

Sudanese Civilian Group Warns Against Egyptian Military Operations on Sudanese Border





The Sudanese Declaration of Principles Groups has warned of the potential consequences of a new military operation announced by the Egyptian army in coordination with the Sudanese Armed Forces, targeting mining areas along the border under the pretext of pursuing “gold smuggling gangs and infiltrators”. The group expressed grave concern that the operation could result in further civilian casualties.

In a statement, the civilian group said the planned operation was an extension of previous attacks on the Al-Ugaidat mine in Red Sea State, which reportedly left dozens of miners dead. It said no independent investigations had been opened and no parties involved had been held accountable.

Mohamed Abdelrahman al-Nayer, a leading member of the Declaration of Principles Forces, rejected the description of traditional miners as “criminal elements”, stressing that they were citizens driven by difficult living conditions and the war to seek work in gold mines. He said that, according to eyewitness accounts, Egyptian airstrikes had taken place deep inside Sudanese territory.

The group warned that using the miners' activities as a pretext could pave the way for imposing a new reality on the ground and expanding a foreign military presence in Sudan. It also pointed to the growing scale of natural resource looting, particularly gold, through organised networks.

The civilian group held Sudan's military authorities responsible for failing to safeguard national sovereignty. It announced plans to escalate the issue at regional and international forums and call for the formation of an independent international investigative commission. It also urged all segments of Sudanese society to unite in protecting the country's territory and citizens.

North Darfur Displacement Crisis: Urgent Appeal to Rescue Hundreds of Families Fleeing RSF Attacks





Activists on Saturday issued an urgent humanitarian appeal to rescue hundreds of displaced families scattered across several areas of Sudan's North Darfur state following attacks by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The RSF attacked several areas in the Um Baru locality of North Darfur early last week. The region is predominantly inhabited by members of the Zaghawa ethnic group. During the attacks, the RSF faced accusations of committing widespread

violations against civilians, including arbitrary arrests, ethnically motivated killings, and the destruction of essential service facilities, among them a hospital in the area of Muzbad and a water source, according to local sources. The attacks forced thousands of residents to flee their homes in search of safer areas, amid fears of a worsening humanitarian crisis as displaced families face a lack of shelter and severe shortages of water and food.

In a statement, the North Darfur Emergency Response Rooms Council warned of the escalating crisis and called for urgent humanitarian intervention. "The Council is sounding the alarm and calling for urgent humanitarian intervention to establish safe corridors for evacuating civilians from areas at risk in the Um Baru locality, ensure their protection, and provide shelter, food and healthcare," the statement said.

Cyanide Contamination Kills 65 Sheep in Sudan's South Kordofan





Activists said on Monday that 65 sheep had died after drinking from a water source contaminated with cyanide, a highly toxic chemical used in mining activities, in the Talodi area of South Kordofan State. Specialists have warned of growing environmental and health risks to local communities and livestock from the use of the highly poisonous substance.

Companies processing waste from traditional gold mining operate at several mines in Talodi locality. The process involves excavating large pits in the ground, filling them with water and adding cyanide to extract residual gold. The main danger lies in the potential leakage of the toxic chemical, which can spread across wide areas beyond the processing ponds. The Committee Against the Use of Cyanide, a community-based group established to oppose the use of the chemical in South Kordofan's mines, has warned of a lack of oversight and accountability.

The committee accused the authorities and the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company of covering up a similar incident in the area last year, which reportedly resulted in the deaths of dozens of people and the loss of cattle due to cyanide contamination of water sources. It said no investigations had been conducted and no one had been held accountable.

❤ Humanitarian Focus

Disease Outbreaks Worsen Sudan's Deepening Health Crisis





The Preparatory Committee of the Sudanese Doctors' Syndicate has reported a rise in tuberculosis cases in Gezira State to 100, while hepatitis cases have reached 288. The committee's spokesperson, Dr Adeeba Ibrahim, said malaria infections of all types had risen to around 405 cases, while 112 cases of dengue fever had also been recorded in the state.

Meanwhile, the Gezira Human Rights Observatory has expressed concern over the spread of dengue fever, describing the number of infections as deeply alarming and continuing to rise. It pointed to a severe lack of primary healthcare services, as well as shortages of intravenous fluids and steep prices where they are available.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the observatory said 3,526 confirmed dengue cases had been recorded across Gezira State, including 57 severe haemorrhagic cases and 26 deaths. Ibrahim also said the outbreak had continued to spread in Sennar State and the city of Sennar, bringing the total number of infections to 5,470 and the death toll to around 248.

Turning to the health situation in Darfur, she described conditions in the Jebel Marra area and surrounding regions as dire. Environmental deterioration and the absence of basic necessities, she said, had triggered an acute humanitarian and health crisis marked by widespread malnutrition. Disease-related deaths have claimed the lives of 687 young children, she said, while around 388 deaths have also been recorded among older people, pregnant women and those with chronic illnesses.

UN : 15.4 million people in Sudan urgently need shelter as funding shortages deepen humanitarian crisis





The United Nations has warned that the conflict in Sudan continues to deepen civilian suffering, three and a half years after it erupted, as shifting front lines force more families to flee, leaving many homeless amid severe funding shortages.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said that around 15.4 million people urgently need emergency shelter and basic household items, including millions who have decided to

return to their areas of origin. However, humanitarian agencies have been able to assist only around 10 per cent of those in need due to funding constraints, creating a significant gap between growing needs and available resources.

