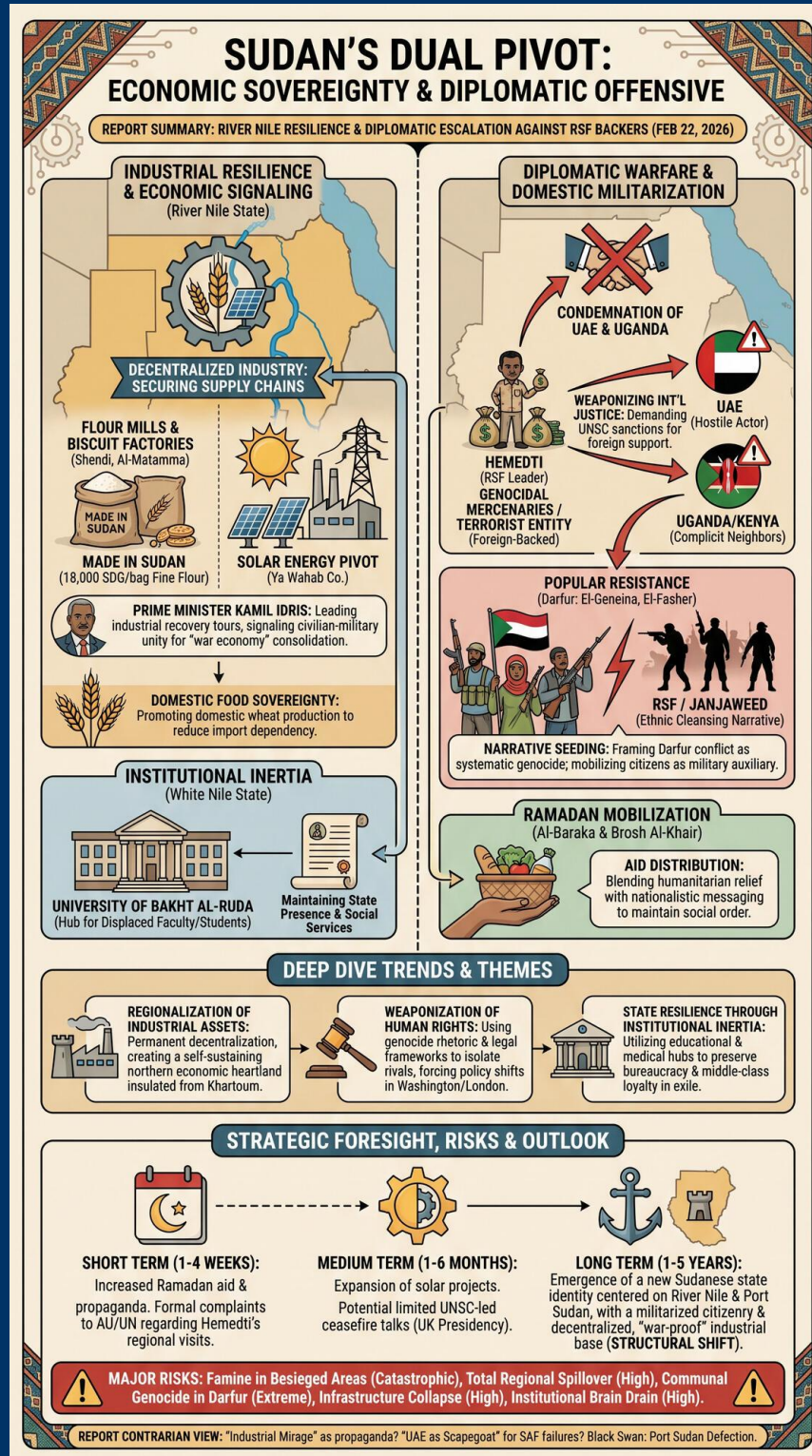


TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

SUDAN

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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THE SUDANESE STATE PIVOTS TOWARD ECONOMIC SOVEREIGNTY AND INDUSTRIAL RESILIENCE IN THE RIVER NILE REGION WHILE ESCALATING DIPLOMATIC WARFARE AGAINST REGIONAL BACKERS OF THE RAPID SUPPORT FORCES.

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

On February 22, 2026, the Sudanese state media apparatus focused heavily on a dual-track strategy: projecting a narrative of domestic industrial recovery while intensifying a diplomatic offensive against regional actors perceived as supporting the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The centerpiece of the day's coverage was the **"Made in Sudan"** exhibition in the River Nile State, attended by **Prime Minister Kamil Idris**. This event served as a high-profile platform to signal that the state is successfully relocating its industrial base from conflict-torn Khartoum to safer northern and eastern regions. The government is promoting [domestic flour production](#) and industrial independence as a direct counter-measure to the supply chain disruptions caused by the ongoing war.

