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أتر **Atar**

Sudan in Perspective

Issue 10, Monday, August 12, 2024

Sudan **and its surroundings**



Artwork by: Obada Gabir

Marhaba!

This is the tenth issue of “Atar” English magazine, from Sudan Facts Center for Journalism. It will be coming to you on Monday, after every two weeks.

From the outset, we have endeavored to address the interconnections between events within Sudan and its immediate and distant surroundings through our “Sudan and Its Surroundings” section. In this issue, we dedicate a comprehensive file to exploring our existence on the agendas of others.

In 2013, the Sudanese government collapsed under the weight of a severe economic crisis, following a GDP drop of nearly 80% after South Sudan’s independence. Synchronously, the region erupted with revolutions and conflicts, while the UAE played a pivotal role with money and mercenaries, capitalizing on the opportunities presented by the changing situation in Sudan. Written by Hassan Alnaser.

Events in eastern Sudan are accelerating, with increasing concerns as Eritrea becomes an active party. Its support for armed factions raises questions about its objectives and the implications for the region. Are we witnessing a new phase of regional conflict? A report from the Atar team delves into the evolving scene and its impact on Sudan’s security and stability.

Along a border strip extending over 1,350 kilometers between Sudan and Chad, geopolitical interests intersect with tribal loyalties, complicating the crisis. While Khartoum accuses N’Djamena of supporting the Rapid Support Forces, Chad continues to present itself as a neutral mediator, even as political tensions cast a shadow over the humanitarian scene. Atar team explores the Sudanese-Chadian issue.


Despite numerous negotiation platforms aiming to end the war in Sudan,

including those in Cairo, these objectives remain unachievable. Mediation and peace talks tend to focus on narrow conflict symptoms rather than addressing the core political issues. The result, as Mai Jaafar writes, is “peace on sale.”

In Port Sudan, the new administrative capital post-war, both the city’s residents and the displaced face a harsh test of adaptation to exorbitant costs and high living expenses. Families are navigating hardships by devising unique survival strategies, from reducing meals to selling possessions, while social solidarity is being raised through aid and local initia-

tives. Written by Fadia Salih and Ahmed Al-Nashader.

In the “Sudan Chronicle” section, Atar correspondents from Kadugli, Atbara, Kassala, Ad-Dweim, Al-Daein, and Khartoum North “Bahri” recount how the socio-economic tragedies spawned by war intersect with the roar of nature. Hunger and autumn are the defining themes of Sudan today.

Finally, we read the weekly price bulletin from Sudanese cities, prepared by Abdelrahman Maalla and Mohammed Elkamel. 

Atar team

In this issue:

- ◇ **Sudan and the UAE: The issue is not war 5 - 9**
Hassan Alhaser
- ◇ **Eritrea's role in Sudan's conflict: A ticking time bomb 10 - 16**
Atar Team
- ◇ **Tribal loyalties fuel tensions between Sudan and Chad 17 - 21**
Atar Team
- ◇ **Peace on sale: Sudan's mediation crisis 22 - 26**
Mai Jafar
- ◇ **Port Sudan: A test of adaptation 27 - 31**
Fadia Salih and Ahmed Al-Nashadir
- ◇ **Sudan's Chronicles: 32 - 45**
 - Kadugli: Hunger may kill more than the war as agricultural activities grind to a halt
 - Atbara: Vendors' goods lost under bulldozers
 - Kassala: Heavy rains worsen displacement crisis
 - Ad-Dweim: Autumn of hunger and pain in isolated city
 - El-Daein: Agricultural season with unprecedented challenges
 - Bahri: Looting, intimidation and mines threatening lives
 - Barbar: Renewed clashes between regular forces and Wad Ahmed Ali led rebels*Diaries recorded by Atar correspondents*
- ◇ **Price Bulletin 46**
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 **Atar**
Sudan in Perspective

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Sudan and the UAE:

The issue is not war

 Hassan Alnaser



The year 2013 marked a significant downturn for Sudan's National Salvation (Inqaz) Government, which was already reeling from the loss of 80 per cent of its state budget following losing oil with South Sudan's secession in 2011. Meanwhile, the Middle East and Arab world were engulfed in revolutions and turmoil, with countries like Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Tunisia facing significant setbacks. In this chaotic environment, the UAE emerged as a key financial player, perpetually in need of hired fighters.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia capitalized on this need, transporting thousands of Sudanese to the Yemen front under the banner of "Operation Decisive Storm". As the National Inqaz Government underwent structural changes after 2014, increasingly relying on individuals rather than institutions, the UAE seized the opportunity to recruit fighters from former President Omar al-Bashir. This recruitment provided Mohammed Hamdan Dagher (Hemeti) and his family with access to vast resources, significantly expanding the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and integrating them into the UAE's military strategy.

Ground Policies

Between 2012 and 2022, the UAE invested approximately [\\$60 billion](#) across Africa, establishing itself as a significant economic player on the continent. By 2022, the UAE had doubled this figure, committing [\\$52.8 billion](#) in direct proj-

By 2018, the Abu Dhabi Development Fund had invested about 7.3 billion dirhams in Sudan, primarily through deposits within the framework of deals established by the Sudanese regime.

ects and investments. This made the UAE the leading source of foreign direct investment in Africa, surpassing China's contributions by a wide margin. However, in 2023, UAE investments decreased to around \$44 billion.

Sudan remained a part of the UAE's broader African ambitions. By 2018, the Abu Dhabi Development Fund had invested about 7.3 billion dirhams in Sudan, primarily through deposits within the framework of deals established by the Sudanese regime.

DP World, a major UAE entity, secured its first African port acquisition in the early 2010s. By 2022, it had purchased South Africa's "[Imperial Logistics](#)" for approximately \$1 billion, allowing it to expand its reach across the continent. Additionally, the UAE signed a 30-year lease with Tanzania to manage the [Dar es Salaam port](#) and acquired agricultural land in Zimbabwe, Sudan and Angola, with Dubai Investments and E20 holding around 3,800 hectares.

The UAE aimed to control major agricultural projects in Sudan, and since the transitional period, its policies have increasingly sought to influence key players and state institutions. The Al-Dahra Agricultural Holding Company, for instance, secured the Wadi Al-Hawad project, awarded by the Transitional Sovereign Council. In 2021, Lt Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, head of the Sovereign Council, established a committee to evaluate the project. By 2022, the committee's recommendations led [Al-Dahra](#) to secure approximately 3 million feddan with an initial investment of about \$1 billion, projected to reach around \$10 billion by the end of the first phase.

The Dispute Between the SAF and the UAE

The underlying conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the RSF is fundamentally economic, centered on their relationship and trade dynamics. The military confrontation with Ethiopia in the Al-Fashaga region is a prime example. On September 6, 2020, the SAF attempted to reclaim Al-Fashaga, which had been occupied by Ethiopia since 1991, taking advantage of Ethiopia's preoccupation with its internal conflict against the Tigray forces.

During this time, Hemeti offered no support to the SAF, neither logistically nor in terms of combat units, despite his interest in the Eastern Sudan file. Notably, Hemeti visited Addis Ababa during

the military confrontation, where he was received by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and toured economic sites with his younger brother, Al-Goni Hamdan Hemeti, who manages the economic portfolio for the Hemeti family.

Hemeti did not directly intervene in the Al-Fashaga issue, except by supporting a UAE initiative to resolve it. This [proposal](#) suggested that the SAF withdraw to pre-September 2020 borders, with the UAE investing in Al-Fashaga's land, distributing returns as 40 per cent to Sudan, 40 per cent to Ethiopia, and 20 per cent to the UAE.

The Al-Fashaga issue marked a turning point in the relationship between the SAF and the RSF. [Lt. Gen. Kabbashi](#) rejected the UAE proposal, stating publicly after Eid al-Adha 2021 prayers that anyone who does not recognize Sudanese sovereignty over the land should leave the country, asserting that there would be no concessions on Al-Fashaga. Various

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groups in Al-Gadarif, where Al-Fashaga is located, adopted the slogan “This Land is Ours,” echoing Kabbashi’s stance.

In early 2022, after Hemeti sent his forces to Port Sudan to resolve internal conflicts and protect civilians, the Commander-in-Chief of the SAF issued a decree assigning the 1970 Maritime Law to the Ministry of Defense, rather than the Border Commission, an independent body overseeing Sudanese border issues. This decree effectively placed all ports along the Red Sea under the Ministry of Defense’s indirect supervision.

Shadows of Conflict: The UAE’s Controversial Role in Sudan’s Strife

With the outbreak of war on April 15 between the SAF and the RSF, accusations of UAE involvement emerged amid government silence. It wasn’t until March 29, 2024, that Ambassador Al-Harith Idris

issued a memorandum explicitly accusing the UAE of participating in the aggression against Sudan alongside Chad and the Central African Republic. This was followed by a public statement from Lt. Gen. Yasser Al-Atta, the SAF’s assistant commander-in-chief, and protests against the UAE in the Red Sea state. Despite this, the UAE remains a significant investor in Sudan, and the Sudanese presence is firmly established in the UAE market.

