



## SUDAN'S CIVIL WAR - GS I MAINS

Q. Examine the causes for the present-day conflict in Sudan. Why is Sudan prone to conflict and vulnerabilities post world war era? (15 marks, 250 words)

**News:** *Why is Sudan still at war a year on? | Explained*

### What's in the news?

- The inability of successive governments to articulate a shared vision has resulted in the unfair distribution of wealth and resources in Sudan.

### Historical background of Conflict:

#### 1956:

- The government that came to power in 1956 emphasized an Arab and Islamic identity based on Mahdist principles.
- It was not representative of diverse communities and demanded compliance, leading to widespread resistance.

#### 1989:

- In 1989, a new government seized control under the National Islamic Front, an alliance between army officers and the Muslim Brotherhood.
- Omar al-Bashir came to power, supported by Islamist leader Hassan al-Turabi, aiming to establish an Islamic state.

#### 1991:

- The government set up an internal security apparatus, arresting and torturing dissenters.
- It introduced a new penal code in 1991 to impose an Islamization agenda.

#### 2003:

- The al-Bashir (in 2003) regime enlisted Janjaweed militias to quell an insurgency in Darfur.
- These militias were later designated as the Rapid Support Forces in 2013.

#### 2018-19:

- After protests in 2018 and al-Bashir's removal in 2019, a transitional military government was established.
- Despite challenges and a failed coup attempt, a power-sharing agreement was reached, but another coup led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan derailed the democratic transition.

### Present-Day Conflict:

#### 1. Power Struggle:

- The SAF and RSF began competing for control of strategic locations and key resources in April 2023.



- Both factions mobilised their forces, leading to widespread clashes in major cities, border regions, and resource-rich areas.

## 2. Civilian Impact:

- The conflict has resulted in significant civilian casualties, mass displacement, and the destruction of infrastructure.
- Critical shortages of essential goods, like food and medicine, have exacerbated the humanitarian crisis.

## 3. Economic Consequences:

- The war has further destabilize the economy, leading to inflation and the collapse of businesses and services.

## Causes of the Present Conflict in Sudan:

### 1. Deep-rooted Crisis in Governance:

- The conflict reflects a longstanding crisis within Sudan's governing structure since gaining independence in 1956, characterized by power struggles and frequent coups.

### 2. Identity Crisis and Rebellion:

- Sudan has experienced numerous rebellions fueled by an identity crisis, with marginalized populations seeking autonomy and fair representation within the state.

### 3. Ethnic and Regional Disparities:

- Sudan comprises 19 major ethnic groups and about 597 ethnic subgroups.
- Since independence, the Sudanese have experienced 35 coups and attempted coups, more than any other African country.

### 4. Religious and Political Ideologies:

- Shifts in government ideologies, such as the establishment of an Islamic state in 1989, have exacerbated tensions and led to further marginalization of certain groups.

### 5. Role of Militias:

- The emergence of paramilitary forces, such as the Rapid Support Forces, has complicated the conflict dynamics, with militias vying for power and control over resources.

### 6. Other Country's Involvement:

- External influences, including support from foreign entities like Russia, have played a role in shaping the conflict landscape, particularly in resource-rich regions like Darfur.

### 7. Economic Interests:

- Economic factors, such as control over lucrative industries like gold mining, have contributed to the entrenchment of certain groups in power and fueled conflict dynamics.



## Way Forward:

### 1. Establish a Civilian-Led Government:

- Sudan needs to prioritize the establishment of a transparent, civilian-led government that represents the diverse Sudanese populace.
- This government should ensure inclusivity and participation in decision-making processes.

### 2. Disarm and Demobilize Militias:

- Urgent action is needed to disarm and demobilize militias like the Rapid Support Forces.
- This will prevent militia dominance over the state and reduce the risk of armed confrontations and conflicts.

### 3. International Support for Reconstruction:

- Sudan requires collaborative efforts from the international community to aid in post-conflict reconstruction.
- This support can include financial assistance, capacity-building programs, and technical expertise to rebuild infrastructure, institutions, and communities affected by conflict.

### 4. Economic Recovery:

- Create an economic recovery plan with international support, focusing on rebuilding infrastructure, stabilising currency, and reducing inflation.

### 5. Accountability and Justice:

- Establish mechanisms for justice and accountability for crimes committed by any armed group, including state actors.
- Promote national reconciliation and community rebuilding initiatives.

## Go back to basics:

### Sudan:

- Sudan, is a country in **Northeast Africa**.

### Borders:

- It borders the Central African Republic to the southwest, Chad to the west, Egypt to the north, Eritrea to the northeast, Ethiopia to the southeast, Libya to the northwest, South Sudan to the south, and the Red Sea.

### Uniqueness:

- Africa's **third-largest country by area** and the third-largest by area in the Arab League.
- Its capital and most populous city is **Khartoum**.