Concurrently, the government is hardening its stance against the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** and **Uganda**, characterizing their diplomatic engagement with RSF leader **Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti)** as an endorsement of "terrorism" and "mercenary warfare." Sudan's leadership is weaponizing international legal frameworks and UN Security Council proceedings to demand [sanctions and accountability](#) for the UAE, while domestic narratives emphasize the "Popular Resistance" in Darfur as the primary bulwark against what they term an ethnic genocide perpetrated by the RSF. This convergence of industrial signaling and aggressive diplomacy suggests a regime attempting to consolidate a "war economy" while seeking to isolate its rivals internationally.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Industrial Resettlement and Economic Signaling:** The government is prioritizing the relocation of industrial capacity to River Nile State, specifically Shendi and Al-Matamma, to ensure [supply chain continuity](#) for essential goods like flour and biscuits.
- **Diplomatic Hostility Toward UAE and Uganda:** Khartoum has formally condemned Uganda's reception of Hemedti and is lobbying for international [recognition of UAE complicity](#) in the conflict, labeling the RSF as a foreign-backed mercenary force.

- **Institutional Continuity Amid Displacement:** Institutions like the **University of Bakht Al-Ruda** are serving as hubs for [displaced faculty and students](#), maintaining state presence and social services despite the loss of facilities in Khartoum.
- **Escalation of Genocide Narrative in Darfur:** State media is framing the conflict in Darfur, specifically El-Geneina and El-Fasher, as [systematic ethnic cleansing](#), calling for "Popular Resistance" to prevent a total demographic shift.
- **Ramadan Mobilization:** The state is leveraging the Ramadan season to distribute aid under the "**Al-Baraka**" and "**Brosh Al-Khair**" programs, blending [humanitarian relief](#) with nationalistic messaging to maintain social order.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- The government is actively promoting "**Popular Resistance**" in Darfur as a legitimate military auxiliary to the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) to [counter RSF advances](#).
- Military cleaning and restoration campaigns are being conducted in liberated areas of **East Nile** to signal the [return of state control](#).

Diplomacy & Statecraft

- Khartoum is utilizing the **UK Presidency of the UN Security Council** to push for a [ceasefire that mandates](#) RSF withdrawal from civilian areas.

- Strategic condemnation of **Kenya and Uganda** for hosting RSF leadership, framing these nations as [destabilizing forces](#) in the Horn of Africa.

Energy & Critical Infrastructure

- Massive pivot toward **solar energy** infrastructure to mitigate the destruction of the national power grid, with the **Ya Wahab Company** emerging as a [key strategic partner](#).
- Efforts to restore **water and electricity services** in Khartoum's suburbs are being framed as "victories" against RSF sabotage [infrastructure restoration](#).

Food & Water Security

- The "**Made in Sudan**" initiative focuses on [flour mill stability](#) in the Jayli and Port Sudan industrial zones to prevent famine.
- Humanitarian kitchens in Khartoum (e.g., Souq Al-Arabi) are serving [thousands of displaced citizens](#) daily amid severe food shortages.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Regionalization of Industrial Assets

The Sudanese government is no longer treating the loss of Khartoum as a temporary disruption but as a catalyst for a permanent **decentralization of industry**. The heavy emphasis on the [Al-Matamma and Shendi](#) industrial corridors suggests a strategy to create a self-sustaining economic heartland in the north, insulated from the frontline. This move aims to secure the government's long-term viability even if the stalemate in the capital persists.

Weaponization of International Justice and Human Rights

Khartoum is increasingly sophisticated in its use of **human rights rhetoric** to target its external enemies. By framing the RSF's actions in Darfur as [systematic genocide](#) and citing UAE involvement, the government is attempting to force a policy shift in Washington and London, moving away from "both-sidesism" toward a formal [designation of the RSF](#) as a terrorist entity.

State Resilience Through Institutional Inertia

The ability of the **University of Bakht Al-Ruda** to absorb [faculty from three or four other universities](#) demonstrates a high level of institutional resilience. The state is using these educational and medical hubs to maintain the loyalty of the professional middle class and to preserve the bureaucracy of the state in exile.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

The Sudanese state is projecting an image of unified "**Popular Resistance**," particularly in Darfur and River Nile State. This involves a dangerous but necessary (from the state's perspective) **militarization of the citizenry**. While this aids the immediate defense against the RSF, it risks creating long-term [social order challenges](#) if these armed groups cannot be re-integrated. Furthermore, the reliance on **Ramadan aid programs** highlights the government's inability to provide basic market stability, creating a dependency on [charitable and state-led distributions](#).