In “[War on Sheep Legs](#),” Magdi El Gizouli highlighted the relationship between population growth in the Gulf and the nomadic livestock of Kordofan and Darfur, with Sudan and Somalia providing around 80% of the Gulf’s meat imports. Al-Jizouli explained that the livestock raised in these areas fuels the Gulf cities, where meat serves as the energy source for the Gulf workers’ productivity, much like how oil powers electricity.

Country/ year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Saudi Arabia	549.1	510.1	284.9	365.3	317.3
Yemen	14.4	8.5	12.5	5.2	5.3
UAE	944.6	1,067.0	1,637.5	2,967.8	2,076.2
Jordan	23.0	91.2	24.1	23.9	37.0
Syria	22.3	32.9	22.7	16.7	16.0
Iraq	1.1	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.1
Total	1,638.394	1,779.3	2,068.6	3,464.1	2,518.0

Arab Countries’ Imports from Sudan (in millions of dollars) (2018-2022)

Source: Based on data from the [Central Bank of Sudan](#), Economic and Financial Report 2022, Table (10)

The Coming Scenario

The RSF's transformation into mere "mercenaries," as described by Arif El-Saui in his report "[The UAE's Last Bet: Hemeti or the Kiseebah Mercenaries](#)", accurately reflects the situation during the conflict. The UAE's gamble now hinges on two points: Understanding Hemeti's position in its strategic equation and the internal transformations within the RSF, particularly the rise of Hemeti's older brother, Abdelrahim Daglo, following Hemeti's notable disappearance.

Despite the RSF's expanding control in Sinnar, its increased presence in Al-Jazirah state, and the establishment of its civilian administrations in Darfur, it is not exempt from facing repercussions for the violations committed during the war. The United States has begun to intervene, with Secretary of State Blinken inviting the SAF and RSF to Geneva meetings, alongside consultations with Saudi Ara-

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bia, the UAE, Egypt, and the European Union, with the UN as an observer. However, these efforts may not quickly end the military conflict or reach a conclusive resolution unless the conflicting parties' allies agree on satisfactory political and financial terms.



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Sudan in Perspective

Issue 10, Monday, August 12, 2024



Eritrea's role in Sudan's conflict: *A ticking time bomb*

 **Atar Team**

Artwork by: Medo Kagonka

The international community is closely monitoring the volatile military developments in eastern Sudan following the eruption of hostilities between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on April 15, 2023. Deepening anxiety is driven by the intensifying tribal militarization, significantly backed by the Eritrean government. This escalation is particularly disconcerting as the conflict has expanded beyond its initial battle zones in Sudan capital and is now encroaching upon central Sudan, including Al-Jazirah State and parts of Sinnar State, edging dangerously close to the eastern territories.

This maneuver, synchronised with civilian mobilisation campaigns to counter the burgeoning influence of the militias, has garnered unequivocal support from the Sudanese Armed Forces. Observers suggest that the inception of these movements may have been orchestrated through a collaborative effort between Sudanese and Eritrean intelligence services, prompted by Eritrea's heightened concern over the potential ramifications of the war spilling into its borders.

Reports of Sudanese armed movements establishing training camps within Eritrean territory surfaced a month after the RSF seized control of Al-Jazirah's capital, leading to the Sudanese army's retreat and their subsequent advance toward the fringes of Al-Gedaref State by the end of December 2023.

These reports highlighted the for-

Reports of Sudanese armed movements establishing training camps within Eritrean territory surfaced a month after the RSF seized control of Al-Jazirah's capital.

mation of military training camps by the Sudan Liberation Movement, under the leadership of Minni Arko Minnawi, and the Popular Front for Liberation and Justice in Eastern Sudan, led by Al-Amin Daoud, within Eritrean territory, allegedly with the backing of the Sudanese Armed Forces. However, sources within Eritrean intelligence suggest that Eritrea's strategic focus was primarily on arming tribal factions with deep-rooted cross-border connections, particularly by consolidating elements from the Beni Amer tribe into a newly formed armed force.

Subsequently, a new military entity has emerged, identified as the "Eastern Sudan Liberation Forces," under the command of Ibrahim Dunia—a prominent figure in Kassala State. Dunia, who previously served in the Sudanese police force before migrating to Qatar and joining the Qatari police, returned to Sudan following the outbreak of the conflict.

Eritrean patronage

Under full Eritrean sponsorship, Ibrahim Dunia's movement held its inaugural conference from May 10 to 13, 2024, at their camp near the village of Tamrat, just within Eritrean borders. The Eritrean government made a prominent appearance, along with several figures representing Sudanese political parties and armed movements, notably in the absence of any official Sudanese government representation. The "Eastern Sudan Liberation Forces" are estimated to number around 2,000 fighters, primarily drawn from the Beni Amer and Habab tribes. During the conference, Ibrahim Dunia stated that the formation of the movement was driven by the increasing violations committed by both sides of the conflict, with the goal of protecting the people of eastern Sudan and defending their land and honor.

Journalist and writer Jamal Hamad, editor-in-chief of the "Adoulis" website, explained to "Atar" that Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki has always been deeply concerned about any political or military developments in eastern Sudan, given the ethnic ties and geographical proximity to western Eritrea. Hamad highlighted that eastern Sudan played a significant role in supporting the Eritrean revolution for over three decades during the armed struggle.

Hamad further elaborated, saying, "Isaias is keen to prevent any destabilization in eastern Sudan. To this end, he

supports armed movements through training and arming, especially amid internal tensions due to the lack of justice in the distribution of power and wealth in Eritrea." He added that the realization of political rights by the people of eastern Sudan poses a constant threat to Isaias's regime. "Afwerki thrives in an atmosphere of wars and unrest; any peace or peaceful struggle that leads to democratic governance is seen as a direct threat to his existence," Hamad remarked.

Eritrea's government has previously hosted Sudanese opposition groups in the 1990s, establishing camps in eastern Sudan that served as launching points for military operations against the regime of Omar al-Bashir, who was eventually ousted in April 2019 following the December revolution. Eritrean forces were the de facto support for any military operations conducted by the National Democratic Alliance forces.

Shifting stances

The Eritrean position initially appeared to be in complete harmony with the Sudanese government, which had begun reaching out to the leadership in Asmara to collaborate against the expansion of the RSF towards the east. Eritrea's support for the Sudanese government was motivated by concerns for its national security and its western borders. However, Eritrea quickly extended its patronage to other movements alongside the "Eastern Sudan Liberation Forces," including

the “Beja Congress Forces” led by Musa Mohamed Ahmed, primarily composed of the Beja tribes; the “Eastern Battalion Forces” under Al-Amin Daoud, comprising members of the Beni Amer tribe; and the “National Movement for Construction and Development” led by Mohamed Tahir Suleiman Betay, whose forces are drawn from the Jumayl’ab branch of the Beja tribes, based in the areas of Hamashkoreb and Telkok near the Eritrean border, maintaining ongoing contact with Eritrean authorities.

According to the Sudanese News Agency (SUNA), General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, Chairman of the Sovereignty Council and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, [visited](#) the Hamashkoreb area in early April, urging the local population to continue “praying for the victory of the armed forces in their battle against mercenaries and rebels.”

Sources close to Eritrean intelligence told “Atar” that a significant shift has occurred in the Eritrean government’s stance on the conflict in Sudan. Eritrea has now decided to adopt an equidistant position from both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the RSF, with its next steps including the unification of the four armed factions under a single command.

Before this latest de-

velopment, the sources revealed that the Eritrean Defense Forces had allocated a military unit of 5,000 soldiers to provide support should the situation on the ground in Sudan escalate and the RSF approach eastern regions. Eritrea had already dispatched an advanced reconnaissance unit earlier to assess the situation around the bridges on the Atbara River.

New developments

The recent expulsion of the Sudanese chargé d’affaires from Eritrea At the end of last July marked a notable turning point in the relations between the two countries, particularly given the already tense regional climate. The Sudanese Foreign Ministry later confirmed the incident.

Speculation has run rampant in the wake of Asmara’s silence on the reasons behind this abrupt decision. Some analysts suggest it may be linked to rumors

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of Sudanese government ties with Tigrayan fighters, who are allegedly involved in the conflict alongside the Sudanese army against the RSF. Others speculate that the issue may relate to the ambassador imposing fees on Sudanese nationals in Eritrea at a time when the host country had waived all fees in solidarity with Sudan’s wartime conditions.

However, former Eritrean diplomat Fathi Osman, who resides in Paris, offered his own interpretation in a Facebook post, suggesting that there were leaks indicating the Sudanese diplomat had been recruiting informants to spy on the training of armed groups at the Sawa camp in western Eritrea. Sawa is the main training camp for the Eritrean Defense Forces. Osman noted that such actions are unacceptable to the Eritrean authorities and are considered a breach of diplomatic duties, emphasizing that diplomatic norms and practices require diplomats to observe and report any activities that may threaten their country's security, but through proper diplomatic channels.

