



Civil War in Sudan

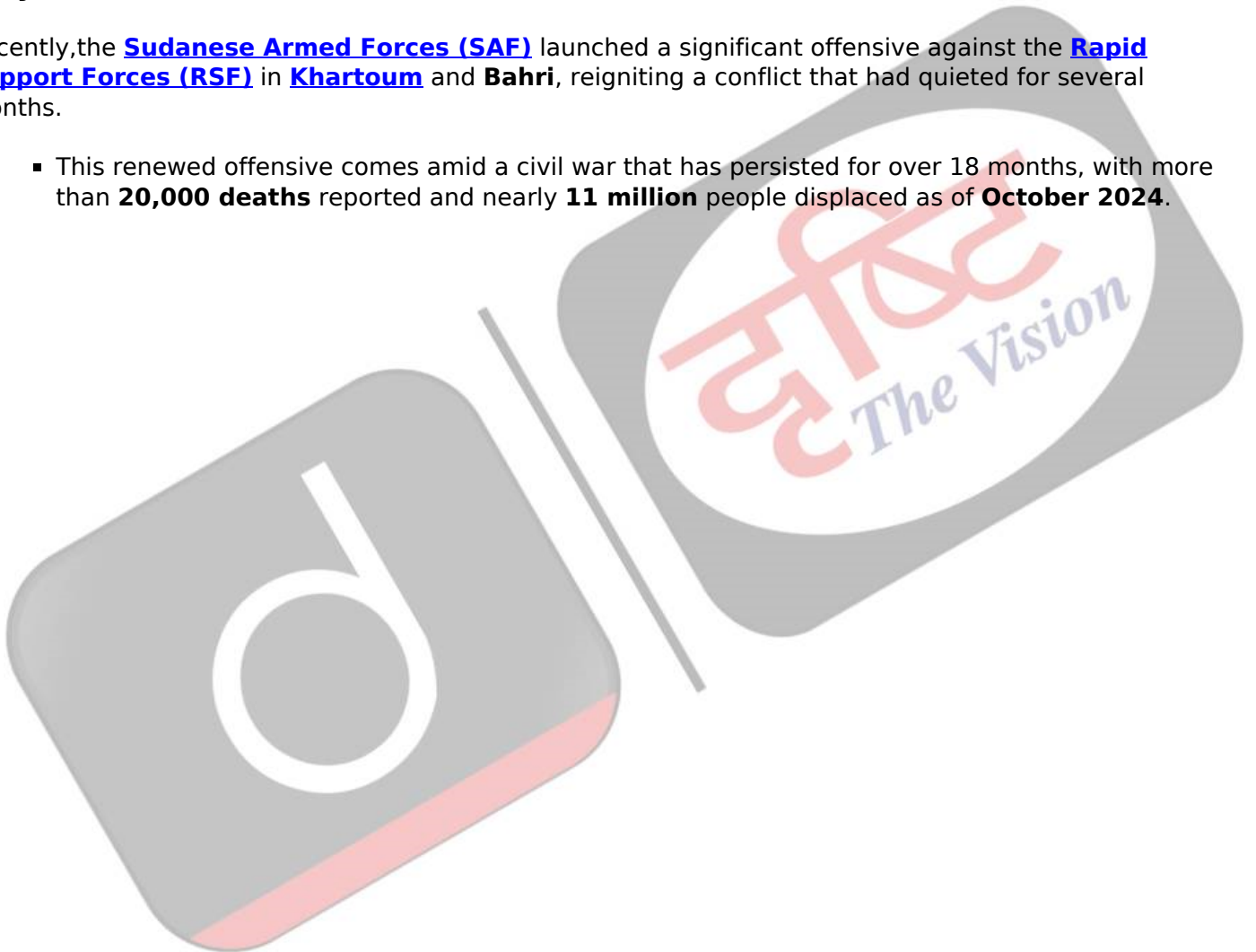
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Why in News?