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

Sudan's global posture is increasingly **confrontational and litigious**. The state has abandoned quiet diplomacy with the **UAE and Uganda**, opting instead for public shaming and demands for international [accountability for regional meddling](#). Khartoum is framing itself as the defender of **sovereignty and stability** against a "mercenary invasion," a narrative designed to appeal to conservative regional powers and the UN Security Council. The state is also **weaponizing its geography**, using Port Sudan and the northern agricultural regions as symbols of a resilient, non-Khartoum-centric state [geopolitical maneuverability](#).

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Sudanese economy is currently a bifurcated **war economy**. While the central bank and traditional markets are crippled, a new industrial ecosystem is being forced into existence in the River Nile State. The government is attempting to control the price of essential staples like flour to prevent unrest, but significant [inflationary pressures](#) remain.

- **Essential Commodity Prices:** "Fine" flour is being sold at [18,000 SDG](#) per bag, with "Special" flour at **17,500 SDG**.
- **Energy Transition:** Significant investment in [solar energy](#) as a primary alternative to destroyed electrical infrastructure.
- **Industrial Relocation:** Relocation of flour mills and biscuit factories to the [Jayli and Al-Matamma](#) regions.
- **Agricultural Resilience:** Promotion of domestic wheat production to achieve [food sovereignty](#) and reduce import dependency.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The current environment shows a consolidation of power within the **transitional military-led government**, with Prime Minister Kamil Idris acting as the primary civilian face of a war cabinet.

- **Prime Minister Kamil Idris:** Actively leading the [industrial recovery tours](#), signaling high-level civilian support for the military's economic strategy.
- **Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti):** Portrayed as an [international pariah](#) whose diplomatic trips to Uganda and Kenya are illegitimate and offensive to Sudanese sovereignty.
- **University of Bakht Al-Ruda Leadership:** Emerging as [key administrators](#) of the state's educational and social continuity strategy.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The editorial tone is one of **combative resilience**. The "Lead Story" throughout the day is the **"Made in Sudan" exhibition**, designed to project confidence and normalcy. Substantial airtime is given to the **diplomatic row with the UAE**, used to build a nationalistic "us versus them" narrative. Emotional appeals are centered around **Ramadan charity** and the **"martyrs" of the Popular Resistance**, aimed at maintaining morale. Conspicuous by its absence is any mention of **SAF battlefield losses** or the full extent of the famine in RSF-controlled areas.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The Sudanese state media frames the world as a struggle between **legitimate**

sovereignty and **mercenary-driven chaos**. Regional neighbors are judged strictly by their relationship with the RSF.

- **Sudan Government (SAF):** Framed as **principled, resilient, and the sole defender** of Sudanese statehood against a foreign-backed invasion ["Sovereign defender"](#).
- **United Arab Emirates (UAE):** Portrayed as the **corrupt and hostile puppet master** behind the RSF, fueling genocide for regional gain ["Hostile actor"](#).
- **Uganda/Kenya:** Framed as **weak and opportunistic** for providing diplomatic cover to "terrorist" leadership ["Complicit neighbors"](#).
- **RSF (Hemedti):** Characterized as **inept mercenaries** and "Janjaweed" perpetrators of genocide, entirely dependent on foreign support ["Genocidal mercenaries"](#).
- **United Kingdom:** Framed as a **potential ally** in the UNSC, with expectations for them to lead a ceasefire process ["Strategic partner"](#).

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

- **Narrative Seeding:** Consistent use of the term **"Janjaweed"** to describe the RSF, linking modern conflict to the historical genocide in Darfur [historical branding](#).
- **Disinformation Management:** Denying claims of RSF control over key regions and instead focusing on **"Popular Resistance"** successes [morale management](#).
- **Meta-Narrative:** The war is not a civil conflict but a **"War of Dignity"** against foreign-funded mercenaries, a framing designed to stifle domestic dissent and unify the population under military rule.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Industrial Partition:** The relocation of industry to the River Nile region will likely lead to a **de facto economic partition** of Sudan, with the government building a self-sufficient state in the north while the rest of the country collapses into anarchy.
- **Diplomatic Rupture:** A formal **severing of diplomatic ties** with the UAE and potentially Uganda is imminent if the government continues its current rhetorical trajectory.
- **Darfur Escalation:** The call for "Popular Resistance" will likely lead to an intensification of **inter-ethnic warfare** in Darfur, moving the conflict from a political struggle to a total communal war.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Increase in humanitarian distribution linked to Ramadan, accompanied by [nationalistic propaganda](#). Formal complaints to the African Union and UN regarding the Hemedti visits to Uganda.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): Expansion of **solar power projects** in northern states as the primary source of energy. Potential [limited ceasefire talks](#) hosted by the UK, though unlikely to achieve more than temporary local lulls.