The expulsion of the Sudanese chargé d'affaires, with a 72-hour deadline to leave Asmara, coincided with a meeting between Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and tribal leaders from eastern Sudan, whose forces are currently training on Eritrean soil, including Chief Mohamed Al-Amin Tirik, the paramount leader of the Hadendowa tribe.

The armament of Eastern Sudan and its implications

Growing anxieties are mounting over the militarisation of tribal groups in Eastern Sudan, particularly regarding the profound and long-term ramifications. Khalid Mohamed Taha, the expert on the Horn of Africa, elaborated to "Atar" that the proliferation of armed factions

and the diverse array of fighters now entrenched in Eastern Sudan are merely manifestations of a much deeper crisis. This crisis is characterized by the unbridled spread of weaponry, the reckless mobilization of forces, and a stark neglect of the region's fragile security infrastructure and the delicate social fabric that binds the various communities across the three states of Eastern Sudan. The situation threatens to escalate further with the influx of tens of thousands of displaced persons fleeing the violence in other regions of the country.

"The issue extends far beyond civilians arming themselves as a means of protection or to ward off potential threats—especially in the aftermath of targeted attacks on civilians, their properties, and their dignity in the war-torn states," Taha articulated. "The peril truly manifests when these arms are wielded to assert dominance, engage in acts of aggression, enforce political ideologies, or impose control through sheer force." He underscored the critical need to reassess the scale, armament, and influence of the myriad armed factions proliferating in Eastern Sudan, which currently number around 18. The majority of these groups profess allegiance to the Sudanese Armed Forces, though the veracity of such claims remains to be scrutinised.

Political activist Khalid Mohamed Nour further contextualized the armed mobilization in Eastern Sudan as an inevitable consequence of the current crisis.

“It is well-known that numerous armed movements have emerged in Eastern Sudan during the ongoing conflict, with many establishing recruitment camps and graduating cadres of fighters,” Nour observed.

Yet, Nour distinguished the “Eastern Sudan Liberation Movement,” which recently convened its inaugural conference, as the most promising force with the potential to effect meaningful change. He commended the movement’s incisive analysis of the fallout from the April 15 conflict, considering it a solid foundation for future engagements. However, he emphasized that the movement must now formulate a comprehensive political agenda to guide its alliances and rectify the current imbalance, where the primacy of armed struggle overshadows the need for a coherent political strategy.

Nour also pointed out that the movement’s leadership stands apart from the traditional political establishment that continues to dominate the landscape of both new and old movements in Eastern Sudan—figures such as Musa Mohamed Ahmed and Al-Amin Daoud being emblematic of this entrenched order. He stressed the paramount importance of peaceful, civilian political engagement, warning against the perils of ignoring the pervasive militarization that is currently sweeping the nation.

Jamal Hamad, however, perceived the situation in Eastern Sudan as a continuation of the tragedy that unfolded in

“It is well-known that numerous armed movements have emerged in Eastern Sudan during the ongoing conflict, with many establishing recruitment camps and graduating cadres of fighters.”

Darfur, where legitimate grievances were co-opted by political actors and armed movements for self-serving purposes, leaving the people and ethnic communities of Darfur to bear the catastrophic consequences. Hamad cautioned that the presence of these armed movements would only exacerbate the already volatile situation in Eastern Sudan, serving as a tinderbox for further tribal and ethnic conflicts that have long plagued the region. He added that these movements reflect deep-seated divisions within the same community, often exacerbated by external influences such as those of Isaias Afwerki.

In alignment with this perspective, Khalid Taha warned that the ongoing arms race in Eastern Sudan would inevitably lead to an intensification of conflicts, regardless of any superficial semblance of unity among these groups at present. “There is indeed a necessity for armament,” Taha conceded, “but not on

the basis of ethnic or regional alignments. The true imperative lies in concerted efforts to halt the war, forge a comprehensive national Sudanese project, address the critical issues of equal citizenship rights, establish a fair system for the transfer of power, build institutions of popular governance, and lay the foundation for a just social contract under a permanent democratic constitution.”

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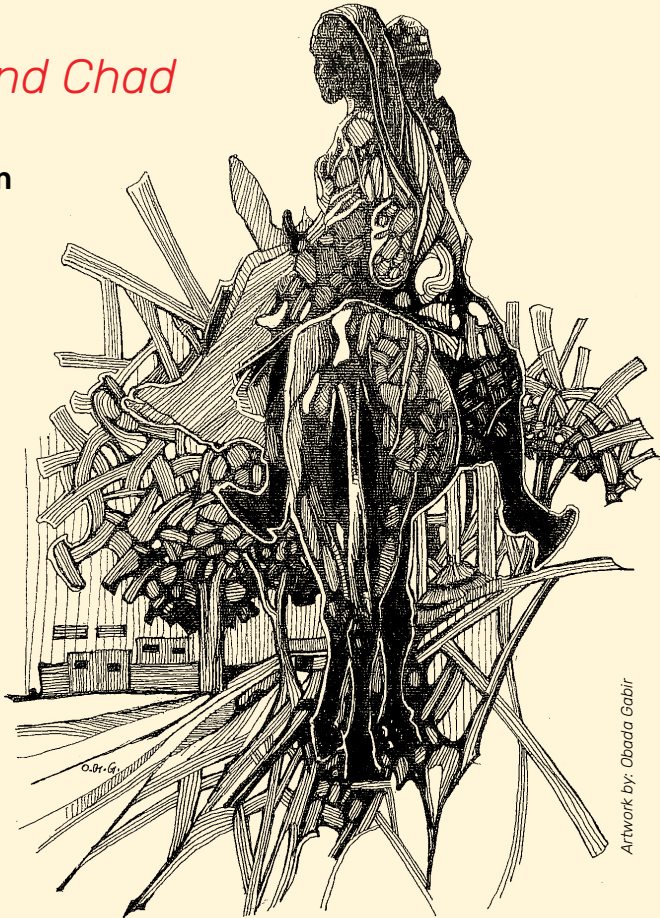
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Sudan in Perspective

Issue 10, Monday, August 12, 2024

Tribal loyalties fuel tensions *between* *Sudan and Chad*

 **Atar Team**



Artwork by: Obada Gabir

As the war in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) continues over a year after its outbreak in April 2023, the conflict has worsened the humanitarian crisis in the region. Millions of Sudanese are displaced, living in refugee camps and facing dire conditions. The international community, including the United Nations, fears an unprecedented humanitarian disaster if the conflict persists.

The war's expansion has significantly impacted Sudan's neighboring countries, particularly Chad, which hosts over a million refugees across six camps along its border with Sudan. The historical relationship between Sudan and Chad has experienced both cooperation and tension, influenced by shared migrations and the effects of drought in the Sahel since the late 20th century.

History of military cooperation

In January 2010, the governments of Sudan and Chad established the Sudanese-Chadian Joint Forces, a military unit created under a security and military protocol between the two nations. Comprising 3,000 soldiers and 360 police officers equally divided between the countries, these forces operate along the 1,350-kilometer border, conducting land, air, and surveillance operations. The leadership alternates every six months between the two countries, reflecting a commitment to maintaining security and stability in the border regions.

Months before the SAF-RSF conflict erupted, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan visited N'Djamena to discuss with Chad's President the need to enhance the operational capacity of the Sudanese-Chadian Joint Forces.

Months before the SAF-RSF conflict erupted, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan visited N'Djamena to discuss with Chad's President the need to enhance the operational capacity of the Sudanese-Chadian Joint Forces. Their discussions included the potential increase in RSF troop presence along the border. Both parties agreed to deploy joint forces in West Darfur to restore normalcy and secure the border areas.

Diplomatic crisis amid war

Despite the deep-rooted cultural and historical ties between Sudan and Chad, as well as shared tribal affiliations, the two nations are now embroiled in a severe diplomatic crisis. This deterioration was sparked by Khartoum's [accusation](#) that N'Djamena had opened its territory and airports to receive military supplies for the RSF from the UAE and provided hospitals to treat injured RSF members—charges that Chad has denied.

A [report](#) by *The New York Times* published in September 2023 revealed that the UAE, under the guise of aiding Sudanese refugees, was secretly supporting the RSF with arms, including drones, and treating injured fighters, with the most critical cases flown to one of its military hospitals. According to the report, satellite images revealed an RSF operations center at an airport and hospital in Um Jaras, Chad, about 30 miles from the Sudanese border, where Emirati planes land.

Chadian Foreign Minister Mahamat Saleh Annadif denied these allegations in an interview with [Al Jazeera Mubasher](#), stating that Chad is among the most affected by the war in Sudan and that the Chadian people are deeply pained by the plight of Sudanese refugees and displaced persons.

