

Sudan's War Passed 6 Months, With Much of the World Consumed by Other Conflicts

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JOHANNESBURG — The war between Sudan's military and a paramilitary group has entered its seventh month, causing nearly 190 days and nights of terror, loss and trauma for much of the northeast African country's population.

An estimated 9,000 people have been killed and another 5.6 million forced to flee their homes during the conflict, according to the United Nations. Half a year of war has plunged Sudan into one of the worst humanitarian nightmares in recent history, U.N. Undersecretary-General Martin Griffiths said in a statement.

NPR has been speaking to Sudanese people from different walks of life — doctors at a hospital, a young activist and a former governor — about how things have changed for them since fighting broke out in April between the Sudanese armed forces and the powerful paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces.

The activist

Thirty-year-old Duaa Tariq was among the grassroots activists who helped organize peaceful mass protests in 2019 largely in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, that brought down the decade's long dictatorship of former leader Omar al-Bashir — only to see a 2021 military coup derail her generation's dreams of democracy. This year's outbreak of conflict has dashed those hopes even further.

But Tariq, who has a huge curly mop of hair and a smile just as big, is uncowed. In April, she told NPR how she and fellow activists were continuing to resist the new conflict through small acts of disobedience, such as chanting revolutionary songs in the street between bombings or spray-painting political messages on walls.

Six months later, Tariq says graffiti protests on the street are simply too risky. In terms of resistance, resistance can take so many forms. ... There is not a chance for protesting physically on the street, even with graffiti, because the militias occupying all the

houses, she says. Tariq — who had a baby during the conflict — has herself been forced to move out of her home, which she says has been taken over by the militia and looted of everything we have.

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