



Paramilitary drone strike kills 75 in Sudan’s Darfur

RSF pushes for dominance in western Sudan as El-Fasher siege intensifies and casualties mount

● RSF targets last army-held Darfur city

● Attack hit displaced civilians’ mosque

● City under 18-month siege

AFP | Port Sudan

Sudan’s paramilitary Rapid Support Forces killed 75 people in a drone strike that hit a mosque in the western city of El-Fasher yesterday, first responders said.

The RSF conducted their strike as they pressed a push to capture the last major city in the vast western region of Darfur still under army control.

The attack struck worshippers in the city’s Al-Daraja neighbourhood, where civilians from the famine-hit Abu Shouk displacement camp had fled after fighters overran the camp.

“The bodies were retrieved from the rubble of the mosque,” the Abu Shouk Emergency Response Room, one of hundreds of volunteer groups coordinating relief across Sudan, said on social media.

There was no immediate comment from the RSF on the incident.

El-Fasher, which has been un-



Sudanese residents gather to receive free meals in Al Fasher in Darfur region

der paramilitary siege for about 18 months, is the final state capital in Darfur still under the control of Sudan’s army, which has been locked in a devastating war with the RSF since April 2023.

The city’s fall would hand the RSF full territorial dominance over the region, where the UN and rights groups have already reported mass atrocities, including ethnically targeted massacres.

‘Full control’

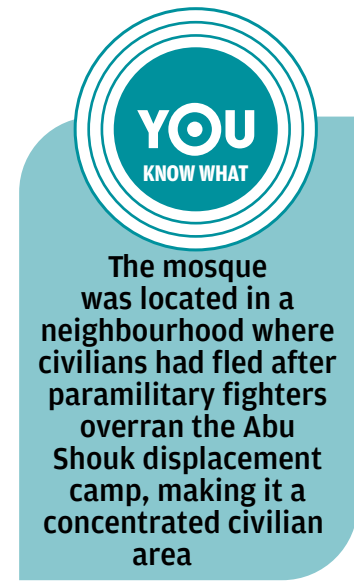
Satellite imagery released by Yale University’s Humanitarian Research Lab on Thursday showed RSF forces advancing on multiple fronts, including around Abu Shouk camp and the former UNAMID peacekeeping base, now used by anti-RSF Joint Forces.

The Joint Forces, a coalition armed groups, has fought alongside the army since late 2023

after mass killings targeting the Massalit tribe in West Darfur state capital El-Geneina.

“RSF has likely captured the former UNAMID compound, Joint Forces’ base of operations,” Yale said, citing damage visible in satellite imagery collected between Monday and Thursday.

An RSF source, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to talk to the media, told AFP: “By around 2:00 pm (Thursday), our



The mosque was located in a neighbourhood where civilians had fled after paramilitary fighters overran the Abu Shouk displacement camp, making it a concentrated civilian area

forces had taken full control of the UNAMID base.”

Buildings near Abu Shouk have been razed to the ground between Monday and Wednesday, according to Yale’s analysis of low-resolution satellite imagery. RSF units now control much of the famine-hit Abu Shouk displacement camp, a densely populated area just three kilometres north of UNAMID, according to eyewitnesses.

This places El Fasher airport -- the army’s de facto base of operations located three kilometres (1.9 miles) south of UNAMID -- and the army’s 6th Division headquarters both within direct RSF firing range.

Blasts kill at least 11 in southwestern Pakistan



Security personnel inspect a damaged vehicle

AFP | Quetta

Separate blasts in Pakistan’s restive Balochistan province killed at least 11 people, officials said yesterday.

Militancy has been rising in mineral-rich Balochistan, which sits on the border with Afghanistan and Iran, and it has been met with a sweeping counter-terrorism crackdown.

A suicide bomber drove an explosive-laden car into a convoy of paramilitary soldiers in Dasht, on Pakistan’s southwestern tip near Iran, on Thursday.

Two local government officials said that three troops were among five people killed. The attack was claimed by separatist group the Baloch Liberation Army.

Another blast near an Afghan border crossing in the province killed six labourers on Thursday night, local government official Imtiaz Ali Baloch said.

Separatists have been fighting a decade-long insurgency against the Pakistani military with the aim of ending discrimination against the Baloch people.

Taliban release detained elderly British couple

AFP | London

An elderly British couple detained in Afghanistan for almost eight months were released yesterday, the Taliban authorities said, after pressure built to free the pair due to fears over their health.

Taliban officials have refused to detail why Peter Reynolds, 80, and his wife Barbara, 76, were arrested in February as they were returning to their home.

“We’ve been treated very well. We’re looking forward to seeing our children,” said Barbara, in a red headscarf, standing next to her bearded husband, near a plane on the tarmac of Kabul airport.

“We are looking forward to returning to Afghanistan if we can. We are Afghan citizens,” she added, after Qatar-facilitated negotiations for their release.

The couple were married in Kabul in 1970, and have spent almost two decades living in Afghanistan running educational programmes for women and children. They also became official Afghan citizens.

When the Taliban returned to power in 2021, the couple re-



Peter and Barbie Reynolds posing for a photograph at an unknown location

mained in Afghanistan against the advice of the British embassy.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Abdul Qahar Balkhi in a statement posted on social media said the couple were handed over to the UK’s special representative to the country Richard Lindsay.

“Two British nationals named Peter and Barbara Reynolds, who had violated the laws of Afghanistan, were released from custody today following the judicial process,” Balkhi added.

Images of the couple standing together with Lindsay at Kabul airport before their departure to the Qatari capital Doha were broadcast on Sky News.

“They are very relieved to be to be going home,” Lindsay told the broadcaster.

The couple were first held in a maximum security facility, “then in underground cells, without daylight, before being transferred” to the intelligence services in Kabul, according to UN experts.



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TWEETS

01



Our times demand more than posturing & promises. They demand progress. The @UN General Debate next week is an opportunity we cannot miss. My message to world leaders: Get serious, bridge divides & deliver. Let this be a week of solutions.

@antonioguterres

02



At #PortoSocialForum we reaffirmed our commitment to a Social Europe. At the 23-24 October #EUCO, EU leaders will for the first time hold a debate on affordable housing — a cornerstone for social cohesion, democratic resilience and the future of the young generations.

@eucopresident

03



We want to ban imports of Russian LNG into European markets. It is time to turn off the tap. I want to be clear: Europeans will be safe this winter. Because we have been preparing for this under REPowerEU. Our efforts are paying off today.

@vonderleyen

04



I just released my AI for America roadmap, and it boils down to this: The companies driving and profiting the most from AI need to do their part to strengthen our workforce, modernize our energy infrastructure, and ensure safety.

@SenMarkKelly

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