

SITUATION REPORT No.78

**Confirmation of Attacks on Communities in
Dar Zaghawa**

17 July 2026

Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Humanitarian Research Lab

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This report was independently produced by the Yale School of Public Health's Humanitarian Research Lab. Learn more at <https://sph.yale.edu/hrl>.

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Citation | Andersen, Daniel, Rebecca Chausse, Caitlin Howarth, Olivia Mooney, Nathaniel A. Raymond "Confirmation of Attacks on Communities in Dar Zaghawa" 17 July 2026. SITUATION REPORT No.78 Humanitarian Research Lab at Yale School of Public Health: New Haven.

I. Key Findings

The Yale School of Public Health's Humanitarian Research Lab (HRL) assesses conflict-related damage consistent with arson attacks in at least four communities – Hazan Orschi, Quarbara, Um Baru, and Abu Leha – in Um Baru locality, North Darfur between 12 June and 7 July 2026. At least three markets have been visibly damaged in attacks. This report, which relies heavily on low-resolution satellite imagery, is believed to provide an undercount of the overall scale of damage and displacement.

Markets appear to be targeted based on analysis of low-resolution satellite imagery. In three of four communities, visible damage appears at or proximate to an identified market. No other major damage is visible in the affected communities during this period. Open sources report that livestock thefts were occurring during RSF attacks on Qarbara and Hazan Orschi markets and communities during this time period.¹ Without high-resolution satellite imagery or ground-level images, it is not possible for HRL to determine whether cattle markets or corrals were damaged; it is also not possible to determine further extent of damage at these locations.

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) launched attacks, including arson, on areas near Umm Baru (Ambro) locality, including on villages around the Orschi reservoir area around 14 June 2026. Open sources reported that attacks included razing, looting, and attacks on civilians. Since late June 2026, many areas in this Darfur region near the border with Chad have changed hands as Joint Forces sought to recapture areas under RSF control. As of 15 July 2026, areas near Orschi have reportedly been recaptured by Joint Forces; the location remains contested.

The Umm Baru locality in North Darfur and surrounding areas have historically been home to predominantly Zaghawa communities, also known as “Dar Zaghawa.” These rural areas have limited water and are highly vulnerable to attack. In February 2026, an ICP Global Initiative alert found that the levels of malnutrition in Umm Baru locality had surpassed famine levels.² The predominantly Zaghawa communities reportedly include displaced persons who fled RSF's mass killing in El-Fasher and Zamzam Internally Displaced Persons Camp – the same killings that the UN Fact Finding Mission called “hallmarks of genocide.”³

This area of Darfur along the Chad border (inclusive of Tina, Karnoi, and Um Baru in North Darfur and parts of Serba and Kulbus localities in West Darfur) and the Jebel Mara region near Tawila are the only places in Darfur not under RSF's sustained control since it captured, razed, and displaced Zamzam Internally Displaced Persons Camp in April 2025 and besieged, razed, and conducted systematic mass killings in El-Fasher in October and November 2026. Yale HRL previously assessed systematic arson attacks east of the Um Baru area conducted by RSF on over 40 predominantly Zaghawa communities north of Kutum, North Darfur between 1 October – 6 November 2024.⁴

Um Baru Market, 24-27 June 2026 (15.024325, 23.704589)

Yale HRL identifies damage to the Um Baru Market in Um Baru Town, North Darfur, visible in low-resolution satellite imagery between 24-27 June 2026. Thermal (fire) signals from VIIRS were detected at the site on 25 June 2026. High-resolution satellite imagery from 7 July 2026 shows damage to the site consistent with targeted arson attacks. Multiple structure clusters at the market – including those separated from each other – appear to have fire damage, and there is no visible ground scorching. Open sources reported that RSF launched an attack on Um Baru around 23 June 2026, and Sudan War Monitor corroborated the presence of RSF in the town on 24 June 2026.⁵ By 27 June 2026, Joint Forces reportedly contested Um Baru locality according to Sudan War Monitor, and open sources claimed that the Joint Forces had recaptured the area by 15 July 2026.⁶ The International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) reported that 5,820 people were displaced due to conflict across Um Baru locality (including Orschi) to other areas within the locality as of 17 June through 3 July 2026.⁷