Annadif added that the situation in Sudan is painful, describing the accusations of Chad aligning with the RSF as unrealistic. He pointed out that Chad was the first country to attempt to mediate between Sudan's Sovereign Council President General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his then-deputy General Mohammed Hamdan Daglo (Hemedti), stating: "We extended an invitation for them to visit N'Djamena before the outbreak of the clashes." He noted that both parties agreed to the Chadian mediation, but the war started before they could engage in negotiations.

Annadif mentioned that all accusations against his government circulated

on social media and that the Sudanese government had not issued any official diplomatic complaints. In response, Sudanese Foreign Minister Ali Al-Sadiq [emphasized](#) that the Chadian support for the RSF was clear and involved using Um Jaras and Abéché airports to receive Emirati flights transporting weapons and military equipment.

Sudan and Chad share a border of over 1,350 kilometers and are home to 30 shared tribes. Both Chadian Foreign Minister Mahamat Saleh Annadif and RSF Commander General Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo hail from the Ar-Rizeigat tribe (the Mahariya clan). Annadif spoke about Sudan's involvement in supporting Chadian opposition movements, asserting that they have evidence of Sudanese support for Chadian opposition and attempts to transfer the war to Chad.

In December 2023, Chad's Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed Sudan of the expulsion of four Sudanese diplo-

Sudanese Foreign Minister Ali Al-Sadiq emphasized that the Chadian support for the RSF was clear and involved using Um Jaras and Abéché airports to receive Emirati flights transporting weapons and military equipment.

mats from its territory within 72 hours, a measure that Khartoum [reciprocated](#) against N'Djamena. The Sudanese authorities face accusations of establishing camps for Chadian opposition within their territory in the city of Ad-Dabba in the Northern State, led by Osman Daliyu, the brother of Chadian opposition figure Yahya Daliyu, who was killed in clashes in N'Djamena last month.

Security sources told *Atar* that Sudanese authorities agreed to the proposal of Darfur Governor Minni Arko Minnawi to open camps for Chadian opposition under the guise of armed movements. The sources indicated that SAF officers and the Darfur governor engaged in intensive meetings and agreed to appoint Osman Daliyu as the leader of these camps. Osman Daliyu appeared in a [video](#) with elements of the Sudan Liberation Movement led by Minnawi after his brother's death, vowing revenge. The sources added that Daliyu had formed a military alliance with Minnawi.

However, Sudanese Finance Minister Jibril Ibrahim, head of the Justice and Equality Movement, denounced these reports, [stating](#) in late March that the claims about opening camps for Chadian opposition in Ad-Dabba were fabricated to push the Chadian government to directly support the RSF. Dr Jibril confirmed

that the Sudanese government had never considered such a move, "and if it had, it would have utilised methods beyond the names deliberately inserted into the fabrication."

Tensions between the two countries escalated following [accusations](#) made by SAF Assistant Commander General Yasser al-Atta in November, accusing Chad of opening its airports to transfer UAE support in weapons and ammunition to the RSF. Multiple reports, including a United Nations panel of experts on Sudan [confirmed](#) the UAE's involvement in supporting the RSF via Chadian territory, with the report stating that the UAE, by engaging in arms transfers to Darfur, violated the arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council since 2004.

In response, Chad demanded that the Sudanese government apologize for Yasser al-Atta's statements or face appropriate measures. However, Sudanese Foreign Minister Ali Al-Sadiq insisted on not providing any apology, asserting that they had presented evidence proving the accuracy of the statements.

Despite strenuous efforts by some parties to calm tensions between the two countries, the departure of some armed movements in Sudan, such as the Justice and Equality Movement led by Dr. Jibril Ibrahim and the Sudan Liberation Movement led

A United Nations panel of experts on Sudan confirmed the UAE's involvement in supporting the RSF via Chadian territory.

by Minnawi, from their declared neutral stance at the war's onset, and their alignment with SAF, has further deteriorated relations between the two countries, with accusations exchanged at the highest levels of leadership.

The leaders of the armed movements supporting the SAF, Jibril and Minnawi, hail from the Az-Zaghawa tribe, from which Chadian President Mahamat Idriss Déby originates. Despite the tribal connections, relations between Jibril, Minnawi, and the Chadian president are strained due to alleged logistical support from Chad to the RSF.

However, the long border between the two countries complicates monitoring military movements, as Dr. Mustafa Al-Jamil, a professor of political science at Sudanese universities, pointed out in an interview with **Atar**. He emphasised that both countries are negatively or positively affected by any armed conflict or political change in either, recalling Sudan's roles in changing governments in Chad, particularly during the regimes of Hissène Habré and Idriss Déby, with

Despite the tribal connections, relations between Jibril, Minnawi, and the Chadian president are strained due to alleged logistical support from Chad to the RSF.


accusations directed at Sudanese governments for supporting numerous Chadian opposition movements.

Chadian journalist and political analyst Abubakar Muhammad Abdelsalam attributed the accusations between the two countries to what he described as misunderstandings due to obstructive rhetoric in diplomacy. He believes Chad has maintained a neutral stance between the warring parties and sought to mediate, but due to recent statements from the Sudanese government and military leaders raising accusations, the Chadian government responded and refuted the allegations.



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Peace on sale: Sudan's mediation crisis

 Mai Jafar



On Saturday, July 6th, 2024, Egypt hosted an 'end to the war' meeting of the Sudanese Political and Civic Forces, which came to be dubbed the Cairo Conference. The event featured notable civil society and political figures at the centre of the Sudanese political scene since Al Bashir's removal in 2019. At the crowd's helm is technocrat and international civil servant turned Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok. The event is one of many attempts to bring together Sudanese stakeholders to bring an end to the ongoing war in Sudan. Egypt itself sponsored humanitarian access talks with donors, civil society, and local actors back in November 2023. Despite Egypt's mediation, political breakthroughs and humanitarian access remain untenable.

In April 2023, a disagreement between Sudan's two top generals, Abdel Fatah Burhan, Commander General of the Sudanese Armed Forces and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo - Nicknamed Hemedti-leader of the Rapid Defence Force (RSF) militia, quickly escalated into an all-out war. The army and the militia troops exchanged deadly fire on the streets of Khartoum before turning almost all of Sudan's capital cities into war zones. Both belligerents used advanced armament in their urban warfare. The RSF deployed surfaces to air missiles and RBG-6CALs while driving- through the city- their machine gun-fitted pickup trucks supplied by the UAE and Russia's Wagner group. The army responded with indiscriminate

air bombardments. Both violated international law by turning residential areas into war zones and using the unarmed public as human shields. The hostilities induced waves of displacement as terrorised populations fled to safety. According to humanitarian figures, Sudan is now the world's worst and largest displacement crisis; almost 8 million people out of a population of 40 million are displaced, half a million of them escaped to Egypt.

In the 16 months since the war broke out, multiple mediation fronts sought to sponsor peace negotiations between the army and the RSF. The leading platform, Jeddah, established in May 2023, is one of many but remains to be the officially endorsed mechanism by the US. Despite international backing, Jeddah failed to facilitate a breakthrough in peace talks. The Jeddah agenda is inconsistent with the preconditions it produced. Mediation and peace talks tend to focus on the symptoms of the conflict, in the case of the Sudan 2023 war; a cease-fire, humanitarian access and improving communication measures to help build towards the next steps. The narrow set of objectives are designed to preclude venturing into political issues out of fear of complicating the crisis further. The army's preconditions for implementing the ceasefire arrangement are conditioned upon the unconditional withdrawal of the militia from the capital and exiting people's homes. The latter is not just a successful war strategy by the militia but a conten-

tious spillover from the pre-war security sector reform agenda, essentially one of many political disputes between the army and the militia that led to the war. It's a typical Catch-22 situation.

As Jeddah declined, stakeholders and policymakers sought to test alternative mediation mechanisms in hopes one would serve as the basis for a new peace project. Between April 2023 and July 2024, several multilateral and bilateral initiatives were set up to intervene to stop the war in Sudan, to no avail. One was through IGAD, the dominant sub-regional organisation, prompted by Kenya's Ruto's newfound role as regional mediator. The forum, having intervened to mediate a peaceful end to the South Sudanese war, retained enough experience to institute a political dialogue between the two belligerents. However, Ruto's rapprochement with General Daglo at the behest of the Emirates caused the army to withdraw from talks as it did in Jeddah citing bias on the part of the mediating partner. In both cases meddling accusations towards the Gulf, along with claims it is trying to influence the process through political pay-outs to mediation parties struggling to foot their food bill is not unfounded. The exclusive nature of the sub regional forum prompted countries like Egypt and Chad, both not members to the body but at higher risk of cross-border rising insecurity, to propose a parallel 'Neighbouring Countries Initiative'. The July 2024 Cairo summit

aimed to develop 'effective mechanisms' with neighbouring countries and in support of other international and regional efforts to find a resolution to address the escalating conflict. The use of effective in their published communique alludes to the failure of previous processes without delving to the political crisis behind it. In the meantime, the African Union in Addis Ababa played host to multiple side meetings with various civil actors to facilitate exploratory talks on the most appropriate type of mechanism, agenda and participants. The multiplicity of mechanisms and the politics underpinning their creation, most of the time a reactionary response to exclusion by member states and influential groups, raises concerns about the consequences of forum shopping on the viability of peace talks.