Recently, the [Sudanese Armed Forces \(SAF\)](#) launched a significant offensive against the [Rapid Support Forces \(RSF\)](#) in [Khartoum](#) and [Bahri](#), reigniting a conflict that had quieted for several months.

- This renewed offensive comes amid a civil war that has persisted for over 18 months, with more than **20,000 deaths** reported and nearly **11 million** people displaced as of **October 2024**.

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■ **April 15, 2023:**
Power struggle between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan (left), and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia, led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, known as Hemedti (right), erupted into a full-scale conflict



What is the Origin of Civil War in Sudan?

- The war is rooted in a **power struggle** between SAF leader **Abdel Fattah al-Burhan** and RSF leader **Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti)**.
- It started in **Khartoum** but has spread to other regions like **Omdurman**, **Bahri**, **Port Sudan**, and the **Darfur** and **Kordofan** states.
- **Historical Background:**
 - Sudan was a joint protectorate under **Egypt** and the **UK** during the **Anglo-Egyptian Condominium**.
 - Sudan gained independence in **1956**, facing internal challenges between the wealthier **Arab Muslim north** and the **Christian/Animist south**.
 - Two major civil wars, **first** (1955-1972) and **Second** (1983-2005), led to the deaths of millions, atrocities, and eventually leading to the **secession of South Sudan** in 2011.
 - The second civil war ended with a peace agreement in 2005, but tensions and internal conflict remained, particularly in **Darfur**.
- **Omar al-Bashir's Regime:**
 - Bashir took power in a **1989 coup** and ruled Sudan for 30 years.
 - He imposed a strict interpretation of **sharia law**, used **private militias (Janjaweed)** to

- fight rebels, and persecuted minority religions.
- Bashir's regime was condemned for **genocide in Darfur**, particularly targeting **non-Arab groups** like the **Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit**.
- **Bashir's Overthrow:**
 - By **2019**, protests against Bashir's oppressive rule intensified, leading to his removal in an April coup supported by both **SAF** and **RSF**.
 - After his overthrow, Sudan entered a transitional phase under military and civilian leadership.
- **RSF's Origin and Power:**
 - RSF emerged from the **Janjaweed militia**, a key force in the **Darfur conflict** responsible for widespread atrocities.
 - Formally organized in **2013**, the RSF gained wealth and influence especially through control over **gold mines**.
- **Transitional Government:**
 - After Bashir's fall, a **Transitional Sovereignty Council** was formed.
 - **Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok**, a civilian leader, sought economic stability but was ousted in a 2021 coup led by the SAF and RSF. Later his resignation left Sudan without effective civilian leadership.
 - **The December 2022 Deal:**
 - The **December 2022 agreement** outlined a two-year transition to **civilian rule**.
 - However, tensions emerged over **RSF integration** into the armed forces, with **Burhan** and **Hemedti** disagreeing on timelines.
 - The involvement of foreign actors, such as the **Wagner Group** and military support from **UAE**, has complicated the conflict, making it harder to resolve.

What are the Reasons for Persistent Conflict in Sudan?

- **Power Struggle:** Both the **SAF** and **RSF** are determined to consolidate power, with each faction seeking dominance over the other.
 - The SAF claims to be the legitimate government, while the RSF challenges it.
- **Weapon Supply:** Despite an arms embargo by the **United Nations** since the **2004 Darfur crisis**, weapons continue to flow into the country.
 - Advanced military equipment, often supplied by **Russia, China, and UAE**.
- **Ethnic Tensions:** The conflict has taken on an ethnic dimension.
 - Eg. In **Darfur**, Arab militias support the RSF, while non-Arab communities like the **Masalit** back the SAF.
- **Foreign Interference:** Each side is receiving external support, reducing their incentive to compromise or seek peace.
- **Failed Peace Talks:** Despite numerous ceasefire efforts, particularly led by **Saudi Arabia** and the **US** like the **Jeddah Declaration (2023)**, none have succeeded.