Hazan Orschi, North Darfur, 12-17 June 2026 (14.841114, 23.909650)

Open sources have reported that starting on 14 June, the Rapid Support Forces attacked at least six villages around the Orschi reservoir, including Hazan Orschi and Ini, and RSF claimed control over the area on 15 June 2026.⁸ According to the Emergency Lawyers and other sources, these attacks included raids on markets, arson and looting, including the use of drones (UAVs).⁹ A spokesperson for the Joint Forces claimed that the RSF used both four-wheeled vehicles, camels, and horses in the attacks, and captured livestock and looted supplies.¹⁰

Yale HRL assesses conflict-related thermal (fire) damage consistent with arson visible in low-resolution satellite imagery between 12-17 June 2026 in the village of Hazan Orschi, south of the reservoir. The damage visible in low-resolution satellite imagery appears where two likely residential compounds are visible in baseline high resolution satellite imagery.

Local media reported that at least seven people were killed and 10 people injured in attacks as of 15 June 2026; that number is believed to be an underestimate.¹¹ These attacks reportedly caused mass displacement.¹² IOM DTM reported on 17 June 2026 that approximately 2,260 people had been displaced from Hazan Orschi and Dou villages to other areas in Um Baru locality.¹³ As of 22 June, ground sources claimed that displaced residents of these areas were trapped and scattered across hills and forests in the area, struggling to access food and water.¹⁴

Hazan Orschi Market, 27 June – 4 July 2026 (14.8473641491, 23.89203547)

Yale HRL assesses conflict-related damage to the market in Hazan Orschi visible in low-resolution satellite imagery between 27 June and 4 July 2026. The market is near Ini and Hajjak, south of the Orschi Reservoir. This damage is located within two kilometers of conflict-related damage previously assessed in Hazan Orschi in low-resolution satellite imagery between 12-17 June 2026. Open sources had reported that the Orschi market was previously razed in an attack by the RSF around 14 June 2026,

however Yale HRL does not independently confirm damage during that time.¹⁵ Open sources reported that RSF continued to raze villages and displace civilians from Zaghawa areas in Umm Baru locality and launched attacks on the Orschi area through at least 23 June 2026; the location was reportedly still contested as of 28 June 2026.¹⁶ Open sources claimed that the Joint Forces had recaptured the area by 15 July 2026.¹⁷

Abu Leha, 13-15 April and 27 June – 2 July 2026 (14.668668, 23.830870)

Yale HRL identifies two instances of conflict-related damage visible in low-resolution satellite imagery on Abu Leha, Um Baru Locality, North Darfur. The first is visible between 13-15 April 2026 and the second is visible between 27 June – 2 July 2026. Abu Leha is approximately 20 kilometers from Hazan Orschi village. IOM DTM reported on 17 April 2026 that at least 500 people were displaced from Abu Leha village, Um Baru locality, due to heightened insecurity.¹⁸

By 22 June, local media had reported that RSF launched an attack on Abu Leha during their broader attack on the Orschi reservoir area.¹⁹ This area reportedly remains contested through at least 29 June 2026, when Joint Forces reportedly attempted to regain control of the area.²⁰ Open sources reported that both the RSF and Joint Forces (aligned with SAF) continued to attack the area with drones, stating that civilians fled at night to avoid being attacked by drones.²¹ Local media reported that Joint Forces claimed to have recaptured the Orschi Reservoir area on 15 July 2026, although it is not clear if Abu Leha is included in that reported area of control.²² Yale HRL is unable to confirm drone activity consistent with these reports at this time.