The history of peace mediation in Sudan is one of divisive politics and fracturing of alliances. Multiple war fronts in Sudan between the state and groups with unresolved grievances propelled wealth and power sharing as a governance alternative to addressing underdevelopment and equitable resource distribution. Under the tenure of Al Bashir in the early 2000s, the Islamists sought to buy the loyalties of opposition and warning groups by offering them a piece of the pie. The process by which these agreements were reached was highly clandestine and militarised. Conducted behind closed doors in the absence of any parliamentary oversight or civic representation, peace div-

idents rewarded the most violent. The larger the armed group, the bigger its seat at the table. The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) instituted a legacy of bargaining as a base for peace-making. Peace wasn't necessarily the end of violence, but the best deal negotiators strike to reshuffle the balance of power to the benefit of the state or at least to buy it more time. In the case of South Sudan, the political machinations came to an end with the 2011 secession.

20 years after the CPA, the 'peace for a price' handbook has come back to haunt the 2023 war mediation process. The multiplicity of actors, meeting capitals, international and regional backers and overlapping agendas reinforces the time-old practice of transactional politics dictating whose peace is to be. Forum shopping is linked to donor funding. You pick your backer and negotiate a deal that best alleviates your standing in the post-war political project. Financiers of political processes, also known more agreeably as donors, sponsor the process to influence the outcome. The UAE has learned, much to the Sudanese's dismay, that war patrons can invest as lucratively in peace, influencing the political process at both ends: diplomatically and on the battlefield. The political marketplace of the post-Bashir era has expanded beyond armed actors and state politicians to include technocrats, civilians, civic actors and independents as is the case with Taqadum.

When I was asked to write this piece, the task was to present the July 2024 Cairo conference to the lay Egyptian reader. Who the participants are, who was absent and why, and what that means for agenda formulation. While all these are crucial questions, presenting the Cairo conference in separation from the larger context of failed mediations and forum shopping precludes the politics behind deal brokerage and the advantage it gives to those with power whether they are on a quest to achieve peace or not.

When looking at the Cairo conference of July 2024, it is essential to ask questions such as who the participants are, who was absent and why, and what that means for agenda formulation. However, presenting the Cairo conference in separation from the larger context of failed mediations and forum shopping precludes the politics behind deal brokerage and the advantage it gives to those with power whether they are on a quest to achieve peace or not.

The Cairo conference was called in a highly contentious setup of regional competition over access to resources and the rise of militia violence aiding the forceful opening of economic frontiers. The Egyptian government plays host while contending with numerous internal economic and security concerns which it needs to balance visa-vi neutralizing a growing security at its borders. For one, Egypt is a net importer of Sudanese raw materials while the Sudanese

market is a primary receiver of Egyptian manufactured goods. The Sudanese war has a negative effect on the Egyptian balance of trade, especially the agriculture and livestock sectors. Geopolitically, the long-term tug of war between Egypt and Addis over Nile water shares and the dispute over the filling of the Renaissance Dam was mediated through Khartoum. Egypt's hydropower agenda is at the risk of being caught in between the triangulated war and peace mediation relation that has the UAE subduing both Egypt's and Ethiopia's foreign policy to its own economic domination agenda in the Red Sea. At home, the Gulf's financial payouts keep the Egyptian economy at bay. When it comes to the Sudanese peace agenda, Egypt must tow a fine line between keeping its largest investor happy while firmly wrangling its interests abroad. Sudan is caught between the geopolitics of competition masquerading as peace facilitation.

The congratulatory statements following the proceedings of the Cairo conference suggest that some big breakthrough was achieved. But the war in Sudan rages on, famine is declared, and the conflict is rapidly developing an ethnic outlook. Overall things today are much worse than they were before the succes-

sive mediation attempts kicked off more than a year ago. The Cairo conference presents itself as a revolution in inclusive mediation, promoting the participation of civic actors in a space usually reserved for armed belligerents. But the value of civic-ness in itself is not a marker for progressive or radical antiwar politics. In Sudan's near and far history, civilian politicians emboldened by electoral representation pitfalls have contributed to the formation of the political marketplace and were instrumental in the weaponization of violence in the service of their agendas. Taqadam, the political alliance leading civic peace talks is accused by the public of being bankrolled by the Gulf to serve as the political arm of the militia. Their history as representatives of the revolution during the 2019-2021 transition is also questionable. For many Sudanese, the civilians' contribution to the peace processes in Cairo last month and Addis before that suffers from the same governance transgressions noted during their transitional tenure: lack of transparency, absent accountability and disregard for the popular voice. Between Cairo, Addis, Jeddah and Geneva, the retreat of the real politics behind the violence makes peace a distant possibility.



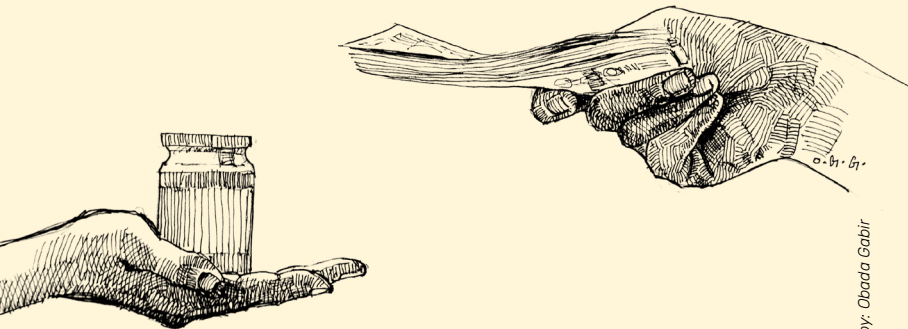
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Sudan in Perspective

Issue 10, Monday, August 12, 2024

Port Sudan: *A test of adaptation*

 **Fadia Salih and Ahmed Al-Nashadir**



A year and several months after the outbreak of the war, Sudan is experiencing catastrophic economic conditions that are impacting its citizens. To adapt to the current economic crisis, Sudanese families are devising various methods based on their priorities, environmental conditions, cultural practices, and economic situations. Before the April 15 war, the country was already struggling with structural issues in service sectors, and the current conflict has led to systematic destruction of these sectors. In Port Sudan, which has become an administrative capital following the war's expansion from Khartoum to other states, the paradox of adaptation lies in families adopting austerity measures. They are reducing essential spending on food, health, and education to survive. What remains for them? And what does life mean without these essentials?

According to economist Hussam Al-Deen Ismail, the service sector, which accounted for 53 per cent of the GDP, has suffered severe damage. The agricultural sector has lost approximately 70 per cent of its farmland, wheat cultivation has decreased by 50 per cent, and millet and sesame cultivation has declined by 70 per cent. Regarding inflation, the exchange rate has quadrupled since the beginning of the war, with the pound's value dropping from 570 to nearly 2000 per dollar. Inflation's impact is evident in the prices of goods and transportation, and where it is not visible in prices, it manifests in the size and quality of products.

The agricultural sector has lost approximately 70 per cent of its farmland, wheat cultivation has decreased by 50 per cent, and millet and sesame cultivation has declined by 70 per cent.

Urban poverty

Due to the economic collapse, Port Sudan is witnessing a dramatic rise in the prices of basic goods, a significant deterioration in health conditions, and continuous power outages. In contrast, Port Sudan's market is heavily crowded, with a noticeable increase in the number of vendors seeking new income sources. Coupled with a strict security grip, the market is entirely closed every Saturday, with all activities halted and movement restricted. According to local discussions, the closure aims to "clean the market." Strolling through Port Sudan's market reveals numerous women, men, and children of various ages seeking financial assistance to support their families and pay for medical bills, among other needs. Begging has become a common manifestation of urban poverty in the new administrative capital.

Amid economic crises and the absence of state mechanisms and social protection policies, families are innovat-

ing ways to adapt and survive, varying based on their economic conditions and income sources.

Cutting down on food

Okeir, who lives in Port Sudan and works at Al-Thawra Bakery in Block 15, complains about the harsh conditions and rising prices, which have directly impacted his household's food system. The price of a loaf of bread has increased from 75 to 125 pounds, prompting his family to consume less bread than before. Okeir told Atar, "We consume half the amount of bread we used to." They sometimes have to reduce the number of meals and extend the time between each meal. "If I have dinner, I must delay breakfast until noon, and one meal has to be skipped, making do with the minimal available meals."

