

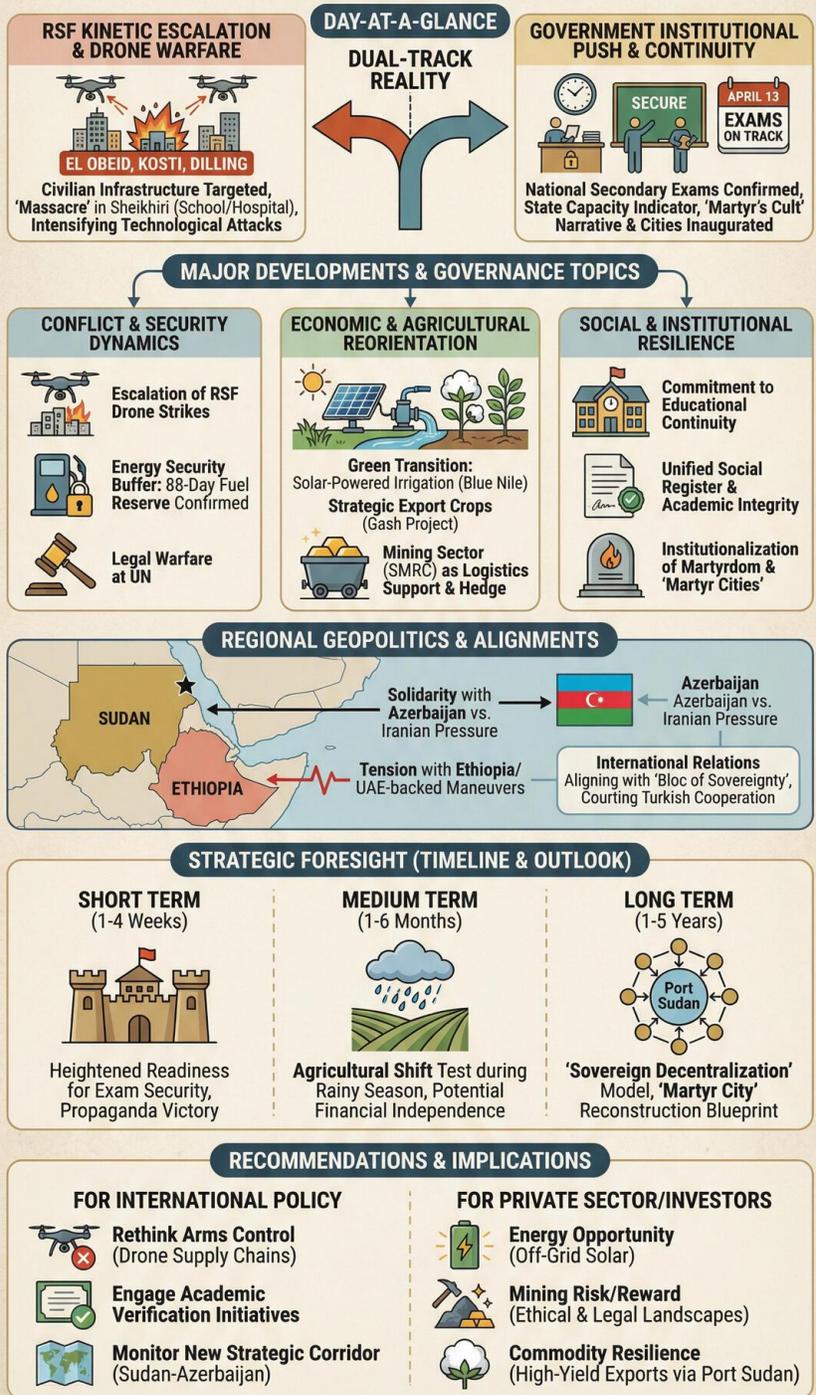
TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

SUDAN

MARCH 12, 2026

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

SUDAN: WARFARE, RESILIENCE, & STRATEGIC SHIFTS (MARCH 2026 REPORT)



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SUDAN MAINTAINS INSTITUTIONAL
CONTINUITY AND AGRICULTURAL
PUSH AMID INTENSIFYING MILITIA
DRONE WARFARE AND REGIONAL
INSTABILITY

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

March 12, 2026, was marked by a dual-track reality in Sudan: a significant escalation in technological warfare by the rebel Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and a defiant push by the Sudanese transitional government to maintain state functions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a scathing condemnation of [drone attacks](#) targeting vital civilian infrastructure in El Obeid, Kosti, and Dilling, characterizing them as a deliberate attempt to undermine state stability. This was punctuated by a "massacre" in Sheikhiri village, White Nile State, where drone strikes reportedly targeted a school and hospital, resulting in [civilian fatalities](#) during the holy month of Ramadan. Despite these kinetic threats, the government signaled its resilience by confirming that national secondary school exams will proceed as scheduled on [April 13, 2026](#), across all states and international centers.