Qarbara Market, North Darfur, 22 June – 7 July 2026 (15.147406839, 23.91420528)

Yale HRL assesses fire damage consistent with a targeted arson attack on the market in Qarbara, Um Baru Locality, North Darfur visible in low-resolution satellite imagery between 22 June – 7 July 2026. The area is located near Khamis, north of Orschi Reservoir. The damaged area visible appears to be at the market, and imagery from March 2025 shows the presence of livestock in the area. This damage corroborates local media reports that RSF looted the Qarbara area, razed the market, and stole livestock.²³ Local media reported that at least nine people were killed, including women and elderly people, and twelve injured in attacks on Qarbara and two other nearby villages, Aru and Oma.²⁴ A spokesperson from the Joint Forces (Popular Resistance of North Darfur State) reported that RSF attacked Qarbara, Umm Baru Locality on 2 and 3 July 2026, and stated that the area did not have any Joint Forces or other military presence.²⁵

II. Human Security Analysis

The Dar Zaghawa area in North Darfur is a rural area scattered with small villages that center around wadis (seasonal rivers). “Dar Zaghawa” refers to the traditional

homelands of the Zaghawa communities. RSF has targeted Zaghawa communities in and around El-Fasher and North Darfur, including rural communities, through mass killings.²⁶ Displaced people who survived mass killings in El-Fasher and Zamzam, particularly those who are Zaghawa, are believed to have fled to Dar Zaghawa.²⁷

These communities have limited water and supplies. On 26 February 2026, the IPC Global initiative found that the Umm Baru locality in North Darfur had double the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate for Famine and the neighboring Karnoi locality passed the GAM rate for Famine.²⁸ Control of and attacks on water infrastructure, like the Orschi reservoir, attacks on supplies, including markets, and looting civilian goods and livestock are likely to have long-lasting implications on civilians as these are the infrastructure for the sustenance of life. IOM and other sources have reported that many people displaced from these attacks are stranded within the locality and hiding amongst hills and forests without safe havens or resources; one report says it takes displaced people 12 hours to get water.²⁹ Displacement itself can cause death from exposure, lack of water, and famine.

The damage documented in this report is likely underestimated. More damage may have occurred to other communities that is not visible in low-resolution satellite imagery to a high confidence, reportable standard. Furthermore, reports of conflict-related sexual violence and other forms of attacks on civilians, including deaths and injuries, are likely uncounted or undercounted.

This region is likely part of RSF's external supply lines from Libya and where Joint Forces from Zaghawa groups are defending Dar Zaghawa from RSF.³⁰