Al-Deen described adaptation as "an attempt to increase revenue and force a reduction in spending, with its effects clearly visible in the quality of life and food. Nowadays, people resort to lentils, local food like kiswa with 'Um Rigaiga,' and falafel, among other poor-quality foods." He continues, "While they were not eating well before, the situation compared to before the war indicates a decline in both the quantity and quality of food. According to the FAO's classification of food and its nature, there is coarse food prevalent in

war zones, such as 'Um Rigaiga,' which consists of water with a bit of dried okra, with no meat, vegetables, or fruits, and no good protein sources in any form."

Hajja Batoul, a tea seller near Al-Sharg College, follows a different approach to adapting food-wise. Due to rising prices, her family has had to eliminate some high-cost items, such as meat, which has risen from 7,000 pounds per kilo to 14,000 pounds.

Reducing spending on health and education

Medicine prices have sharply risen in the city, along with medical consultation fees. For instance, at the "Ansar al-Sunna" clinic in Block 15, the fee for a general practitioner has increased from 2,000 to 5,000 Sudanese pounds, and the price of intravenous fluids, which are life-saving due to the prevalence of fevers, has also risen. These increases create a barrier for low-income families and limit their access to health services. Okeir said, "Medicine prices have skyrocketed, and we only go to the doctor if it's a serious illness. If someone has malaria or infections, we are forced to forgo seeing doctors, and you might end up taking your patient to the hospital and returning without treatment."

Schools reopened in February amid hesitation from parents about sending their children to school. The main rea-

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son for this hesitation was the fear of an unstable academic year and lack of confidence in the government's decision to complete the school year under the current conditions. After the decision was made, parents were shocked by the exorbitant tuition fees, whether in public or private schools, in addition to other expenses like uniforms, books, and daily costs. These expenses hindered many children from low-income families from attending school. Okeir, a father of two, Abdelrahman, 7, and Osman, 3, said, "I didn't send my children to school, and you can clearly see how prices for clothes and notebooks have risen. Should I feed them or send them to school?"

Like Abdelrahman and Osman, many children were unable to enroll in school this year, reflecting in the city's streets filled with children selling goods or begging during school hours.

Selling property and spending savings

Most internally displaced persons (IDPs) have seen their income sources directly impacted by the war. Naturally, displaced families adopt the aforementioned adaptation methods but also face another challenge of high and limited rental housing. In response, many families have sold their possessions and spent their savings to cope with the crisis and secure housing.

Displaced families with moderate incomes spend a significant portion of their income on housing, with monthly rents

"I didn't send my children to school, and you can clearly see how prices for clothes and notebooks have risen. Should I feed them or send them to school?"

ranging from 950,000 to three billion Sudanese pounds. Consequently, rent constitutes a significant part of the budget for moderate and high-income displaced families. For low-income families unable to afford rent, they resort to relatives, if available, or to sheltering houses where they face various issues.

Many families have innovated income-generating activities as a form of adaptation. Women among the displaced have started making and selling sweet ice cream to neighborhood children, selling snacks and other goods, while others engage in selling perfumes and food. Due to the destruction of many factories in the country, many families have turned to producing and selling some goods, especially dairy products, at home to increase their income. A recent common practice to maximize income is having all capable family members work, sometimes even children.

Despite all this, amidst the current crisis that may lead to a trend toward individual salvation, many families rely

on assistance from relatives and friends, especially those living abroad. In the city, acts of generosity and solidarity between locals and the displaced are evident, with philanthropists continuously providing various forms of aid to sheltering houses, which have become a primary destination for distributing charity and assistance. In the complex situations the country is facing, social solidarity has become a mechanism for survival and rescue, making the promotion of solidarity practices essential.

A recent common practice to maximize income is having all capable family members work, sometimes even children.



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Sudan in Perspective

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Sudan's Chronicles:

Kadugli: Hunger may kill more than the war as agricultural activities grind to a halt

Atbara: Vendors' goods lost under bulldozers


Kassala: Heavy rains worsen displacement crisis

Ad-Dweim: Autumn of hunger and pain in isolated city

El-Daein: Agricultural season with unprecedented challenges

Bahri: Looting, intimidation and mines threatening lives

Barbar: Renewed clashes between regular forces and Wad Ahmed Ali led rebels

 Diaries recorded by Atar correspondents

Kadugli: **Hunger may kill more than the war as agricultural activities grind to a halt**

Atar correspondent

On the streets of Kadugli, the capital city of South Kordofan State, children as young as two years old roam around begging for food. They are seen in the city's market near bakeries and shops yawning as homes lack basic necessities.

In a country where only members of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) receive regular salaries, the plight of other families is so bad as they lack income and any other support.

Just like other war-torn regions of Sudan, residents of South Kordofan's nineteen localities face severe conditions in livelihoods and security. The ongoing conflict between warring parties has turned life for residents and displaced persons into a living hell.

Kadugli is particularly hard-hit. Since June last year, battles in the eastern rural areas of the state have pushed many families to seek refuge in the city.

As a result, eleven sheltering houses have been established, with the largest being the Port of Kadugli Sheltering House.

Additionally, displaced persons had already settled in the city due to tribal conflicts in the Lagawa locality of West Kordofan in October 2022. Some 36,000

people fled to the city, according to a UN humanitarian update.

With the state government's lack of attention to citizens' needs and international organisations' silence, the city's Emergency Room was activated through community efforts and contributions from residents abroad. A kitchen was set up at Kadugli Teaching Hospital and another at the Children's Hospital.

The management of Kadugli Emergency Room says hospitals are operating at 50 per cent capacity and do not provide all necessary medicines, especially for chronic conditions. Available medications are expensive. Despite the hospitals and health insurance services, citizens cannot afford medication due to the economic crisis caused by over thirteen months of unpaid state salaries, job losses, and a significant reduction in agricultural land.


Humanitarian aid and medical supplies only come in through South Sudan due to the closure of the road linking South Kordofan with North Kordofan.

Goods reach the city via South Sudan from Al-Na'am market, where transactions are conducted in US dollars due to fluctuating exchange rates. This has led to severe price increases in the city's markets, affecting purchasing power. Traders say the purchasing rate is very low.

Most large-scale agricultural operations have ceased due to fuel shortages and high prices, with a gallon of diesel costing 100,000 Sudanese pounds, limit-

ing farming to financially capable individuals.

Others have resorted to small-scale gardening near their homes, hoping to benefit from the rainy season.

Although the state government announced an initiative to form a committee to assist residents with farming, citizens view it as mere publicity stunt, unlikely to succeed due to ongoing security issues brought about by the war, which will confine agricultural activities to specific areas. 

Item and Quantity	Price/ Sudanese pound
Ground sorghum (per sack)	10,000
Sugar (per kg)	5,000
Oil (per pound)	2,500
Bread (10 loaves)	2,500
Lentils (per kg)	5,000
Onions (per Malwa measure)	10,000
Beef (per kg)	4,000
Okra (per Malwa measure)	14,000
Cowpeas (per Malwa measure)	16,000

Atbara: Vendors' goods lost under bulldozers

Atar correspondent

Street vendors, kiosk owners, and tea and coffee sellers in Khartoum and other war-affected cities have faced uncertainty. Many have relocated to safer states to continue their struggle for survival amidst the challenging living conditions in Sudan.

Following the fall of Al-Jazirah State to Rapid Support Forces (RSF), social media has spread claims that many vendors and street hawkers were Trojan horses and sleeper cells for the RSF in Atbara, awaiting the signal to act. In Atbara, there is no evidence to support these claims, and no official statements have indicated the arrest of any vendor with weapons or explosives in the market. Nevertheless, security forces have succumbed to these pressures and conducted extensive campaigns to remove kiosks and small businesses, most of which were established before the outbreak of war.

Last week, authorities in Atbara demolished all kiosks, particularly in Ad-Dammer transport hub, led by various security forces, including police, intelligence, and the army.

One affected individual, "Hamid," who arrived in Atbara from Omdurman in August 2023 and set up a small kiosk selling basic goods, recounted, "When I

couldn't find a rental space in the market, I went to the local administration and obtained a permit for 175,000 pounds for a small kiosk at Ad-Dammer transport hub."

Business was initially smooth, with regular payment of various fees to health and waste authorities, but this did not last. Hamid explained, "We were all verbally notified of the removal and given only half an hour to clear out." This situation also occurred at the Atbara port and other areas like Sidon and Abu Hamad. Hamid and others faced violence if they attempted to protest or negotiate.


"H.S.," a seller of ice who moved from Al-Fao, east to Sinnar State to Atbara in 2004, shared, "The force came and asked us to close our shops without allowing us to move our belongings." H.S. reported that over 60 ice blocks in his kiosk were destroyed, with each block valued at 6,500 pounds. H.S. rebuilt his kiosk for 400,000 pounds but lost most of his customers, resulting in reduced sales.

Local authorities provided no answers, denying any involvement in the demolitions, and no court orders or official presence were observed besides military and police forces. Hamid and other kiosk owners still do not know who will compensate them for their losses, as their goods were destroyed under the bulldozers.