Strategic focus shifted toward long-term economic security and agricultural self-reliance. The government highlighted major investments in the [Gash Agricultural Project](#) in Kassala State, aiming to transition from invasive mesquite trees to cash crops like cotton and moringa for export. Concurrently, the Ministry of Energy sought to quell public anxiety regarding regional tensions between the US, Israel, and Iran, asserting that Sudan holds a [fuel reserve](#) sufficient for 88 days. This domestic stability is being bolstered by a "Martyr's Cult" narrative, exemplified by the inauguration of "Martyr Cities" for the families of fallen soldiers in [River Nile State](#), ensuring that the social contract between the military and its base remains intact despite the prolonged "Battle of Dignity."

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Escalation of RSF Drone Strikes:** The government reported a coordinated pattern of drone attacks against civilian centers, notably the targeting of [vital infrastructure](#) in North Kordofan and White Nile. The strike on Sheikhiri village was highlighted as a [war crime](#) for its impact on educational and medical facilities.
- **Commitment to Educational Continuity:** The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Interior's Emergency Room confirmed that arrangements for the [secondary school exams](#) are complete, including centers in Egypt, Libya, and the Gulf, serving as a primary indicator of [state capacity](#) during wartime.

- **Strategic Agricultural Reorientation:** Authorities are prioritizing the Gash Agricultural Project for its potential to generate [foreign currency](#), while the Blue Nile State is aggressively adopting [solar-powered irrigation](#) to reduce reliance on costly chemical fertilizers and fuel.
- **Regional Geopolitical Positioning:** President Burhan expressed solidarity with [Azerbaijan](#) following missile and drone incursions (presumably from Iran), while analysts criticized Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed for [exporting internal crises](#) and aligning with UAE-backed regional maneuvers that threaten Sudanese interests.
- **Energy Security Buffer:** Amid global market fluctuations, the Ministry of Energy clarified that [petroleum supplies](#) are stable, with several tankers awaiting discharge at Port Sudan to supplement the existing [88-day stock](#) of gasoline.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

National Security & Tactical Warfare: The shift toward drone-based attrition by the RSF is forcing a shift in government defense policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is actively pursuing [legal warfare \(lawfare\)](#) at the UN Security Council, demanding that the international community end its "silence" on these technological violations of [international humanitarian law](#).

Economic Security & Resilience: The government is leveraging the mining sector—specifically the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company (SMRC)—not just for revenue, but as a [logistical support](#) provider for military checkpoints and "Martyr" family welfare. Economic analysts are encouraging the use of [gold as a hedge](#) against the inevitable

currency fluctuations caused by the Red Sea tensions and the regional Israel-Iran standoff.

Food & Water Access: Local governance in areas like Al-Gurashi has focused on [solar-powered water](#) systems to achieve "zero thirst" targets. In Khashm El Girba, the local administration is integrating [displaced populations](#) into the agricultural workforce, turning a humanitarian crisis into a labor asset for [food production](#).

International Relations & Diplomatic Alignment: Sudan is aligning itself with a "Bloc of Sovereignty," supporting Azerbaijan against Iranian pressure while simultaneously courting [Turkish cultural](#) and developmental cooperation. This suggests a strategic diversification away from traditional Western or Arab mediators who are viewed as [biased or ineffective](#).

State Capacity & Social Order: The cabinet approved a "Unified Social Register" and an [economic recovery](#) project for war-affected families. The Ministry of Higher Education is also taking steps to protect the [academic integrity](#) of Sudanese degrees against wartime forgery, emphasizing long-term [institutional reputation](#).

