

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

Research Response Number: SDN32167
Country: Sudan
Date: 17 August 2007

Keywords: Sudan – Khalid Ibn Al Walid military camp – National service – National Islamic Front

This response was prepared by the Research & Information Services Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. This research response may not, under any circumstance, be cited in a decision or any other document. Anyone wishing to use this information may only cite the primary source material contained herein.

Questions

- 1. Is there an army camp Khalid Ibn Al Walid at (or perhaps in/near the hills outside) Omdurman?**
- 2. Is there any evidence national servicemen are pressured to join the National Islamic Front, or mistreated generally?**

RESPONSE

- 1. Is there an army camp Khalid Ibn Al Walid at (or perhaps in/near the hills outside) Omdurman?**

An update from May 1998 on the website of the University of Pennsylvania African Studies Center reported the opening of a “new training camp named Khalid bin al-Walid” in Sudan, as follows:

STUDENT MILITARY CAMP OPENS: A new training camp named Khalid bin al-Walid will begin taking student mujahedin from 21 March, President Bashir told a mass rally at Omdurman Islamic University. He said Sudan would never return to the situation before the National Salvation Revolution of June 1989, and the Sudanese people ‘would never fear the provocations of antagonists or conspiracies against the homeland.’ (‘Sudan Update Volume 9 Number 5’ 1998, University of Pennsylvania – African Studies Center website, 15 May <http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Newsletters/sdup95.html> – Accessed 16 August 2007 – Attachment 1).

Searches of the sources consulted found no other mention of a camp of this name in Sudan. The searches undertaken focused on the words “Khalid” and “Walid” to include the various

other transliterations of the name Khalid bin al-Walid, which include Khalid Ibn Al Walid, Khalid Ibn El Walid, Khalid Bin Walid and Khalid Ibn Walid.

2. Is there any evidence national servicemen are pressured to join the National Islamic Front, or mistreated generally?

A search of the sources consulted found no reference to national servicemen being subjected to pressure to join the National Islamic Front.

Sudan's *National Service Act 1992* appears to provide for national service to be undertaken in a number of ways other than with the armed forces. The English language version of the *National Service Act 1992* sourced from the UK Home Office states the provision thus:

The recruit shall do the service in any of the following places:

- The armed forces
- The police or other regular forces
- Government or public sector units
- Public projects in development, economic or social service ('Sudan: National Service Act 1992' 2003, *UK Home Office*, April – Attachment 2).

In the sources consulted, however, no reference was found to the criteria that may be relevant to a decision regarding a recruit's place of service nor, specifically, to the extent to which a recruit's political affiliations may affect such a decision.

Articles from 2006 and 1998 make reference to unrest in national service camps, reportedly as a result of the mistreatment of recruits.

On 15 May 2006 it was reported that:

A series of protests and demonstrations at national [military] service camps have occurred in the last two weeks and have led to some students fleeing, clashes and burning of property. These are a dangerous precedent for national service sessions of Sudan school certificate students known as Sudan Glory.

In Nahr Atbarah municipality, Kasala State, national service students started a fire in the camp following rioting by a group of students. In the ensuing chaos some students escaped from the camp.

Several students told Al-Watan that the riot was in protest against mistreatment by the trainers and harshness of the training routine. There were conflicting reports on the amount of damage caused due to the riots. Kasala State's national service coordinator Al-Baqir Muhammad Nur said the rioting was limited to a few students and had been contained.

In Al-Damazin, Blue Nile State, some Sudan Glory students deserted Al-Diysah camp during the chaos following clashes between the students and the camp's administration. Al-Watan has learnt that clashes broke out following the camp administration's refusal to assist one of the students who had a severe chest infection. The sick student was later assisted and is currently being treated at Al-Damazin hospital.

Clashes also broke out in Sudan Glory student's camps in Al-Fashir, capital of west Darfur, last week following a demonstration by students in the camp in protest against reports that people had been killed in renewed violence in one of the displaced people's camps in Zalinge.

Sources told Al-Watan that some students had left the camp. National service coordinator in the state Bashir al-A'jab told Al-Watan that the rioting had not be caused by the camp's administration or the national service but was related to the Abuja agreement and incidents in Zalinge ('Sudan: Sudanese students protest against mistreatment at national service camps' 2006, *BBC Monitoring*, 15 May – Attachment 3).

An article dated 14 April 1998 reported on the deaths of conscripts attempting to escape a camp southeast of Khartoum. According to that report:

Sudan has acknowledged that 52 student conscripts drowned while trying to flee a military camp outside the capital, newspapers reported Monday.

It was the first government comment on the accident in more than a week and followed reports by opposition groups that as many as 129 conscripts were killed in the April 2 incident.

The government had earlier acknowledged that only 31 people died. But the opposition National Democratic Alliance said Sudanese soldiers shot and beat to death 74 student conscripts and that at least 55 others drowned as they tried to escape.

... The recruits were training at the Ailafoon military camp, 15 miles southeast of Khartoum, the capital. Many of the men were forcibly picked up from the street to fight an insurgency in southern Sudan ('Government acknowledges 52 students died in drowning' 1998, *Associated Press Newswires*, 14 April – Attachment 4).

On 13 April 1998, an earlier report of the same events included some information about the treatment of the conscripted soldiers at the camp, stating that:

The students tried to escape after soldiers in the camp refused to allow them to go home for the Feast of the Sacrifice, a major Muslim holiday, an official in the opposition Umma Party's office in London told The Associated Press Sunday.

... Only 15 students are left at the camp, where conscripts receive one meal a day and are forced to drink contaminated water, the party said ('Opposition: Government responsible for deaths of fleeing students' 1998, *Associated Press Newswires*, 13 April – Attachment 5).

No other specific references to mistreatment of national servicemen were located in the sources consulted.

List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:

Government Information & Reports

CIA website <https://www.cia.gov>

UK Home Office website <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk>

US Department of State website <http://www.state.gov>

Non-Government Organisations

Amnesty International website <http://www.amnesty.org>

Human Rights Watch website <http://www.hrw.org>

International News & Politics

Africa Confidential website <http://www.afric-confidential.com>

Africa Daily website <http://www.africadaily.com>

All Africa.com <http://allafrica.com>

BBC News website <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

IRINnews.org website <http://www.irinnews.org>

Sudan Tribune <http://www.sudantribune.com>

Topic Specific Links

Global Security website <http://www.globalsecurity.org>

Search Engines

Copernic search engine

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

Jane's (Intelligence Review, Islamic Affairs Analyst, World Insurgency and Terrorism)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database)

List of Attachments

1. 'Sudan Update Volume 9 Number 5' 1998, University of Pennsylvania – African Studies Center website, 15 May
<http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Newsletters/sdup95.html> – Accessed 16 August 2007.
2. 'Sudan: National Service Act 1992' 2003, *UK Home Office*, April. (CISNET Sudan CX125916)
3. 'Sudan: Sudanese students protest against mistreatment at national service camps' 2006, *BBC Monitoring*, 15 May. (CISNET Sudan CX153514)
4. 'Government acknowledges 52 students died in drowning' 1998, *Associated Press Newswires*, 14 April. (FACTIVA)
5. 'Opposition: Government responsible for deaths of fleeing students' 1998, *Associated Press Newswires*, 13 April. (FACTIVA)