

Atar

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Tulus:

Death of a tribal leader and ominous signs ahead

An-Nuhoud:

Death, destruction and displacement as RSF takes over control

Babanusa:

Civilians and soldiers share spoils as everyone fights for survival

Nyala:

Displaced within the city and working for a song

Atar correspondents



Artwork by: Mohamed Osman Gaki

Tulus: **Death of a tribal leader** **and ominous signs ahead**

Atar Correspondent

SOUTH DARFUR- On May 14, the Deputy Chief of the Falata tribe, Al-Hadi Idris Yousif, was fatally wounded by a bullet to the head during clashes among Rapid Support Forces (RSF) members in Tulus market, a locality in South Darfur located about 80 kilometres southeast of Nyala.

Witnesses say an old feud among the RSF fighters from the Falata tribe resurfaced inside a café in Tulus market, prompting the Yousif to intervene to calm tensions. He was struck by stray gunfire and rushed to Nyala for medical care but died en route.

Another account indicates that Yousif had been attending a meeting with tribal leaders near the market when an RSF member stormed in, addressed him directly and shot him in the head. He later succumbed to his injuries before reaching Nyala.

Following the shooting, Tulus market was immediately shut down, except for pharmacies, bakeries, vegetable shops and small indoor stalls. This exacerbated poor living conditions amid widespread tension and anxiety, as residents demanded that those responsible be arrested and held accountable.

A source told Atar that some tribe

members blamed a few of their kinsmen, including Chief Mohammed Al-Fateh Al-Samani, accusing them either of orchestrating the assassination or of firing indiscriminately. This suspicion arose mainly because Al-Samani was a prominent leader who opposed his tribe's involvement with the RSF.

Days later, claiming inability to capture the suspects, the RSF launched a sweeping arrest campaign targeting local community leaders. According to local sources, those detained included Omda Ahmed Mohammed Ismail, Omda Mohammed Adamallah Gabo and Omda Ishaq Abdel Jabbar.

During the late chief's memorial service, the deposed Falata chief Al-Samani announced his intention to dispatch 100 RSF combat vehicles from Nyala to Tulus to secure the town.

Notably, several RSF commanders and allied civilian administrators attended the memorial, including Brigadier General Absher Jibril Blail, the commander of the RSF vanguard force in Nyala, Yusuf Idris Youssef, head of the Civilian Administration of South Darfur and El-Tijani Karshum, head of the Civilian Administration of West Darfur. Also present was deposed Beni Hilba chief Al-Tom Al-Hadi Issa Dabka. Local sources report that residents widely rejected Al-Samani's pledge to bring RSF forces to Tulus.

During his remarks at the memorial, the state's civilian administrator denied

RSF forces or the victim's kinsmen were involved, attributing the fatal shot to errant fire amid ongoing armed clashes. He vowed to do whatever it takes to restore security and stability to Tulus and neighboring localities such as Buram and Id Al-Fursan.

Since the beginning of this year, Tulus and surrounding areas have been plagued by violations, looting, theft, threats and killings in the city's market, claiming several lives, including women. This latest incident underscores the security breakdown afflicting many Darfur towns.

An-Nuhoud: Death, destruction and displacement as RSF takes over control

Atar Correspondent

WEST KORDOFAN- Information on An-Nuhoud has been nearly non-existent, except from those who recently fled, undertaking an unplanned exodus. Nearly 29 days have passed since RSF forces entered the town and government troops withdrew.

One escapee told *Atar* that people evacuated in groups toward various directions, and most who fled have lost contact with relatives because communication channels were cut. A small number manage occasional calls via Starlink from within the town.

Hussein Al-Hasan, a pseudonym for an Al-Nuhud resident, says the town and its environs are in a state of collapse after the solar panels used to pump water from Jabal Wad Haidub and the Umm Khiretiesh area east of town were looted, cutting water supply entirely. Most residents

have relocated to different areas of the rural periphery, especially Umm Habiyla to the south, Wad Al-Haliyu and Wad Shu'ayfun to the west, Iziriq west of town. Some reached Foja, while others went to Hamra Al-Sheikh in North Kordofan.

Al-Hasan adds that the market was ransacked completely on the first day RSF seized the town. Although shops remain open, there are no goods or provisions. Cash and gold were looted, and even harvested crops were taken. Owners of those assets suddenly found themselves impoverished and displaced.

A female doctor at An-Nuhoud Hospital, who requested anonymity for security reasons, reports the hospital has been non-functional since the RSF takeover, having endured heavy gunfire. Most medical staff fled, and several were killed by stray bullets. Some patients relocated to the western rural areas; a few receiving dialysis died, while others remain missing. Two critically ill patients eventually managed to reach Al-Ubayyid after great hardship. The facility served patients from Darfur states, especially Al-Fashir, and from all localities of West Kordofan.

Eyewitnesses from An-Nuhoud and Wad Banda told *Atar* that the town is under siege by army forces and allied units from the east, using drones to target RSF positions. These strikes have killed several soldiers and wounded others, who were evacuated to Wad Banda via military ambulances and four-wheel drives.

Others told *Atar* that the civilian administration distributed free flour and sugar to residents from the home of the overall chief of the Dar Hamr tribes, Abdul Qader Abdul Monem Mansour, who refused to leave after RSF took over. Water tankers were dispatched to neighbourhoods free of charge after several wells supplying the town and countryside failed.

