

TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

SUDAN

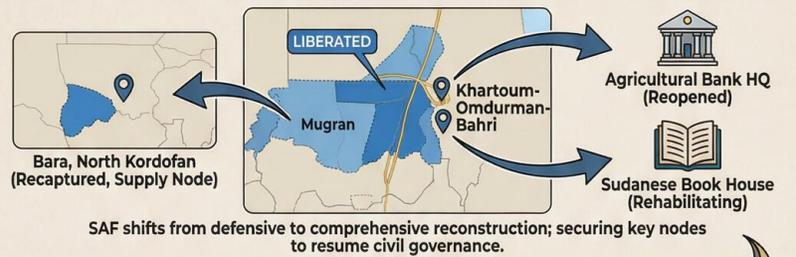
MARCH 9, 2026

THE G D E L T P R O J E C T

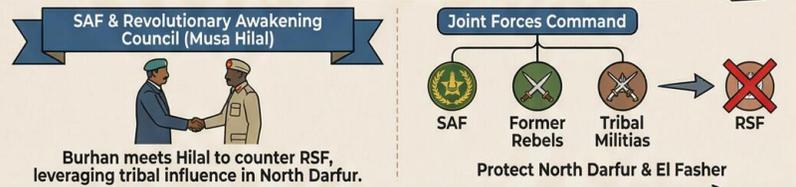
SUDAN CONSOLIDATES DOMESTIC CONTROL:

Tribal Alliances & Financial Restoration Amid Regional Tensions
(March 2026 Report Explainer)

1. STATE-BUILDING UNDER FIRE: Military Gains & Infrastructure Recovery



2. STRATEGIC REALIGNMENT: Tribal & Political Consolidation



3. ECONOMIC NORMALIZATION & GOVERNANCE



4. GEOPOLITICAL PIVOT & SUPPLY CHAIN SECURITY



5. STRATEGIC FORESIGHT & TRENDS

SHORT TERM (1-4 Weeks):
Resupply from Bara; Citizen Returns to Khartoum (Services Operational).

MEDIUM TERM (1-6 Months):
Musa Hilal Alliance Tested in Darfur; Harvest Success Critical.

LONG TERM (1-5 Years):
"Securocrat" State Model; Military-Led Reconstruction & Modernization.

IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

- Engage Hilal (Sanctions Complication)?
- Red Sea Security Cooperation Window
- Support Public Service Return (Prevent Secondary Crisis)

PRIVATE SECTOR/INVESTORS

- Monitor National Cotton Committee (Value-Added Opportunities)
- Prepare for Maritime Disruptions (Alternative Routes)
- Localized Liquidity Returns (Risk of RSF Attacks Remains)

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SUDAN CONSOLIDATES DOMESTIC CONTROL THROUGH TRIBAL ALLIANCES AND FINANCIAL RESTORATION AMID ESCALATING REGIONAL TENSIONS

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The Sudanese state, led by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), is aggressively transitioning from a defensive military posture to a comprehensive "state-building under fire" strategy. On March 9, 2026, the government signaled a major shift by publicizing significant territorial gains, specifically the [liberation of Bara](#) and continued progress in the Khartoum-Omdurman-Bahri triangle. These military successes are being leveraged to launch an ambitious reconstruction agenda, underscored by the reopening of [nine out of ten Agricultural Bank branches](#) in the Khartoum region and the rehabilitation of cultural landmarks like the [Sudanese Book House](#). This pivot suggests the SAF believes it has achieved sufficient security depth to resume civil governance and financial operations in the capital's heart.

A critical geopolitical and internal realignment is also underway. The high-profile

meeting between SAF leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and [Musa Hilal, head of the Revolutionary Awakening Council](#), represents a strategic effort to consolidate tribal support and isolate the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Simultaneously, Sudan has sharpened its diplomatic edge, using the Arab League platform to [condemn Iranian aggression](#) against Arab neighbors. This move aligns Sudan more closely with the Gulf bloc (specifically Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Qatar) at a time when regional tensions—including a possible US-Israel-Iran conflict—threaten [national supply chains](#) and strategic imports.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Strategic Military Advances and Territorial Reacquisition:** The SAF reported the successful [recapture of the city of Bara](#) in North Kordofan, a vital node for supply lines. In the capital, the military is moving from clearing operations to securing high-value infrastructure, such as the [Agricultural Bank of Sudan \(ABS\) headquarters](#) in the Mugran district, which was previously used as a sniper nest and operations center by the RSF.
- **Political and Tribal Realignment:** The formal reintegration of **Musa Hilal** into the national security architecture is a watershed moment. Al-Burhan met with Hilal and Darfur Governor [Minni Arko Minnawi](#) to coordinate military efforts in North Darfur. This alliance aims to leverage Hilal's influence among the Mahamid tribe to [counter RSF recruitment](#) and stabilize the western frontier.

- **Economic Normalization and Infrastructure Recovery:** The Agricultural Bank of Sudan is spearheading the return to financial normalcy, [restoring nine branches](#) in Khartoum. Efforts are also underway to [rehabilitate the Sudanese Book House](#), which was systematically looted of its two million volumes. Nileen University has also announced it will resume [academic activities from Khartoum](#), signaling a push for institutional continuity.
- **Geopolitical Positioning and Supply Chain Security:** Sudan has officially [condemned Iranian attacks](#) on Arab countries during an Arab League ministerial meeting. This comes as the Ministry of Industry and Trade prepares for the [consequences of regional war](#) involving Iran, the US, and Israel, which threatens to close maritime ports and disrupt the flow of essential goods.
- **Nationalist Mobilization via International Women's Day:** The government repurposed International Women's Day (March 8) as a vehicle for the "War of Dignity" narrative, celebrating women who [supported the SAF](#) and highlighting the resilience of "Kandakas" and "Mehiras" in both [Port Sudan and Khartoum](#).