Long Term (1-5 Years): A new Sudanese state identity will emerge, centered on the **River Nile and Port Sudan**, characterized by a militarized citizenry and a decentralized, "war-proof" industrial base [structural shift](#).

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Famine in Besieged Areas:** The concentration of food production in government-held northern regions leaves the rest of the country vulnerable. **Triggers:** RSF cutting transit routes. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Catastrophic. **Mitigations:** International humanitarian corridors [flour distribution](#).
- **Total Regional Spillover:** Diplomatic hostility with UAE/Uganda could lead to **overt military support** for the RSF from regional actors. **Triggers:** Formal diplomatic rupture. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** High. **Mitigations:** Third-party mediation (UK/Saudi Arabia).
- **Communal Genocide in Darfur:** The framing of "Popular Resistance" could trigger **uncontrollable ethnic cleansing**. **Triggers:** RSF capture of El-Fasher. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Extreme. **Mitigations:** UN peacekeeping intervention [ethnic targeting](#).
- **Infrastructure Collapse:** Failure of the solar pivot to meet industrial needs. **Triggers:** Destruction of Ya Wahab facilities. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** High. **Mitigations:** Redundant solar installations [solar security](#).
- **Institutional Brain Drain:** Loss of professional faculty at Bakht Al-Ruda to international flight. **Triggers:** Failure to pay salaries. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** High. **Mitigations:** Targeted aid for civil servant salaries [institutional support](#).

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The transcripts provide no data on the **internal stability of the SAF leadership** or the rumored tensions between military factions.
- There is a total lack of reporting on the **humanitarian conditions** in RSF-controlled areas of Khartoum and Kordofan.
- The actual **military efficacy** of the "Popular Resistance" units is unknown and likely exaggerated for propaganda purposes.
- The specific role of **Russian or Chinese economic interests** in the new northern industrial zones is not disclosed.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

The "Industrial Mirage": The focus on the "Made in Sudan" exhibition is not a sign of recovery but a **desperate propaganda campaign** to mask the near-total collapse of state revenue. The industrial relocating may be limited to a few symbolic factories while the macro-economy remains in terminal decline [performance of recovery](#).

The "UAE as a Scapegoat": The aggressive rhetoric against the UAE is a **tactic to deflect blame** for SAF military failures onto a foreign actor, thereby unifying the population against an external enemy to prevent a coup against General Burhan [strategic deflection](#).

Black Swan - "The Port Sudan Defection": A sudden move by local tribal leaders in Eastern Sudan to declare neutrality or independence, cutting Khartoum's last remaining economic lifeline in Port Sudan.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Prioritize the establishment of **protected humanitarian corridors** from northern industrial zones to conflict regions in Darfur and Kordofan.
- Leverage the UK presidency of the UNSC to initiate a **formal investigation into regional arms flows** to all parties [arms embargo focus](#).
- Engagement with the **University of Bakht Al-Ruda** as a conduit for delivering social and educational aid to displaced populations.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Identify opportunities in the **solar energy sector** in River Nile State, specifically for small-to-medium industrial applications [solar investment](#).
- Assess supply chain risks for agricultural imports, as the government pivots toward **domestic wheat and flour production commodity pivot**.
- Prepare for **increased regulatory complexity** and "war taxes" as the government attempts to fund the Popular Resistance via industrial output.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The transitional government is currently governing by **executive decree and military mandate**. Prime Minister Kamil Idris's visit to the industrial zones signaled a new policy

directive for decentralized industrialization.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:** Proposals for the [formal incorporation of Popular Resistance units](#) into the state security apparatus.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:** Prime Minister's [speech condemning Uganda](#) and demanding UAE accountability at the UN Security Council.

KEY STORIES

- **"Made in Sudan" Exhibition Opening:** PM Kamil Idris visits industrial zones in River Nile State to promote [domestic production of flour](#) and essential goods.
- **Diplomatic Row with UAE/Uganda:** Sudan formally [denounces regional support](#) for RSF leader Hemedti.
- **Darfur Genocide Allegations:** Reports of systematic ethnic cleansing in [El-Geneina and El-Fasher](#).
- **Solar Energy Pivot:** The **Ya Wahab Company** signs agreements to provide [solar infrastructure](#) to northern industrial hubs.
- **Bakht Al-Ruda Resettlement:** Displaced professors and students from Khartoum universities find refuge at [White Nile State institutions](#).
- **Ramadan Aid Distribution:** The **"Al-Baraka"** program distributes food to [thousands of displaced families](#) in camp settings.
- **Restoration of East Nile:** Military-led campaigns to [clean and restore services](#) in Khartoum suburbs.

- **University of Bakht Al-Ruda Graduation/Continuity:** Ceremonies held to demonstrate [institutional survival](#) despite the war.

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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