Most affected vendors are from Darfur, with a few from Atbara and nearby villages. The demolition's impact extend-

ed to a part of the prayer area, used by drivers, shop owners, and passengers for worship and basic services.

“Ali,” a public transport driver, said that drivers have also been affected by the removal of kiosks, as these provided services like credit transfers and mobile

phone top-ups, as well as small restaurants where they used to have their snacks such as sandwiches and juices. The drivers’ rest area was also demolished, which had some local zeal for quenching the thirst of passersby without exception. 

Kassala: **Heavy rains worsen displacement crisis**

Atar correspondent


Fleeing the horrors of war, displaced individuals in Kassala State, eastern Sudan, face various adversities, including the loss of tents and essential daily needs due to heavy rains exacerbating their plight. Since the start of the rainy season, the state has experienced significant increases in rainfall due to climate changes.

On Friday morning, July 26, heavy rains, described by locals as the worst in years, began. The city regularly experiences flooding from the major river, Al-Gash, which bisects the city and originates from the Eritrean highlands.

The Kassala Youth Emergency Room appealed through social media for citizens, volunteers, official bodies, and organizations to urgently supply the sheltering houses with water extraction equipment. The Emergency Room has seen increased activity following the third wave of displacement due to recent events in Sinnar State. Around 300 families have arrived at the Kassala Industrial School shelter-

ing house, which due to its low location has become vulnerable to flooding and rainwater accumulation.

Despite the rising number of arrivals, sheltering houses continue to receive more, with organizations trying to provide minimum aid through the Red Crescent, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sudanese organizations like Sadakat, and local voluntary initiatives like the Kassala Youth Emergency Room, High School Youth Association, and various volunteers.

Flooding and water damage have affected the entire city, with 1,708 homes impacted, affecting 9,106 people. In West Kassala rural areas, 192 homes were damaged, affecting 1,072 people. In the Aruma rural area, 135 homes were destroyed, affecting 690 people, with 7 injuries and 3 deaths reported. In Kassala rural areas, 62 homes were damaged, affecting 325 people, resulting in 5 deaths. According to the meteorological department in Kassala, the city recorded 118 mm of rainfall, with 74 mm in West Kassala and 95 mm in Wadi Sharifai, among the highest levels in years. These floods present a significant challenge for the region, requiring urgent intervention from relevant authorities. 

Ad-Dweim: Autumn of hunger and pain in isolated city

Atar correspondent

In the city of Ad-Dweim, where daily life intertwines with the ongoing tragedies of war, the residents are suffering from relentless repercussions. Autumn, which usually brings greenery and fertility, has this year become a symbol of road blockages and the city's isolation from the rest of the country. Amid this chaos, citizens struggle to survive in the face of a harsh reality.

The residents of Ad-Dweim are experiencing dire conditions due to the ongoing war and its exacerbating effects, alongside the autumn season, which makes life more difficult due to the disruption of national roads connecting them to other states in the country. The city and its rural areas have witnessed a horrific decline in all aspects of life, including economic, living, health, and personal and public security.

Ad-Dweim locality, part of White Nile State, is home to nearly a quarter of its population, which exceeds half a million people. The city has received around 40,000 displaced people due to the war from Khartoum, Gezira, and Kordofan. The locality has contact points with war zones in the eastern White Nile region and the northwestern borders, where the city of Halba experienced an attack by

the RSF, resulting in the death of several citizens.

Ad-Dweim market is the largest shopping center in northern White Nile State, attracting traders and citizens to buy and sell goods regularly twice a week, on Saturdays and Tuesdays. The primary suppliers of agricultural and livestock products are hundreds of villages and towns around the city west of White Nile up to the borders of North Kordofan, in addition to vegetable and fruit products from West Al-Jazirah and food products from the towns of Al-Managil, Al-Kereimit, and their surroundings.


Due to the security situation resulting from the war, the city has witnessed an unprecedented rise in the prices of goods and commodities. Since the RSF took control of Wad Madani city at the end of 2023, which is the main supplier for Ad-Dweim market, prices have surged. The price hike intensified after the RSF seized Jabal Moya, cutting the last remaining road connecting White Nile State to the eastern states of Sudan where the ports are located, causing a halt in fuel supplies and a rise in its prices. The state government has increased the price of diesel by 100%, with diesel now costing 23,000 pounds at fuel stations and 50,000 pounds on the parallel market, leading to higher transportation costs for goods and transportation. Prices in Ad-Dweim market have reached astronomical figures; despite Ad-Dweim being a sorghum-producing area, the price of a sack of mil-

let has reached a minimum of 90,000 pounds, a sack of wheat 120,000 pounds, a 20 kg sack of rice 140,000 pounds, a 50 kg sack of sugar 143,000 pounds, and a sack of onions 145,000 pounds.

Ad-Dweim Hospital, a general teaching hospital affiliated with the Ministry of Health, provides diagnostic and therapeutic services to tens of thousands of thousands of patients from the city and surrounding villages on both banks of the White Nile. The hospital also serves members of the regular forces as a medical unit for the northern White Nile region and parts of the western Al-Jazirah region. Despite the significant pressure on the hospital, it lacks many essential components for performing its role effectively.

Notable deficiencies include the human resources; the hospital has specialists in the four main areas: internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, surgery, and pediatrics. It also has specialists in

areas like ophthalmology and urology on a weekly referral clinic basis. In terms of technical equipment and devices, the hospital lacks CT scan and MRI machines, and there is a shortage of medicine provided by the Ministry of Health and donor organizations. The hospital relies on contracts with private companies, which are the main suppliers of medicine for the entire locality and neighbouring localities.

Ad-Dweim is under the control of the SAF, with the 18th Division headquartered there, and is subject to emergency laws. Markets are closed from 6 PM to 6 AM, and a curfew is in place from 8 PM. Violations of the emergency orders carry fines of up to 1 billion Sudanese pounds for shops and 300,000 pounds for individuals. There are raids and personal inspections, and some foreigners, mostly from South Sudan, have been deported or are still detained. 

El-Daein: **Agricultural season with** **unprecedented challenges**

Atar correspondent

Despite being less affected by military conflicts compared to its neighbours in Darfur and western Sudan in general, East Darfur State, particularly its capital El-Daein, faces catastrophic conditions comparable to those in the most affected areas. The state, which experienced some aerial sorties and bombardments in late February this year, is suffering from a comprehensive crisis on all fronts.

Since the withdrawal of the 20th Division from its bases on November 21 of the previous year, the third military base seized by the RSF in Darfur, the state has witnessed relative stability. However, this stability has not prevented the escalation of economic and humanitarian crises, especially with the onset of the autumn season, which is a crucial time for agriculture in the state.

El-Daein, located on the border with South Sudan, faces serious threats due to heavy rains and floods that have cut off vital roads. These disruptions directly affect the ability of the state's residents to meet their basic needs and provide health services. The main routes supplying the state across the South Sudan border, the desert road through North Darfur from Libya, and the land route through Bahar Al-Arab locality, have all been closed due

to rains and security disturbances, causing significant transportation difficulties.

These challenges have led to a sharp rise in commodity prices; the price of a Malwa measure of millet, a staple food in the state, is 10,000 pounds, a Malwa measure of sorghum 8,000 pounds, and a Malwa measure of wheat 9,000 pounds. Prices for cooking oil (36-pound container) have reached 47,000 pounds, a sack of onions 140,000 pounds, and imported sugar 150,000 pounds (3,000 pounds per kilo). A sack of imported wheat flour (25 kg) costs 55,000 pounds.

The agricultural season in El-Daein has faced unprecedented challenges, with a reduction in the number of workers in this vital sector due to military mobilization and displacement from conflict-affected areas. Farmer (A.M.) describes the situation, saying that the aforementioned reasons have led to a significant increase in farming costs, with the cost of plowing one feddan, done using animals, rising to 40,000 pounds, double the cost compared to previous seasons.

Regarding ground peanut prices, the price of a ton of shelled ground peanuts has reached 750,000 pounds, the highest for the production area, while a ton of raw ground peanuts is 500,000 pounds. Seed prices have also seen noticeable increases, with a sack of 30-mellow cowpeas at 90,000 pounds, and a sack of millet at 200,000 pounds, an unprecedented increase in the state. Amid these challenges, meat prices have remained relatively

stable compared to other Sudanese states, with a kilo of lamb at 8,000 pounds and a kilo of beef at 7,000 pounds, the lowest in the country, due to a halt in livestock exports because of the war.

As for the security situation during the agricultural period, it is currently stable. Local administration coordinates with the RSF to secure roads leading to agricultural areas within the state. However, there are no guarantees against potential disruptions, especially with the approaching harvest time.


Medical sources in East Darfur State report a severe shortage of medicines and frequent interruptions in vaccine supplies provided by the federal Ministry of Health from Port Sudan via the northern state, exacerbating the health situation. The state faces a widespread prevalence of malaria and conjunctivitis, with a complete lack of mosquito control measures, contributing to disease spread. Additionally, the state lacks several major humanitarian organizations such as UNICEF, WFP, and WHO, increasing the burden on residents and displaced people.

