

Please cite as: EUAA, '2.9.2. Conflict dynamics and tactics' in *Sudan: Security Situation*, October 2026.

2.9.2. Conflict dynamics and tactics

In May 2025, the RSF first seized Al Nuhud city,962 then Al Khuwai,963 reducing the SAF presence in West Kordofan to their military bases in Babanusa city and Heglig.964 The RSF besieged the town of Babanusa965 which in late spring 2025 was reportedly subjected to repeated assaults by the RSF and witnessed intense clashes between the conflict parties.966 The RSF finally captured the city in December 2025967 and shortly afterwards also took control of Heglig oil field on the border with South Sudan,968 resulting in the group's full control of West Kordofan state.969 In mid-December, South Sudan deployed troops to Heglig oil field under a tripartite security arrangement with the RSF and SAF970 aiming to insulate the facility from further armed confrontations.971

During the reference period, both RSF and SAF employed drone strikes targeting the other party's area of control, repeatedly impacting civilians or civilian infrastructure.972 Dabanga reported the use of barrel bombs by the SAF in an airstrike on Al-Fula in July 2025.973 There were reported incidents of violence perpetrated by RSF troops in recently seized areas such as around Al Nuhud, involving killings of local residents974 and looting of houses and a market.975 In the Abyei region, incidents of intercommunal clashes occurred between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka as well as other communities, resulting in casualties.976

- 962

  Sudan Tribune, Sudan's RSF paramilitaries seize strategic West Kordofan city Al-Nuhud, 2 May 2025, url; Sudan War Monitor, RSF seizes control of Al Nahud in latest blow to SAF, 1 May 2025, url

- 963

  Ayin Network et al., Sudan Conflict Monitor # 21, 1 July 2025, url, p. 3

- 964

  Ayin Network, Shifting frontlines: Army and RSF clash over strategic West Kordofan towns, 14 May 2025, url

- 965

  Sudan War Monitor, Sudanese Army Base in Babanusa Overrun After Protracted Siege, 1 December 2025, url; Ayin Network et al., Sudan Conflict Monitor # 20, 26 May 2025, url, p. 4

- 966

  Ayin Network et al., Sudan Conflict Monitor # 21, 1 July 2025, url, p. 3

- 967

  CIR, RSF takeover of the 22nd Division base in Babanusa, West Kordofan, 21 January 2026, url; Darfur 24, Rapid Support Forces seize control of Babanusa garrison, 2 December 2025, url

- 968

  Sudan Tribune, RSF seizes strategic Heglig oilfield, local administration deploys protection force, 8 December 2025, url; Sudan War Monitor, Rapid Support Forces Capture Heglig Oilfield, 8 December 2025, url

- 969

  MEE, Sudan's Heglig: Why the oil field taken by the RSF matters, 9 December 2025, url

- 970

  Sudan War Monitor, Heglig Oilfield placed under neutral South Sudan protection, 14 December 2025, url

- 971

  Al Jazeera, South Sudan army to secure critical Heglig oilfield in Sudan war spillover, 11 December 2025, url

- 972

  UN News, World News in Brief: Deadly drone attacks in Sudan, violence against women in the spotlight, more clashes in DR Congo, 12 March 2026, url; UN News, Sudan: Rights chief alarmed after at least 57 killed in drone attacks in two days, 18 February 2026, url; Sudan Tribune, RSF drone strikes kill at least 10 civilians in Sudan’s Kordofan – sources, 28 May 2025, url

- 973

  Dabanga, Civilians targeted in West and North Kordofan amid SAF airstrikes, RSF clashes, 14 July 2025, url

- 974

  AP, Paramilitary group kills 32 in a rampage in southern Sudan, activist group says, 24 July 2025, url; Al Jazeera, Sudanese paramilitary RSF kills 19 after taking city of al-Nahud: Sources, 2 May 2025, url

- 975

Al Jazeera, Sudanese paramilitary RSF kills 19 after taking city of al-Nahud: Sources, 2 May 2025, url

- 976

UNSG, Situation in Abyei, S/2026/378, 4 May 2026, url, para. 7; Radio Tamazuj, 5 killed, 1 injured in attack in Abyei, 12 April 2026, url; UNSG, Situation in Abyei, S/2025/649, 15 October 2025, url, para. 7-9

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu