



## KORDOFAN IN FOCUS: FRONTLINE SHIFTS AND PROGRESS IN THE SOUTH

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## **INTRODUCTION**

November 2025 marked a period when fighting in the Sudan war intensified around Kordofan and reshaped the Darfur-Khartoum axis. After Al-Fasher fell under Rapid Support Forces (RSF) control in late October, the war’s focus shifted west to Kordofan, where Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) faced multi-front battles with both the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) and RSF units. At the same time, increased airstrikes along the Khartoum-Atbara corridor, supported by RSF’s consolidated external backing, signaled a shift in strategy from “city sieges” to nationwide expansion. The developments showed the conflict widening into multiple fronts rather than narrowing geographically.

# Key Attacks in the Sudan War

## November 2025

Sudanese airstrike destroyed 50+ RSF combat vehicles and fuel/ammunition tankers from an eastern Libya convoy linked to Haftar. (*The Libya Observer*, Nov. 22, 2025)

A drone, believed operated by Sudanese forces, struck RSF-controlled Tagru gold mine in el-Maiha, North Darfur, killing at least 10 and injuring 42. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 16, 2025)

Sudanese forces recaptured Abu Sunun, Abu Qaoud, and Um Sayala in North Kordofan. (*Anadolu Agency*, Nov. 19, 2025)

Sudanese forces blocked RSF suicide drone attacks on strategic sites including Merowe Airport and Dam. (*Anadolu Agency*, Nov. 13, 2025)

Sudan Army blocked a series of drone attacks targeting Khartoum and Atbara. (*Anadolu Agency*, Nov. 7, 2025)

Sudanese air defenses shot down a Chinese-made RSF drone over al-Obeid, North Kordofan. (*Anadolu Agency*, Nov. 8, 2025)

Sudan Army repelled RSF attack on Babnousa with support from 22nd Infantry Division; RSF suffered losses and ~177,000 civilians were evacuated. (*TRT World*, Nov. 24, 2025)

RSF drone strike during a funeral in Uwaynat, North Kordofan, killed at least 40 civilians and injured dozens. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 4, 2025)

Sudan Army repelled an RSF attack with artillery and combat vehicles on Babnousa, West Kordofan. (*Anadolu Agency*, Nov. 9, 2025)

Sudanese forces regained Umm Dham Haj Ahmed, Habila and Kazgii in North Kordofan after heavy clashes with RSF. (*Anadolu Agency*, Nov. 15, 2025)

Sudan Army repelled RSF ground attack on 22nd Division Base in Babnousa, including three days of artillery and drone bombardment; RSF reportedly sent mercenaries from South Sudan. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 12, 2025)

RSF drone strike hit Bashayer oil processing station in el-Jabalain, White Nile, killing an engineer and damaging parts of the facility. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 15, 2025)

RSF renewed attacks on 22nd Infantry Division HQ in Babnousa with reinforcements from Darfur and FPV drones; Sudan Army repelled attacks with artillery and drones; failed tribal mediation led to renewed clashes. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 28, 2025)

Sudan Army reclaimed at least seven SPLM-N villages in South Kordofan for the first time since 2023; captures include Tabassa, al-Damra, Gardoud Jama, and nearby settlements, marking the army's most significant advance in the region. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 30, 2025)

RSF launched simultaneous drone attacks on Omdurman, Atbara, al-Obeid, and Dilling; heavy artillery in Dilling caused civilian casualties. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 7, 2025)

Sudan Army captured Tabsa, al-Damra, Gardoud Jama, and al-Mureib west of Al-Abbasiya Tagali, South Kordofan, after heavy clashes with RSF and SPLM-N. (*Anadolu Agency*, Nov. 30, 2025)

At least 7 civilians were killed and many injured in a drone strike by RSF on a shelter in Al-Abbasiya Tagali, South Kordofan. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 1, 2025)

SPLM-N reported Sudanese forces' three-pronged attack on Habila-Kartala was repelled; RSF and SPLM-N sent reinforcements; Dilling and Kadugli faced heavy artillery in recent weeks. (*Sudan Tribune*, Nov. 27, 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.  
 \*\* The town of Tawila, located on the Chad-West Darfur route, is controlled by Abdul Wahid al-Nur.