Speaking to journalists in Geneva from Khartoum, Abu Bakr Jallo, UNHCR's Deputy Representative in Sudan, said that three out of every four internally displaced people in the country are women and children.

Mohamed Refaat, IOM's Chief of Mission in Sudan, said the organisation's warehouses were now "completely empty". Speaking to journalists in Geneva, he explained that 16 trucks had managed to reach Darfur the previous day, "but they were the last of our supplies in our warehouses".

Refaat confirmed that more than 5.2 million people had returned to their areas of origin, warning that the continued absence of basic services "could force these people to flee again, with no hope of returning". He also noted that Sudanese nationals have become the largest nationality group among arrivals in Europe via the Eastern Mediterranean route.

Economic Snapshot

Sudan Moves to Import Sorghum and Frozen Chicken to Curb Food Prices





Sudanese authorities are moving to allow imports of sorghum from Ukraine and Brazil, alongside frozen poultry, in a bid to boost market supplies and curb sharp increases in the prices of the crop and food products. A source at the Ministry of Industry and Trade said directives had been issued to open the door to imports, following a proposal submitted by the Emergency and Civil Support Coordination Committee. The proposal cited the wide gap between sorghum prices on international markets and those in Sudan. The source said a tonne of sorghum costs between $200 and $230 on global markets, compared with around $800 in Sudan. The move is intended to ease pressure on the poultry sector, which relies heavily on sorghum for animal feed. The crop accounts for around 75 per cent of feed ingredients, while the sector consumes more than half of Sudan’s domestic sorghum production, according to the proposal. The proposed measures would allow both public- and private-sector entities to import sorghum, with shipments exempt from customs duties and taxes. The imported crop would then be sold at prices below prevailing market levels, based on an indicative price set by the Agricultural Bank of Sudan.

The measures would also open the market to frozen poultry imports to increase supplies, ease pressure on domestic production and reduce demand for sorghum used in animal feed, leaving more of the crop available for human consumption.

The proposals are based on the expectation that imports of sorghum and poultry would strengthen competition, curb monopolistic practices and increase market supplies. If implemented, they are expected to reduce the price of a 100kg sack of sorghum by between 30 and 40 per cent, and poultry prices by around 25 to 35 per cent.

Culture & In-Depth

Sudanese Initiative Wins 2026 Nature Award for Inspiring Women in Science





The Sudanese initiative "Share the Knowledge – Sudan" (StK) has won the "2026 Nature Awards" for Inspiring Women in Science in the Science Outreach category, marking a major international achievement. The award, presented by Nature Portfolio in partnership with The Estée Lauder Companies, recognises the initiative's exceptional efforts to support education and scientific research and empower Sudanese women and researchers, both inside the country and across the diaspora.

The Sudanese initiative emerged as the global winner in the Science Outreach category following a highly competitive international process that attracted 602 nominations from 92 countries across the award's two categories: Scientific Achievement and Science Outreach. StK was selected as the sole global winner in its category.

The initiative provides educational and training opportunities, as well as academic mentoring, for students and researchers, with a particular focus on women and girls whose academic paths have been disrupted by difficult circumstances, successive crises and damage to educational institutions in Sudan. Its work is built around an integrated programme that includes online scientific lectures, a free digital library, academic mentoring, and support for preparing research proposals and succeeding in interviews for professional and academic opportunities.

The Nature Awards for Inspiring Women in Science are among the leading international initiatives recognising women-led organisations and projects that promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), while encouraging girls and women researchers to pursue innovation and expand scientific knowledge.

Further Reading

Impunity: 673 Violations Against Sudanese Journalists





The Freedoms Secretariat of the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate said it had documented 673 violations between 15 April 2023 and 30 June 2026. These included the killing of 34 male and female journalists, 116 cases of arbitrary arrest, detention and enforced disappearance, 120 cases of threats and hate speech, and 34 incidents of gunfire and direct targeting. The documented violations also included physical assaults, armed looting of homes, arbitrary dismissal, institutional and administrative abuses, and cross-border violations. Read the full story

Older People in Sudan's War: A Lifetime of Loss and Hardship Without Support





Aisha Abdullah, 72, says she never imagined the day would come when she would be forced to leave the home where she had lived for more than 40 years. "We left in a hurry and could take nothing with us except a few clothes and some basic belongings," she said. "I left behind my memories, photographs of my children and grandchildren, and everything I had accumulated over a lifetime." The displacement journey was extremely difficult, she added, saying it was more than someone her age could bear. "Now I am living in a place I do not know, where I feel neither safe nor settled. What hurts me most is that I have no idea when I will be able to return home," she said. Read the full story

Sudan's Looming Famine in Plain Terms: No Means to Produce or Buy Bread





Osman Ibrahim said the continued rise in the prices of essential commodities, coupled with the ongoing war, has made it increasingly difficult to provide for his family's daily needs. He said his family requires around 30,000 Sudanese pounds worth of bread each day. He added that he is often forced to wait in long queues, sometimes for up

to three days, to refuel his car, while his income is no longer sufficient to cover his family's basic needs. Read the full story

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