All areas hosting displaced persons lack water and sufficient food. Families seek shade beneath leafless hashab trees, which offer little protection from sear-

ing summer heat, forcing some to drape sheets and blankets over branches for relief.

Some residents have returned to An-Nuhoud in recent days after fleeing initially due to the absence of water in outlying areas.

As the Hajj season begins, the town has forfeited a crucial economic advantage: exporting Hamri sheep to Saudi Arabia. Previously, thousands were shipped each season. An-Nuhoud's produce market is one of the region's largest, yielding peanuts, watermelon, hibiscus, and gum Arabic.

RSF forces seized An-Nuhoud on May 1. Witness estimates put the civilian death toll at over 200. Some victims were buried near the local government office in An-Nuhoud market. Reports also emerged of multiple rapes during the siege, all communication networks severed.

Babanusa: **Civilians and soldiers** **share spoils as everyone** **fights for survival**

Atar Correspondent

WEST KORDOFAN- After a brief opening that allowed food and medicine into the enclave of civilians trapped inside the 22nd Division in Babanusa, trade between Al-Mujlad and Babanusa halted due to

deteriorating security and the proliferation of looting gangs along main roads linking the town to surrounding areas.

A resident trapped within the division told *Atar* that conditions worsened rapidly once battles shifted to An-Nuhoud, Al-Khuway and Ad-Dibibat. Convoys that once brought food and goods to remaining civilians stopped, and with armed gangs blocking roads and plundering traders, commerce between the town and nearby areas ceased entirely.

Since January 2024, Babanusa has endured RSF's most intense and determined military assaults aimed at capturing it, though those attacks subsided despite RSF's control over other West Kordofan towns.

A source inside Babanusa told *Atar* that the town endured a fierce siege, albeit with slow military operations, sending food prices skyrocketing. "Some goods now sell by the cup instead of traditional weights. A cup of sugar costs 7,000 Sudanese pounds; a pound of cooking oil, 12,000 pounds; and a single onion, 5,000 pounds."

Prices eased after military activities briefly subsided, another source said, noting that traders resorted to transporting goods on donkeys and camels, and large numbers of sheep entered the town after residents went without meat for six months.

With expectations that the 22nd Division would open a route to Al-Mujlad,

conditions for the besieged military force in Babanusa deteriorated due to conflicting claims and seesawing advances between combatants.

Sources did not rule out a return to fighting soon, as RSF made new advances into areas it vacated, especially Ad-Dibibat and Al-Khuway, tightening its grip on An-Nuhoud.

Abdullah Jaber, a resident, warns that Babanusa's situation could worsen in the coming days amid surrounding battles, and that the siege may intensify, reducing essential food and supplies as it did last year.

Civilians who sought refuge inside the 22nd Division rely on the division's army for sustenance. One resident says the town is now almost empty; all water and electricity services have ceased, forcing civilians and soldiers to share resources to survive.

Nyala: **Displaced within the city and working for a song**

Atar Correspondent

SOUTH DARFUR- In Nyala, South Darfur, human rights abuses: killings, kidnappings, threats and arbitrary arrests, have become rampant. Women and girls face repeated thefts and harassment at work and en route, compelling many to quit their jobs.

"Since mid-April, RSF members have seized abandoned homes in neighbourhoods such as Al-Nahda, Khartoum Belil, Al-Imam and Al-Nasim. Their former residents either fled or were displaced after receiving threats or enduring looting and theft, forcing them to seek shelter elsewhere within Nyala, its rural peripheries, other parts of the country, or even abroad," a resident told *Atar*. He added that most RSF elements occupying these homes are newcomers from Khartoum, Kordofan, North Darfur and other regions.

Authorities in Nyala have closed and demolished the Qadra Market and the Al-Jenaynah Bus Station to the north, as well as the Taqrou market, known for illicit hashish sales dispensed by armed RSF-uniformed traders.

RSF checkpoints have also been removed from some neighbourhoods. Yet thefts, looting and kidnappings continue a large scale within Nyala.

Amid dire economic and living conditions, new waves of the RSF-affiliated who escaped other states, particularly North Darfur and Khartoum, persist. Large numbers of displaced persons have recently arrived and settled in several areas around Nyala. Reports indicate the civilian administration has proposed hosting and relocating some newcomers to the Monawashi region north of the road to Al-Fashir.

The state's health sector remains severely hampered by a shortage of medical services, especially skilled staff and medications, whose prices have soared. The price of IV, an infusion used for gas-

trointestinal issues, has reached 4,500 Sudanese pounds. Medical personnel face assaults and abuses by RSF-affiliated soldiers and unidentified gunmen.

Police Hospital administration in Nyala coerces employees seeking to join medical staff into taking oaths of loyalty to RSF and conducts military training for healthcare workers inside the facility, a local source told *Atar*.

“With low salaries and no incentives, doctors and nurses are forced to seek alternative work due to ongoing violence,” she said, adding that she has worked as a certified employee for two years on a monthly salary of 120,000 pounds, while other employees earn no more than 90,000 pounds, yet they are continually threatened at gunpoint, sometimes shot at, and verbally abused by patients and relatives.



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