

10th -22nd Sept. 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. Radio Tamazuj
2. Eye Radio South Sudan
3. Gurtong
4. IRIN
5. Sudan Tribune
6. Foreign Policy
7. BBC News
8. The East African
9. Associated Press
10. Reuters
11. Xinhua
12. The Conversation
13. Daily Nation
14. The New York Times

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WEEKLY MEDIA ECONOMIC DIGEST SOUTH SUDAN



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PRICES AND MARKET

Meeting to discuss price Surge held between Government officials and traders In Aweil

[Agoth Abraham: Gurtong-9 Sept.2016](#)

A meeting between traders and government officials including the Governor of Aweil was held last Saturday to discuss prices of commodities in the State. The prices of commodities in the State both food and non-food items have continued to rise following claims by traders that they are being subjected to multiple taxes. While addressing the traders, Governor Ronald Ruay called upon all traders in the State to cooperate with government and ensure that they are legally conducting their businesses. He warned traders of hoarding goods and later selling at a higher price to buyers. He also warned individuals especially South Sudanese who open up unlicensed vehicle auctions to Sudanese business owners who buy these vehicles without legal documentation and later move to Sudan. "My government will not accept illegal selling of vehicles and exporting them to Sudan without legal documents. It has been the call of government in the State to reduce the sky rocketing prices of goods," he said. The Governor emphasized on concerns raised on taxes imposed on traders that all traders must pay their taxes as required. The Governor also warned against the sale of relief food.

South Sudan media raises sale fees

[Radio Tamazuj- 17 Sept.2016](#)

Media organizations in South Sudan have notified clients and readers of plans to raise price for circulation and selling of individual paper. The cause of the decision, according to the owners and proprietors of leading independent daily newspapers, is linked to the increased in Juba due to economic hardship faced by the troubled country. Daily English Juba Monitor reported that it would increase the prices of the paper to 20 South Sudanese

Pounds. The paper cited costs of printing as the reason for the increase in prices. " The management of Juba Monitor is informing its readers that with effect from Thursday 15th of

this month, the price of the paper will increase to SSP 20 due to increased costs of printing, ", the paper told its readers.

Prices rise at Agok market

[Radio Tamazuj- 21 Sept. 2016](#)

The commissioner of Rumamer County in the contested area of Abyei between Sudan and South Sudan has complained that prices of consumer goods are soaring at the market in Agok area. Commissioner Chan Piok Deng told Radio Tamazuj yesterday that the county is

witnessing increasing prices of commodities at the market due to devaluation of South Sudan Pound against the US dollar. The local official explained that the ordinary citizens are immensely suffering as the economic situation hasn't improved.

Abyei traders criticize price fixing

[Radio Tamazuj- 22 Sept. 2016](#)

Traders in Abyei say that fixed prices in the market are hampering business. It comes as bad road conditions have already effected trading in the area for farmers. Businesses say they hope trade will improve by November, when the state

of the Wau-Juba road will have improved. Chamber of Commerce chairman in Agok, Monyluak Mayol said the authorities have abandoned the fixing decision, and sources that that prices are going up on a daily basis.

"High cost of printing" shuts down Juba dailies

[Obaj Shago: Eye Radio South Sudan- 22 Sept. 2016](#)

Some of daily newspapers in Juba have stopped publishing due to high cost of production caused by the economic crisis. Two daily newspapers say the printing press companies have increased their charges due to the devaluation of the pound. "The common reason why we stopped printing is not due to the conflict but due to high cost of printing newspaper on a daily basis," said Eunice Malath, Editor of the Daily Vision English newspaper. "But for now we are just saying let's close down and then find out a way that we can

get back to the market." Meanwhile, the chairman of Board of Directors for "Al-whada" Daily Arabic newspaper says the economic situation has affected their operation. He says the rate of printing one copy of paper is 13.5 pound, a price the paper can't afford. Abraham Malek says they stopped printing the paper to analyse market "but we will resume printing on Friday the next". Most of the newspapers are being sold at between 20 to 15 pounds per copy.

Thousands stranded at Yei Airstrip – Eyewitness

[Memoscar Lasuba: Eye Radio South Sudan- 21 Sept. 2016](#)

A man who just arrived from Yei with his family says thousands of people are stranded at the Yei Airstrip, waiting for flights to Juba. Goc Wal Lul,

35, says the situation in Yei County is increasingly becoming difficult, hence forcing people to flee. Series of gunfights between the army and armed

groups led to the displacement of civilians. The roads linking the state with neighbouring areas have been closed. This gives those fleeing only one option: air transport. A ticket costs \$100, an amount majority of those fleeing the conflict cannot afford. Wal brought his family and those of his relatives by air to Juba on Tuesday. "I brought twenty people and it cost me two

thousand dollars," Mr Wal told Eye Radio. "We contributed with our brothers and relatives. They gave me money to go and bring their families as well." On Tuesday, Yei river state information minister Stephen Lado Onesimo said the army would open the road. It's is now not clear whether the road has been opened or not.

