

AL-KUMA TOWN UNDER AERIAL BOMBARDMENT

**SALAAMEDIA REPORT
OCT 14, 2024**

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Airstrikes by Sudanese Armed Forces warplanes on Al-Kuma locality in North Darfur state amounted to more than 20 raids within five months. That is in spite of the residents adopting a position of neutrality, choosing not to align with either side of the war, in a meeting in the town’s mosque, only three days after the war eruption.

Upon early days of the war, Al-Kuma became a destination and a shelter for displaced people from Khartoum, Nyala, Umm Kadada, Al-Fashir, and other areas that witnessed confrontations between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. IDPs statistics – according to local residents – exceeded 40 thousand families, residing in 23 camps. The [Darfur Victims Advocacy Organization](#) stated that the Al-Kuma houses about 350,000 displaced people, most of whom are women, children and elderlies. The town never encountered any clashes between the warring parties since the beginning of war, due to the fact that, there are no garrisons for the Armed Forces nor the Rapid Support Forces.

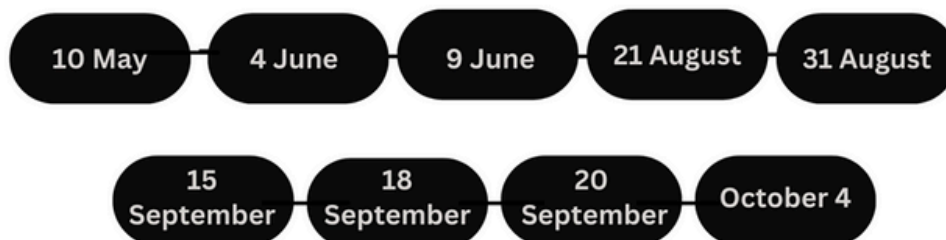
Al-Kuma town hosts the Headquarters of Al-Kuma locality, distance about 76 kilometers east of Al-Fashir along the national road linking Darfur region to the capital, Khartoum. The locality includes four administrative units (Al-Kuma, Sari, Um Heglig, Al-Kabir and Ghibaish), where most inhabitants draw from Arab pastoralist origins.

In this report, SalaaMedia team illustrates the number of air strikes that the locality was subjected to, the numbers of dead and wounded civilians, and as well attempts to explore reasons behind airstrikes targeting the area with such a number of airstrikes since battles intensified in North Darfur in May 2024.

Number of Raids

Statistics gathered by SalaaMedia from open sources indicate about nine air strikes, while citizens of the locality say that the number of raids that struck the area exceeded 20 airstrikes in the period from May 10 to October 4, 2024.

Al-Kuma Airstrikes and casualties May 10 to October 4, 2024.











Dead and Wounded

According to statistics reported by residents, airstrikes launched by the Sudanese Armed Forces, since the beginning of war, have led to the death of 68 people. A community activist from the area, Mr. Saleh Harirain, told SalaaMedia: “The last raid in this month killed 61 people and wounded 215 others,” while previous raids led to seven deaths and losses of about 351 heads of livestock, he said.