**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.

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



## **EXTENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION AND INTENSITY OF THE ATTACKS**

### **South and North Kordofan**

November was one of the periods with the highest civilian casualties in the Sudan war. On Nov. 1, an RSF drone strike on a shelter in Al-Abbasiya Tagali in South Kordofan killed at least seven civilians and wounded many others. On Nov. 4, a drone attack on a funeral in the village of Uwaynat in North Kordofan killed at least 40 civilians. The two incidents show the RSF has institutionalized tactics that target civilians.

From Nov. 5-9, the Sudanese Army repelled RSF artillery and drone attacks around al-Obeid and Babnousa. On Nov. 8, a China-made RSF drone shot down over el-Obeid again highlighted the group's foreign supply networks. Heavy fighting on Nov. 9 in Babnousa in West Kordofan showed the area had become a new center of the war.

From Nov. 12-15, the SAF reestablished control in Umm Dham Haj Ahmed, Habila and Kazgil. In the same period, an RSF drone strike on the Bashayer oil processing station in al-Jabalain showed the war had reached a stage threatening energy security. Starting Nov. 15, the army expanded its counteroffensives in Kordofan and retook numerous villages.

In the final week of the month, fighting flared again along the Babnousa line. RSF attacks, carried out with reinforcements brought from Darfur and FPV-type suicide drones, were repelled by army artillery and air support. On Nov. 24, operations coordinated by the 22nd Infantry Division reportedly led to the evacuation of 177,000 civilians. By late November 2025, the town of Babnousa had emerged as the Sudanese Army's main defensive line against the RSF in Kordofan.

### **Sudan, Egypt, and Libya Border Zone**

On Nov. 22, the SAF destroyed a military convoy in an airstrike that was reportedly sent from eastern Libya to support the RSF and linked to Haftar. More than 50 armored vehicles and fuel and ammunition tankers were destroyed. The incident heightened the risk of the war becoming more regional.

### **Darfur and Southern Frontlines**

A drone believed to belong to the Sudanese Army struck the Tagru gold mine in North Darfur on Nov. 16, signaling a shift toward targeting RSF-linked economic assets. From Nov. 27-30, the army retook areas around Al-Abbasiya Tagali in South Kordofan — including Tabsa, al-Damra, Gardoud Jama and al-Mureib — from the RSF and its ally SPLM-N. It was the army's largest territorial gain in South Kordofan since 2023.

## **ACTORS AND TACTICAL SHIFTS**

### **Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF):**

- Implemented a “gradual encirclement” strategy to reestablish ground superiority in Kordofan.
- Activated air-defense systems along the Babnousa, el-Obeid and Atbara corridor, downing numerous drones.
- Prioritized protecting energy infrastructure and key facilities, including the Merowe Dam and the Bashayer oil complex.
- Intensified air operations against external supply routes coming from the Libya and South Sudan borders.

### **Rapid Support Forces (RSF):**

- Shifted from direct attacks on city centers to targeting energy, infrastructure, and tribal sites.
- Used FPV suicide drones and China-made drones to wear down defensive lines in Khartoum and Kordofan.
- Brought in mercenaries from South Sudan to reinforce the Babnousa and Dilling fronts.

### **Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N)**

- Reemerged in November, coordinating with the RSF along the Habila-Kartala line to slow the army’s advance.
- By the end of the month, the army’s capture of seven villages around Al-Abbasiya Tagali was a major setback for the SPLM-N.

## **ASSESSMENT AND OUTLOOK**

- The Kordofan front has become the war’s strategic center. RSF concentration there is part of its strategy to maintain control in Darfur and besiege Khartoum.
- The army’s November advances show it has regained some ground, though the sustainability of these gains is uncertain.
- Attacks on energy infrastructure are accelerating economic collapse and deepening the humanitarian crisis nationwide.

- The risk of regional intervention has risen due to connections with Libya and South Sudan, making the Sudan war no longer explainable by internal dynamics alone.

**Short-term outlook:** fighting in Kordofan is expected to concentrate around Babnoussa and Al-Abbasiya Tagali, while the RSF is likely to target strategic sites near the Merowe Dam and Khartoum.

**Long-term outlook:** front-line balances in Sudan will depend less on territorial control and more on the sustainability of supply lines, signaling a shift toward a “decentralized war” structure.

## CONCLUSION

November 2025 marked a new phase in the Sudan war as Kordofan became the conflict’s central hub after the devastation in Darfur. RSF attacks, carried out without regard for civilians, have expanded the war to the country’s eastern and southern fronts. Sudan’s future now hinges not only on military balances but also on vulnerabilities in energy, humanitarian access, and cross-border security. ORSAM will continue to monitor the developments and their regional implications.

