

## David Yauyau Rebellion, Jonglei State

David Yauyau is from the Murle tribe, a minority that lives almost exclusively in Pibor County, bordering Ethiopia and covering the south-east corner of Jonglei State. Unlike other insurrection leaders, such as George Athor and Gatluak Gai, David was a civilian, not a member of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), before launching his armed revolt following the April 2010 elections. He studied theology in Southern Sudan and Kenya before working as the Pibor County secretary of the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in Jonglei. He then ran as an independent candidate in the state's parliamentary election for the Gumuruk–Boma constituency seat representing Pibor County in the Jonglei State Assembly. David was defeated by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement's (SPLM) candidate, Judy Jokongole, who reportedly won the race by a wide margin.

David launched his first revolt on 21 May 2010 by attacking the town of Pibor and reportedly killing several SPLA soldiers. His forces then moved south into Boma National Park, where they attacked SPLA wildlife forces. Most recently they launched several attacks along the Bor–Pibor road, in Pibor and Gumuruk *payams* (districts). In early July, they killed several soldiers traveling in a convoy near Gumuruk. This road remains insecure, limiting access to the town of Pibor, which is already largely cut off from major access points in Jonglei during the rainy season due to flooding.

Some cite internal Murle politics rather than election-related tensions as a driving factor behind the revolt. A man in his thirties, David is viewed by Murle elders and the tribe's elites as having support only among local youths and is resented for not having sought the consent of Murle leaders before running in the elections. This rebellion seems linked to the intense rift between two Murle factions, one led by Ismail Konyi (a former Sudanese Armed Forces major-general who was incorporated into the Southern government in 2006 as the presidential adviser on peace and reconciliation) and the other represented by Pibor County Commissioner Akot Maze. The perception among some Murle is that Ismail is backing David in order to destabilize the county and force Akot's removal. The commissioner maintains close ties to the SPLM, while many of his constituents deeply resent the Southern ruling party due to its marginalization of the Murle at the Juba level and abuses they suffered during the SPLA's latest disarmament campaign in the Pibor area before the elections.

Ismail, with substantial resources still at his disposal, may be providing illicit support to David, but local estimates put the number of his armed supporters between 50 and 300 men, suggesting that his uprising is smaller in scale than the other insurgencies in Jonglei and Unity states. Nonetheless, David's activities are still playing a destabilizing role in Pibor County, an area that has already been relatively neglected by humanitarian actors since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, due partly to persistent insecurity and other access difficulties.

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David's rebellion has received less attention from the leadership of the Southern government than did other revolts, probably because it is perceived as a less significant threat than those led by George and Gatluak. In addition to the fact that David seems to have fewer military and financial resources at his disposal, his revolt is less linked to higher-level GoSS politics than those of George and Gatluak. Nonetheless, Murle discontent and general insecurity in Pibor County have proved to be fertile ground for such a revolt, and the area is one where the SPLA has failed to assert and extend its authority, beyond the conduct of brutal disarmament campaigns that have only served to stoke local discontent of authority at the Juba level.

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