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Governance activity focused on social welfare policies and wartime emergency measures. Cabinet sub-committees and state-level ministries are coordinating to synchronize infrastructure development with military support efforts.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Unified Social Register:** A proposed system to track beneficiaries of [social welfare](#) and recovery programs for families displaced by conflict.
- **Higher Education Governance Bill:** A project aimed at improving the ranking of [Sudanese universities](#) and establishing a more rigorous verification system for academic credentials to prevent fraud.
- **Arms and Ammunition Act Amendment:** A recommendation from the [High Judicial Committee](#) to tighten regulations on illegal weapons to combat proliferation in liberated areas.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Secondary Exam Emergency Room Meeting:** Minister of Interior and Ministry of Education officials confirmed the [April 13 exam start date](#), assuring parents of security and technical readiness.
- **Foreign Ministry Press Statement:** A formal condemnation of drone strikes on [Kosti and El Obeid](#), calling for international accountability for the RSF's backers.
- **Ministry of Energy Briefing:** A clarification of the national [petroleum reserve](#) status to mitigate panic buying fueled by regional war rumors.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Green Transition as a Wartime Strategy: A notable trend is the rapid adoption of solar energy in the agricultural sector. In both [Al-Gurashi](#) and [Blue Nile State](#), solar is no longer just an environmental goal but a survival mechanism to bypass the vulnerabilities of the centralized power grid

and the high cost of diesel. This [decentralization of energy](#) is likely to create more resilient local economies that can withstand the broader collapse of national infrastructure.

The Institutionalization of Martyrdom: The government is moving beyond rhetoric to formalize support for the families of fallen combatants. The construction of [Martyrs' Cities](#) in River Nile State indicates a permanent shift in the state's urban planning and social priorities, creating a privileged caste of "Karama" (Dignity) families. This suggests a long-term commitment to a [military-led social contract](#) that will persist even if the conflict ends.

Media as a Kinetic Battlefield: The first anniversary of the liberation of the Republican Palace and the concomitant [martyrdom of TV staff](#) highlights the role of the state media as a primary target. The government is using these anniversaries to consolidate [nationalist fervor](#), framing journalists not as observers but as active combatants in an "information war" that is essential to [national survival](#).

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect a heightened state of military readiness around April 13 as the government attempts to protect [exam centers](#) from potential RSF drone disruption. Successful execution of these exams will be used as a major domestic and international [propaganda victory](#). Humanitarian agencies will likely increase pressure for a ceasefire in White Nile following the school/hospital [massacre](#).

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The agricultural shift in the [Gash and Blue Nile](#) regions will face its first major test during the rainy season. If solar-powered irrigation and

cotton/moringa transitions yield results, the government may achieve a degree of [financial independence](#) from external aid. Relations with Ethiopia may deteriorate further if Abiy Ahmed pursues the [Red Sea access](#) maneuvers discussed by analysts.

Long Term (1-5 Years): Sudan appears to be building a governance model based on "Sovereign Decentralization," where states like [Kassala and River Nile](#) act as semi-autonomous economic engines while Port Sudan remains the strategic gate. The "Martyr City" model may become a blueprint for [post-war reconstruction](#), prioritizing military and paramilitary loyalists in a restructured Sudanese state.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For International Policy:

- The shift toward [drone warfare](#) targeting social infrastructure requires a rethinking of arms control and monitoring, specifically focusing on the supply chains providing drone tech to non-state actors in the [Horn of Africa](#).
- Engagement with the [academic verification](#) and exam initiatives is a low-risk way for international partners to support state continuity without choosing a side in the kinetic conflict.
- The Sudan-Azerbaijan alignment suggests a [new strategic corridor](#) that could complicate Red Sea security dynamics if not managed by regional powers.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Energy Opportunity:** The aggressive shift toward [solar-powered agriculture](#) presents a massive opportunity for providers of off-grid energy solutions and durable irrigation technology.
- **Mining Risk/Reward:** While the mining sector is heavily [militarized](#), it remains the primary driver of the formal economy. Investors must navigate complex ethical and legal landscapes regarding [war-effort financing](#).
- **Commodity Resilience:** Cotton and moringa projects in [Kassala](#) offer potential for investors seeking high-yield agricultural exports, provided they can secure supply chains through [Port Sudan](#).

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.

This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

For questions or suggestions, please contact kalev.leetaru5@gmail.com. You can also learn more about the GDELT Project at <https://blog.gdeltproject.org/> and the Internet Archive's TV News Archive at <https://archive.org/details/tv>.