

VIOLENCE IN THE WAR DEEPENS

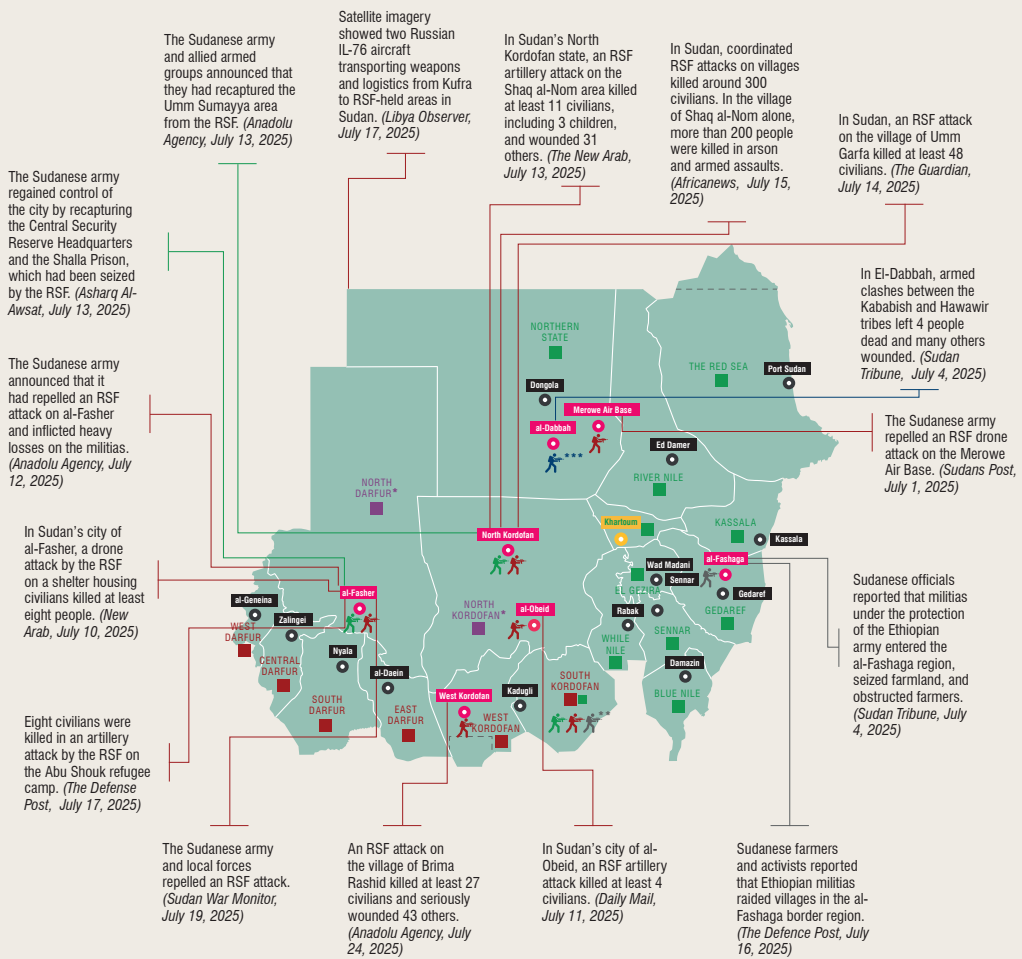
KAAN DEVECİOĞLU & ALEYNA KAYADELEN

INTRODUCTION:

July 2025 was a period in the Sudanese conflict marked by a rise in civilian casualties and an expansion of the front lines. With this monthly analysis series, prepared by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (ORSAM), the aim is to follow the course of the conflict both geographically and in terms of actors, to visualize developments on the ground, and to provide policymakers and researchers with a reliable point of reference. The civil war that erupted on April 15, 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) spread into rural areas in July 2025, bringing a significant increase in civilian deaths. During this period, the RSF drew attention with coordinated village assaults, artillery strikes, and targeted attacks on camps, while the SAF responded with air power. At the same time, the influence of external actors and restrictions on access to humanitarian aid further complicated the situation on the ground.

Major Attacks in the Sudan War

July 2025



** SPLM-N (Abdelaziz al-Hilu): Fighting against both the SAF and the RSF though periods of non-engagement with the SAF are occasionally observed. The group demands a secular constitution, self-governance, and secularism.

*** Inter-tribal clashes can occur in different parts of Sudan on a monthly basis.

SAF Sudanese Armed Forces (the official army of Sudan)
RSF Rapid Support Forces (a paramilitary force operating in Sudan)
 The conflict between the SAF and the RSF has been ongoing since April 15, 2023.

SAF: Areas under the control of the Sudanese Armed Forces
RSF: Areas under the control of the Rapid Support Forces
 * Cities where the fighting between the SAF and RSF is most intense



THE EXTENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION AND THE INTENSITY OF THE ATTACKS

Throughout July 2025, fighting was not limited to the traditional front lines but also intensified in areas such as Merowe and Shendi in the north, al-Fashaga and Kassala in the east, and Brima and Nyala in the west. The infographic prepared by ORSAM documents at least 14 major attacks and more than 1,000 civilian deaths across various regions resulting from these assaults. On this basis:

- **North Kordofan:** Reports indicate that more than 25 civilians, including 7 children, were killed in RSF artillery attacks on the Shaq al-Nom and Al-Obeid areas.
- **Darfur and Kordofan:** Attacks by the RSF on the villages of Brima Rashid and Shaq al-Nom are estimated to have killed around 300 civilians.
- **Eastern Sudan:** Activities by Ethiopian militias in al-Fashaga have once again heightened tensions.

ACTORS IN THE WAR: NEW MOVES AND OLD TACTICS

Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF):

- Repelled an RSF drone attack on the Merowe Air Base.
- Conducted heavy airstrikes in response to RSF advances in Al-Fasher and South Darfur.
- Increased the intensity of unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV) operations.

Rapid Support Forces (RSF):

- Stepped up coordinated attacks on civilian areas.
- Satellite imagery documented the transport of logistics and weapons via Russian-made IL-76 aircraft.
- Formed temporary alliances with tribes in certain areas to open new fronts.

Tribal Forces and Other Actors:

- Four people were killed in tribal clashes in Al-Dabbah.
- Reports indicate Ethiopian-origin militias exerting pressure on Sudanese farmers in Eastern Sudan.

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES AND HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Throughout July:

- Nearly 300 civilians were killed in the village of **Shaq al-Nom**.
- In settlements such as **Brima Rashid, Al-Obeid, Abu Shouk, and Umm Garfa**, RSF attacks claimed the lives of many civilians, including children.
- Attacks on hospitals, camps, and farms further hindered access to humanitarian aid.

On this basis, the spread of conflict dynamics into rural areas could trigger a new wave of displacement.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTLOOK

- The RSF appears to be shifting its focus to rural areas, placing greater emphasis on asymmetric tactics against the SAF.
- The SAF, in turn, continues its efforts to protect urban centers and maintain air superiority.
- UCAV strikes are contributing to the Sudanese army's ability to reassert dominance in certain areas.
- Militia activities and tribal tensions along the Ethiopia-Sudan border increase the risk of the war evolving into a broader regional conflict.

In conclusion, the conflict in Sudan is producing profound effects not only among armed groups but also on the civilian population. As of July 2025, the trajectory of the fighting indicates that the war may evolve into a long-term spiral of instability. ORSAM will continue to closely monitor this process in the coming months, examining both its military and humanitarian dimensions.

