

# **BREAKING NEWS- Heavy fighting in Malakal upon return of militia leader**

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By Manyang Mayom

February 24, 2009 (MALAKAL) — Heavy fighting broke up in Malakal, the capital of Upper Nile State, since today morning between the southern Sudan army and a Khartoum backed militia led by Gen. Gabriel Tang Ginya. No casualties yet reported from the troubled town. However, three people are said to be wounded with no death as the fighting continues.

Following November 2006 clashes, the President of Southern Sudan government described Tang as criminal and asked Khartoum to hand him over to justice. But he had been transported to Khartoum by the Sudan Armed Forces.

The fighting started when the General Tang arrived yesterday to Malakal and refused to leave the town. Eyewitnesses told Sudan Tribune that some SPLA troops wanted to capture the Gen. Tang alive or else shot him. But, UNMIS tried to intervene to convince him to move out with no results.

"Gen. Tang was flown into Malakal yesterday from Khartoum by Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and rushed to the SAF barracks and this morning attacked SPLA. This is part of the conspiracy by the National Congress Party to destabilize the South and in particular Upper Nile State," said Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth in Washington, the Government of Southern Sudan Head of Mission to the United States.

Tang's militia " pushed the SPLA a bit from Malakal town of Malaki but as of now they are pushed back the SAF forces to the Airport and the fighting is continuing. The situation is very bad and casualties are high from the SAF forces," he further said.

The situation is tense while most business houses remain closed and Malakal people are indoors. Similar incidents occurred on November 27, 2006 when General Gabriel Tang and John Maluit the commissioner of Fangak had a fierce dispute over the commissionership of Malakal. 150 people were killed.

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