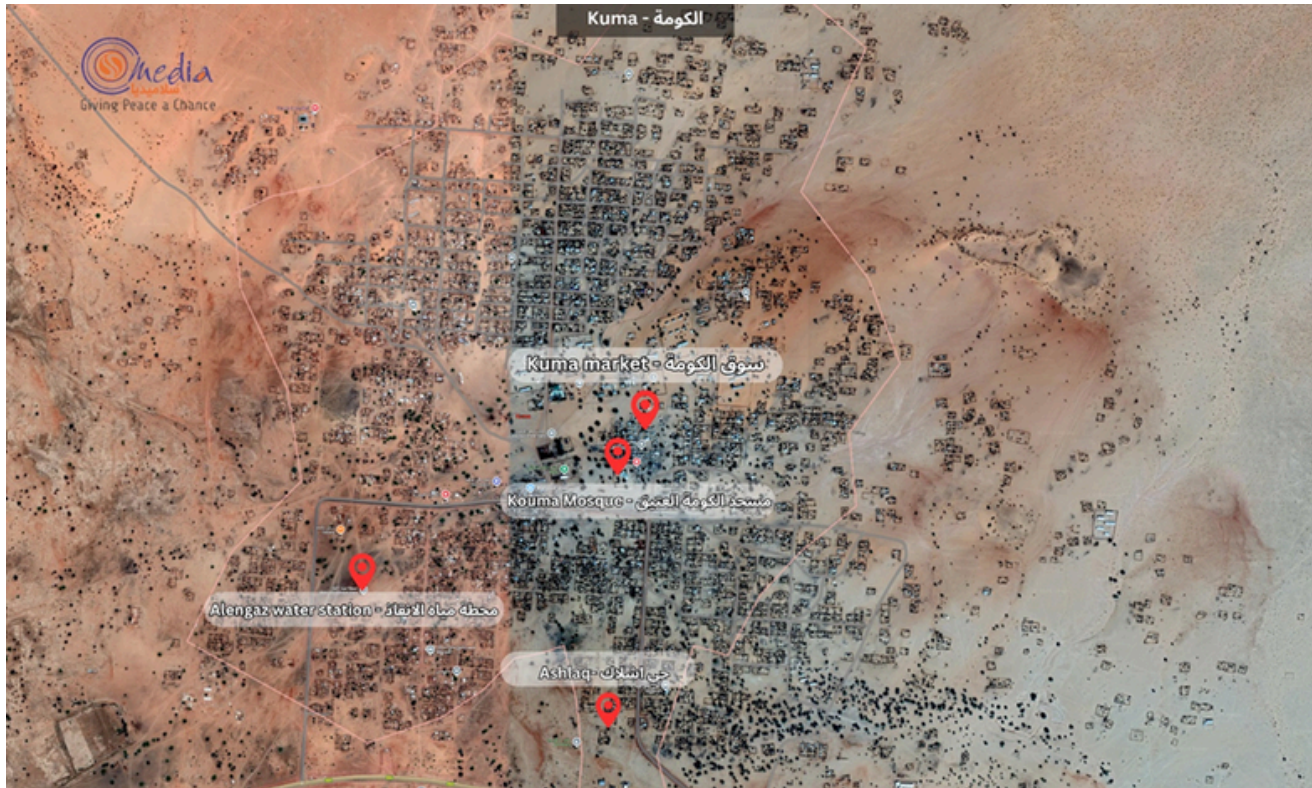
In the same context, statistics obtained by SalaaMedia team from open sources shown that the death toll from the [recent raid](#) – which targeted the weekly market, visited by thousands of citizens – has increased beyond 65 people. According to [UNICEF](#), the latest raid claimed lives of 13 child and injured four. SalaaMedia monitored the killing of [five children](#) and injury of six others in previous raids on the area.

Casualties and losses of airstrikes on Al-Kuma town May 10 to October 4, 2024

Total of fatalities	72		
Total of wounded	215		
Total of child victims	29		
Total losses of cattle	351		

Infrastructure Destruction

The aerial bombardment that targeted Al-Kuma locality caused damage to the infrastructures, by targeting the town’s market, completely destroying it. Al-Kuma town market constitutes a living window for the displaced people, as it provides them job opportunities from which they obtain their livelihood and some of their needs. The Warplanes also destroyed the town’s [Grand Mosque](#), and large numbers of citizens’ houses and shelter centers, leaving hundreds of families homeless (there are no accurate statistics showing the numbers of houses and [institutions](#) affected by the bombing). According to the Darfur Victims Support Organization, the bombing led to the destruction of health facilities, creating a severe shortage of medical supplies and emergency health care in the region, resulting in the death of those with serious injuries.



Reactions

The airstrikes launched by the Armed Forces' warplanes on Al-Kuma locality were largely condemned by the Sudanese society and international institutions, as [UNICEF](#) stressed the need to end the ongoing violence against children in Sudan, and to put an end to neglecting their safety and rights, referring to the raid on the town market. In the same context, statements were issued by the Coordination of Civil and Democratic Forces ([Taqaddum](#)), the [Sudanese Congress Party](#) and the [Ummah Party](#), denouncing the crime of Armed Forces aircraft bombing civilians in Al-Kuma market, destroying civilian facilities there, amid campaigns, appeals and repeated demands for the necessity of protecting civilians and sparing them the dangers of aerial and artillery bombardments.

Targeting Al-Kuma town, north of El-Fashir, by airstrikes carried out by the Armed Forces' aircraft is not the only one but was preceded by a series of raids in multiple areas of the Darfur region. What is noted in all of these raids, that they continued targeting residential areas, causing casualties among civilians, whose financial conditions and war circumstances prevented them from seeking refuge to safer locations. These raids greatly affected vulnerable groups in the society, including women, children and the elderly. The peculiarity of Al-Kuma comes from being one of the historical cities that was associated with Arab pastoralist groups, which the Armed Forces may consider as a social incubator of their opponents in the Rapid Support Forces. But whatever the case, targeting civilians in any capacity is something that is rejected by the international laws and local customs. The continuation of such attacks increases the pace of war. Therefore, we continue to appeal to the international and regional community and the warring parties to protect civilians from all violations, including airstrike.