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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 Babanusa[965](#) 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 2025[967](#) 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 SAF[970](#) 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 residents[974](#) 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](#)

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