Fuel shortage affects Yei Civil Hospital

[Magdoline Joseph: Eye Radio South Sudan- 22 Sept. 2016](#)

Major surgical operations have been suspended at the Yei Civil Hospital and the blood bank has been closed due to fuel shortage, according to authorities in Yei River State. They say most of the patients who are in critical conditions and those who need major operations are now being referred to private clinics. The Director-General at the state Ministry of Health says insecurity has hindered the supply of fuel to the state. The blood

bank was closed partly due to lack of donors. "So this blood bank at the moment has come to a standstill because there is no power and people who are supposed to donate blood are not there," Eye Radio's Daniel Friday reported. There have been reported incidents of insecurity in the area, with thousands of civilians fleeing to the neighbouring areas.

Aweil butchers protest new tax charges

[Radio Tamazuj- 20 Sept. 2016](#)

Traders involved in slaughtering industry in Aweil state have threatened to go out of business in protest of tax hikes, describing it unfair. The objection to the new tax charge was a rare public protest against the policies of the new government of Governor Ronald Ruay Deng. Sources and residents claimed hundreds of businessmen, shop owners and traders have denounced what they say are unfair tax rises imposed in recent months. Some said the rise in taxes have been about 600 per cent, though there are no official statistics. But officials at the local town council have defended the hikes and told Radio Tamazuj on Tuesday that the "taxes are

fair, based on the law and are applied to everyone equally." Economic growth in South Sudan has plunged to around zero per cent from double digits just in less than three years of positive outlook. Economists attribute the cause to the pullout of foreign investors and non-government organizations due to the on-going civil war in the country. Butchers or members of the slaughtering industry in the state have argued that new tax rate announced by the state government recently by taking 5% from each cow sold for slaughtering purpose as government fixed rate does not consider all other incurred expenses and profit.

KCB denies facilitating money laundering

[Nichola Mandil: Eye Radio South Sudan- 14 Sept. 2016](#)

The Kenya Commercial Bank, KCB, says it remains committed to safeguarding the confidentiality of its customer information, despite revelations by The Sentry report of cases of money laundering among its clients. The CEO and Managing Director of KCB Group, Joshua Oigara, says, in a statement, they have taken note of the recently published report by The Sentry on South Sudan that makes reference to the Bank. He says KCB is required in the respective banking laws across their markets to protect the identity of its clients. "We advise that KCB being a regulated entity deploys global standards applicable to Anti- Money Laundering

guidelines and Know-Your-Customer requirements provided by the regulators in all the countries of our operations," partly read the statement. "KCB South Sudan continues to work closely with the Government of South Sudan and the Bank of South Sudan with regards to resolutions on UN Security Council Sanction List 2206. The Bank remains committed to safeguarding the confidentiality of customer information as required in the respective banking laws across our markets." [Also reported in Sudan Tribune- 19 Sept. 2016: Kenya bank linked to money laundering from South Sudan](#)

Honey production takes sting out of economic crisis in Yei

[Radio Tamazuj- 20 Sept. 2016](#)

The value of oil in South Sudan has diminished, but farmers are turning to another liquid substance for profit: honey. Elizas Martu, a beekeeper in Tore county of Yei River State, says that he makes over \$200 per jerrican of honey. He harvests the honey three times per year, earning him much more than other agricultural endeavors. "Beekeeping is one of the simplest sources of investment and raising revenue than agriculture," Martu told Radio Tamazuj. "I make more harvesting natural honey per every harvest season compared to agriculture," and added that

the practice does not depend on climatic cycles. The biggest challenge Martu faces includes a lack of roads, access to big markets, storage and insecurity. Recently, Yei has seen fighting between government and opposition forces. Another beekeeper, Angelina Hawadia, says that selling honey has become her family's main source of economic livelihood. "We call on partners more especially those supporting agriculture and forestry to also consider beekeeping as another source for economic sustainability," Hawadia said.

Ivory Bank to open a new branch in Wau

[James Deng Dimo: Gurtong- 16 Sept. 2016](#)

Residents of Raga can now have access to their money in Wau, without having to travel to Raga to make any transactions. The bank will be opening a new branch in Wau which will see to it that residents of Raga will be able to conduct

their banking activities at ease. Ivory Bank had shut down its branch in Raga town following the aftermath of the June fighting between government troops and armed groups. Mawuor Malou, Wau Ivory bank manager said "We will

only restart our activities in Raga town once the security situation has improved," he said. The

bank lost an estimated 30 million of South Sudanese pounds during the conflict.

ECONOMY AND PUBLIC FINANCE

South Sudan to open new oil facility in October

[Sudan Tribune- 10 Sept. 2016](#)

The South Sudanese Petroleum minister, Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth has disclosed that government plans to establish a new oil facility in the country before end of the year. The new oil facility, he said, will be opened in Palouch oilfields of oil-rich Unity state next month. "The idea to establish a new facility aims to amplify daily production in the country," said Gatkuoth. According to the South Sudanese petroleum minister, since conflict erupted in the young nation in December 2013, the world's youngest nation has only been producing 130,000 barrels of oil per day. The new facility will be handled by the Dar Petroleum Operating Company which has been managing the production of oil in Palouch of Unity state since the signing of Sudan's 2005 peace deal, said Gatkuoth. Gatkuoth, however, said although

production was halted due to waves of violence, oil workers in the region were safe ahead of plans to restart production in Unity state. The minister said neighbouring Sudan recently agreed to help South Sudan and its oil companies in repairing damages caused by war in order to allow quick resumption of production at its oil wells. "For us to operationalize the resumption of oil there, we are actually thinking that by December, things are going to change in Unity state and resumption of oil production will restart in the area," he said. South Sudan, one of Africa's leading oil producers, still lacks an oil refinery of its own, making transportation very costly. Revenues from oil account for 98 percent of South Sudan's annual budget.

Juba too broke to pay foreign medical bills

[Barbara Among: The East African- 16 Sept. 2016](#)

Broke South Sudan government has cancelled all payments for public officials seeking medical treatment from foreign countries in a bid to cut spending. Finance minister Stephen Dhieu Dau issued the order Friday cancelling all bills and claims related to healthcare outside the country for civil servants. The directive comes a week after the minister and his staff met with heads of government institutions to discuss key reforms including immediate implementation of cash limits for departments and agencies. "This money is needed for improvement of health

services in the Republic of South Sudan," said Mr Dau in a memo to all undersecretaries and heads of commissions. Last month, the minister cancelled payments of all outstanding cheques and claims – which were returned the concerned spending agencies – pending possible inclusion into the financial year 2016/17 budget, which is yet to be read. South Sudan, which gained independence from Sudan in July 2011, is struggling to stay afloat following resumption of war in December 2013, which has nearly halted oil production, the lifeline of the country's economy.

S. Sudan says facing cash crisis at its foreign embassies

[Xinhua- 10 Sept. 2016](#)

South Sudan said Friday its facing cash crisis at its foreign embassies stemming from salary delays as well risk eviction for failure to pay rents. Philip Thon leek, Chairperson of Specialized Committee for Foreign Relations in transitional Parliament, told Xinhua in an interview in Juba that the government is making frantic efforts to rescue the diplomats who may be at risk of eviction due to rental dues. "The diplomats have been going without salaries for about five months, and some of them are being threatened to be dragged to court for failing to pay rents by their landlords," Leek said. In March, Juba said it will downsize the number of staff in its embassies across the world in order to cut costs due to economic slump stemming from a two-year civil war. The move comes amid unconfirmed reports that some of the foreign missions have been served with eviction orders for not paying rent while some staff have not been paid for months due to economic crisis. "Our diplomats don't get their salaries regularly because scarcity of hard

currency has disadvantaged them from paying their house rents abroad," Leek stressed. The lawmaker explained that the situation has been exacerbated by the current economic crisis that has made foreign currencies to be very scarce, coupled with the large number of diplomats deployed in foreign missions abroad. Since South Sudan gained its independence from Khartoum in 2011, the world youngest nation has so far opened 32 missions worldwide. Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Mawien Makol told Xinhua that the delays are due to economic crisis, coupled with recent fighting that forced former first vice president Riek Machar to flee the country. "We have some economic problems at the moment, but we are trying our best, and also to reduce the number of officials in some of those embassies," Makol said. Enditem. [Also reported in Radio Tamazuj- 11 Sept. 2016: South Sudan admits difficulty in paying diplomats in foreign missions, in Daily Nation- 13 Sept. 2016: South Sudan facing crisis at its 32 embassies as cash dries up.](#)

Local Revenue Management Committee Formed In Western Lakes State

[Mabor Riak Magok: Gurtong- 16 Sept.2016](#)

The Minister of Finance and Economic Planning in Western Lakes State, Daniel Gumwel Nhomabur on Thursday issued an order for the formation of a local revenue management

committee. In the ministerial order the Governor appointed the Director General in the Ministry, Makur Malual Machut as the chairperson of the committee.

A degree doesn't count for South Sudanese job seeker

[The Conversation- 19 Sept. 2016](#)

Despite a large proportion of South Sudanese having professional qualifications, many of them are struggling to find jobs in Australia's Capital Territory and face racism when applying for work,

new research finds. As part of the study, 72 members of the South Sudanese community living in the ACT participated in workshops about finding employment. In this group 42% have

tertiary qualifications in areas such as accounting, nursing, public health, medical science and law. However, they all failed to get employment in their chosen career. In fact 96% of the participants were job seekers, working in casual and part-time jobs. It's estimated that more than 24,000 South Sudanese are living in Australia. This ethnic group is the fastest-growing migrant community. However, this community is also among the most disadvantaged, with an

unemployment rate of 28.6% (the national unemployment rate is 5.7%). In the ACT, the total number of South Sudanese in work is 235, out of the 800 living there (500 adults). Divided up, 127 women are working in the child-care sector and 108 men are working in various sectors. Numerous initiatives by diverse institutions in different states have tried to reduce underemployment among South Sudanese, but without significant success.