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Economic Security and Statecraft: The Agricultural Bank of Sudan is prioritizing the [re-financing of the agricultural season](#) and small industries to jumpstart the economy. Governance is shifting toward "risk management" as officials discuss implementing [International Public Sector Accounting Standards \(IPSAS\)](#) to increase financial transparency and attract future investment.

Regional Influence and Power Projection: The meeting with Musa Hilal suggests the SAF is successfully [consolidating the "Joint Forces"](#)—a coalition of former rebel movements and tribal militias—under a unified command. This is critical for the [protection of North Darfur](#) and the city of El Fasher from RSF encroachment.

Supply Chains and Food Security: A new [National Cotton Committee](#) has been formed to oversee a 2026-2030 strategy, aiming to transform cotton from a raw export into a [value-added industrial sector](#). Simultaneously, the Ministry of Finance is monitoring [strategic reserves](#) of essential commodities to mitigate the impact of Red Sea maritime disruptions.

National Security and Infrastructure: The Ministry of Interior is focusing on [clearing "negative manifestations"](#) in Khartoum, including the removal of illegal barricades and the resumption of public services like [passport and civil registry services](#) in Bahri. The Ministry of Communications is also planning a [4G network expansion](#) to 200 villages to maintain digital sovereignty.

Biosurveillance and Health: The Ministry of Health has launched a [Hepatitis B vaccination campaign](#) for children, particularly in vulnerable areas like Khartoum and Sennar, indicating a return to [routine immunization protocols](#) despite the ongoing conflict.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Governance activities focused on institutional planning and international compliance, with several high-level committees formed to

manage the post-conflict transition and current regional instability.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**

- **2026-2030 National Cotton Strategy:** A comprehensive directive to [reorganize the cotton value chain](#), integrating production, processing, and marketing under a single permanent national committee.
- **Five-Year Strategic Plan for Social Welfare:** The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Welfare discussed a [five-year roadmap](#) to integrate social protection services for war-affected populations.

- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**

- **Supply Chain Emergency Meeting:** The Ministry of Industry and Trade held an [emergency session](#) to discuss the impact of the US-Israel-Iran war on Sudanese food security and the need for private sector collaboration in maintaining supplies.
- **International Accounting Standards Workshop:** The Ministry of Finance inaugurated the [first meeting](#) for the adoption of international accounting standards to enhance governance and transparency.
- **Arab League Ministerial Council:** The Sudanese Foreign Minister participated via [video conference](#), articulating Sudan's new alignment against Iranian regional interference.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Restoration of "Statehood" as a Military Objective: The SAF is no longer just fighting for territory; it is fighting to prove the

viability of the Sudanese state. By reopening bank branches, [rehabilitating looted headquarters](#), and resuming university operations, the government is attempting to "win the peace" even before the war is over. This is a deliberate psychological operation aimed at [encouraging displaced citizens](#) to return to Khartoum and reinvest in the state's institutions.

Tribal Realignment and the Isolation of the RSF: The rehabilitation of Musa Hilal is a calculated risk. Hilal, once a rival to SAF leadership and the original architect of the Janjaweed, is now being positioned as the [legitimate tribal alternative](#) to the RSF's Dagalo family. This suggests a deepening "Arab-on-Arab" divide within the Sudanese conflict, where the SAF is leveraging traditional tribal structures to [undermine the RSF's ethnic power base](#).

Pivoting to the "Gulf Consensus": Sudan's condemnation of Iran at the Arab League marks a definitive end to any "neutrality" regarding regional polarities. By explicitly [siding with Saudi Arabia and Egypt](#) against Iranian influence, the Sudanese government is likely seeking increased financial and military support from the Gulf bloc, while also preparing for the [disruption of Red Sea trade](#) caused by broader Middle Eastern conflict.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): The recapture of Bara will likely lead to a [resupply of SAF positions](#) in North Kordofan and potentially a renewed offensive toward El Obeid. In Khartoum, expect a surge in [citizen returns](#) to liberated neighborhoods as banking and health services (like the [Hepatitis B vaccinations](#)) become operational.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The alliance with Musa Hilal will face its first major test in [protecting North Darfur](#). If Hilal's forces can effectively block RSF reinforcements, the RSF's hold on western Sudan may begin to fracture. Economically, the success of the [agricultural financing](#) will be critical; a failed harvest could lead to severe civil unrest regardless of military victories.

Long Term (1-5 Years): The move toward [international accounting standards](#) and the 2026-2030 cotton strategy suggests the SAF is planning for a "Securocrat" state model—one where the military maintains a dominant role in the economy under the guise of [national reconstruction and institutional modernization](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For International Policy:

- The rehabilitation of Musa Hilal complicates the international "sanctions" landscape. Western powers must decide whether to engage with a [former Janjaweed leader](#) who is now a key SAF ally against the RSF.
- Sudan's pivot against Iran opens a [diplomatic window](#) for increased cooperation with the US and the Gulf states on Red Sea security.
- Humanitarian aid should focus on supporting the [nascent return of public services](#) in Khartoum to prevent a secondary crisis among returning populations.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Opportunities are emerging in the [cotton industrialization sector](#) as the government moves toward value-added production. Investors should monitor the new National Cotton Committee's progress.
- The reopening of [Agricultural Bank branches](#) signals a localized return of liquidity, though the risk of RSF guerrilla attacks on financial infrastructure remains high.
- Supply chain managers should prepare for [maritime disruptions](#) in the Red Sea, potentially requiring overland routes through Egypt or the use of Port Sudan as a primary, albeit strained, hub.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

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