WHY IS A DISPUTED BORDER MAKING SUDAN'S WAR EVEN MORE DANGEROUS?

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A drone strike on a market near Abyei, a border region claimed by both Sudan and South Sudan, has killed at least 153 people. The attack happened during Sudan's civil war, which began in 2023 when the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces began fighting for control of the country. Abyei has a complicated history. Sudan and South Sudan have argued over the oil-rich area since South Sudan became independent in 2011. Different communities also use the land in different ways. The Ngok Dinka population generally supports joining South Sudan, while Misseriya nomads use the area's grazing land and favour remaining with Sudan. This means that the war is not only a struggle between two armies. It also involves local communities, land, oil and an unfinished border. Drones have made the fighting even more dangerous because attacks can reach crowded markets and transport hubs far from the front line.

WHY IS THIS INTERESTING?

Borders created by governments do not always match the places where people live, work or feel they belong. Abyei shows how independence can solve one problem while creating others. The region's history, natural resources and competing communities have kept the border disputed, making it easier for a wider civil war to spread into local conflicts.

THINK LIKE A HISTORIAN

"Why can independence leave border problems unsolved?"

Source: The Guardian

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/oct/21/abyei-drone-strike-market-south-sudan-war-death-toll