Nevertheless, some international and national organizations continue their efforts, including: CARE International, ALIGHT, CRS, World Vision, Nido Or-

ganization (National Initiative for Development), and Al-Manar National Organization.

El-Daein has experienced waves of displacement since the outbreak of the Darfur civil war in 2003, leading to a large influx of displaced people who settled in the city, increasing its area and population density. In the current war, the city has become a refuge and transit point for those fleeing the consequences of the war in Nyala, Al-Fashir, and El-Geineina. There are 10 sheltering houses for displaced people in El-Daein, housing people from various parts of Darfur.

Local initiatives such as El-Daein Emergency Room and the Youth Initiative for the Country are providing voluntary support through central kitchens, educational programs, and distributing aid supported by organizations and benefactors, helping to cover the needs of the sheltering houses.

El-Daein General Hospital operates with its available resources and has a dialysis center, but suffers from continuous interruptions in solutions. The newborn nursery is functioning well, but the hospital in general suffers from shortages in some surgical and obstetric staff and a shortage of nursing staff. 

Bahri:

Looting, intimidation and mines threatening lives

Atar correspondent

Since the military operation described by the SAF as “special” on May 31, when its forces crossed the Halfaya Al-Muluk bridge heading towards Khartoum Bahri, the city has witnessed violent battles with aerial support lasting two days. Since then, no further military confrontations have been recorded between the SAF and the RSF, and the situation has returned to what it was before the operation, with the SAF’s withdrawal.

Last week, Bahri city reported a series of mysterious crimes, particularly in the areas of Shambat and Al-Halfaya. The RSF surrounded the Garri area adjacent to Al-Jaili Oil Refinery, accusing residents of providing coordinates that reveal the locations of their forces in the area. The forces fired on citizens and arrested several of them, according to a statement by Bahri Resistance Committees.

In Shambat, the Bahri Emergency Room announced on Monday, August 5, 2024, the death of Mohammed Amin, who was killed by a stray bullet. The victim was a member of the electricity team in Bahri city and the Al-Ezba district, and died while working to restore electricity to the devastated city.

In Halfaya Al-Muluk, the body of 75-year-old Osman Babiker was found

in his home this week with no signs of a gunshot. Osman had been living alone since his family was displaced in June.


In the same week, an RSF unit brought the body of Mustafa Mahmoud to his family, claiming he died from alcohol poisoning. Mustafa was a collaborator with the RSF after the war broke out and a member of the civil administration team in Al-Halfaya area, according to eyewitnesses.

Bahri city neighbourhood committees reported that a “Janjaweed militia” raided the Garri area, looting and terrorizing residents. The committees indicated that the militia accused residents of providing coordinates for drones that bombarded their gatherings in the area and around Al-Jaili refinery.

The Bahri Emergency Room has also warned rural citizens of buried landmines discovered due to recent heavy rains. The room urged citizens to stay away from flood channels and landmine areas to ensure their safety.

In Shambat, Abdallah Babiker Abdallah was killed at home on Wednesday by a stray bullet fired by an RSF member. He was one of the volunteers serving the community in Shambat and was involved in meal preparation at the Abdallah communal kitchen “Takaya”, according to a member of the Shambat Emergency Room.

Diseases associated with the rainy season and the spread of flies pose an additional threat to Bahri city, where 11

cases of acute diarrhea were reported at the North Al-Shabiya Health Center and one death in Shambat Al-Hilla in recent days. 

Barbar: **Renewed clashes between regular forces and Wad Ahmed Ali led rebels**

Atar correspondent

On July 18, renewed events occurred in the Barbar locality of the Nile River State in northern Sudan. Social media users posted videos of intense and horrific clashes that took place in Al-Firikha area between regular forces and rebel leader Wad Ahmed Ali, who has created an armed movement to defend the region following the expansion of the war in Sudan. The clashes resulted in two deaths among government forces and several injuries.

A joint armed force from the regular forces raided a location where the armed formation had entrenched itself in Al-Firikha area to address it, following information that its leader was in the area. However, they were surprised by the large number of personnel and equipment, according to local sources who spoke to “Atar.”

Following the events, the Nile River State Security Committee issued a press release, which “Atar” received, confirming the complete stabilization of the security situation in Al-Firikha area in Al-Ibidiyya administrative unit of the Barbar locality.


The statement indicated that the joint forces clashed with the armed for-

mation, inflicted significant losses on it, and seized the weapons and ammunition in its possession. The operation was conducted within a limited geographical area, with all regular forces participating in its execution. The statement confirmed two deaths and one injury among its forces.

The village of “Al-Firikha” is about 12 kilometers north of Barbar city, near the Fifth Cataract, and is the second-largest village north of Barbar after Al-Ibidiyya. Its residents have recently been engaged in gold mining following its significant appearance in the area, which also includes archaeological sites dating back to the Meroitic Civilization. In 2008, a joint Canadian-Sudanese mission uncovered a temple and statues from the “Nubian” era during the reign of King “Nektamani” and his wife “Amani Teri” near residential areas.

Wad Ahmed Ali, affiliated with “Al-Ababda” group, led clashes in Al-Bawaga area about a month ago known as “Pontoon Clashes,” and then fled before his recent appearance.

The media office of Al-Ababda tribe in Sudan quickly clarified that the group comprises members from various tribal components in the state who share the same area. They adopted issues related to their region and discussed them without mentioning any tribal component. The office indicated that “hidden parties” are trying to involve Al-Ababda tribe in the events occurring in the Nile River State,

from Al-Bawaga to Al- Firiekha, simply because a member of the tribe was part of the group. 



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Price Bulletin

Understanding price differences and analyzing their economic and social impacts is of paramount importance, if not essential, for gaining a deeper comprehension of Sudan's economic dynamics. This understanding illuminates the path towards formulating genuine developmental policies based on precise and comprehensive foundations, and identifying the challenges facing the country, particularly during periods of conflict, in terms of production and distribution activities in local markets.

A selection of essential products, which play a significant role in people's lives, was chosen. Through our examination of their prices, we aim to gather data that can provide us with useful insights focused on improving the daily lives of citizens and enhancing their economic stability.

Mohammed Elkamel, and Abdelrahman Maalla
Facts Center Fellowship

		Port-Sudan	Al-Fashir	Shendi	Kosti	Dongola	El-Obeid	Sennar	Halfa	Al-Qadarif	Lowest price of the product	Highest price of the product	Average price of the product
1	Millet (12Kg)	18000.00	10000.00	2200.00	4500.00	16000.00	5000.00	1600.00	1500.00	1600.00	1500.00	18000.00	6711.11
2	Wheat (12Kg)	1500.00	12000.00	2550.00	4000.00	12000.00	16000.00	1800.00	1800.00	1750.00	1500.00	16000.00	5933.33
3	Corn (12Kg)	1700.00	10000.00	2000.00	4000.00	20000.00	4000.00	2800.00	3000.00	1600.00	1600.00	20000.00	5455.56
4	Peanut Oil (450 Gram)	2000.00	1500.00	2200.00	2200.00	1900.00	600.00	2500.00	2200.00	1900.00	600.00	2500.00	1888.89
5	Onion Shawwal	40000.00	130000.00	25000.00	115000.00	350000.00	10000.00	10000.00	50000.00	10000.00	10000.00	350000.00	82222.22
6	Veal Beef Kg	12000.00	7000.00	10000.00	9000.00	8000.00	4800.00	8000.00	11000.00	14000.00	4800.00	14000.00	9311.11
7	Lamb Kg	15000.00	9000.00	14000.00	12000.00	10000.00	6000.00	10000.00	14000.00	16000.00	6000.00	16000.00	11777.78
8	Soap (brick)	800.00	800.00	650.00	600.00	500.00	600.00	500.00	500.00	650.00	500.00	800.00	622.22
9	Powdered Soap	3250.00	1500.00	3000.00	2000.00	2500.00	1000.00	3000.00	1000.00	3500.00	1000.00	3500.00	2305.56
10	Insulin	6000.00	6500.00	5500.00	8000.00	5000.00	6000.00	5000.00	5000.00	6000.00	5000.00	8000.00	5888.89
11	Sanitary Pad	1500.00	1800.00	1500.00	2000.00	1000.00	1600.00	1200.00	1000.00	1600.00	1000.00	2000.00	1466.67
12	Milk (450 Gram)	1000.00	1000.00	600.00	1000.00	600.00	1000.00	900.00	800.00	700.00	600.00	1000.00	844.44
13	Eggs (piece)	300.00	600.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	600.00	400.00	500.00	500.00	300.00	600.00	488.89
14	Sugar Kg	1600.00	7000.00	1800.00	2000.00	2000.00	3000.00	1800.00	1500.00	2000.00	1500.00	7000.00	2522.22



Photo: Al-tayib Musa



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