III. Methodology

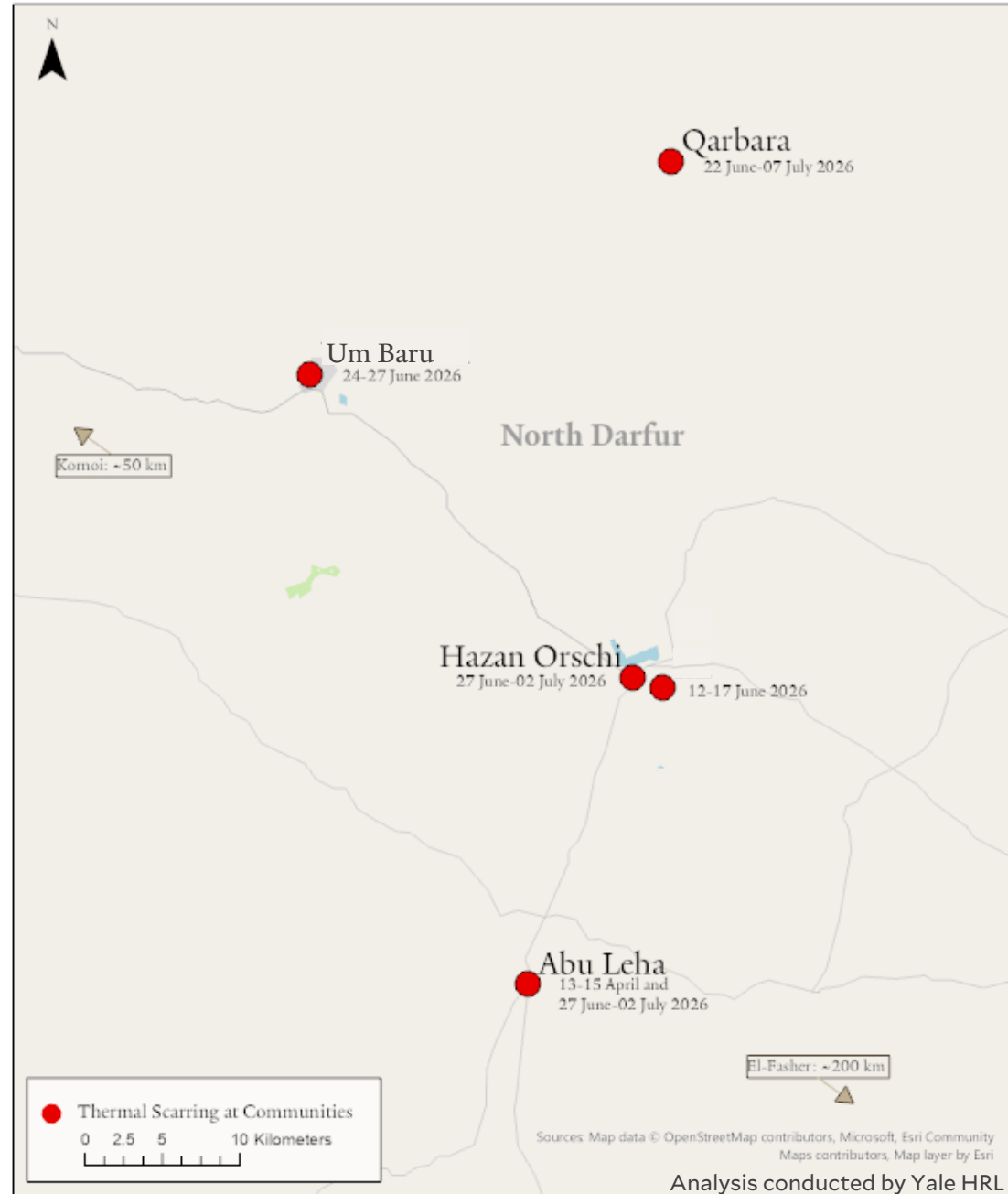
Yale HRL utilizes data fusion methodologies of open source and remote sensing data analysis. Yale HRL produced this report through the cross-corroboration of open source data, including social media, local news reporting, multimedia, and other reports, and remote sensing data, including satellite imagery and thermal sensor data. Researchers analyzed open source data across social media, news reports, and other publicly available sources to identify, chrono- and geolocate, and verify incidents. Analysts assess the credibility and reliability of open source data based on a source's level of detail, past credibility, and the corroboration of other independent sources. Remote sensing and satellite imagery analysis relies on multi-temporal change detection, which involves the comparison of two or more satellite images of the same area captured at different times to detect differences in coloration, visual properties, and presence, absence, or positional change of objects across the images.

Place names were identified using UN P-codes obtained via the United Nations Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) and International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Sudan. This baseline was then verified and informed through open source analysis by Yale HRL's analysts with relevant cultural and linguistic skills.

Limitations

There are significant limitations to the data fusion methodology. The information environment in Sudan does not have the breadth of data available in other locations and there is likely a significant reporting bias for those who provide open source reporting. The tools and techniques present significant challenges to assess activities such as extrajudicial detention, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), and conflict-related casualties, particularly in environments with limited data. Satellite imagery analysis is limited by available imagery over time and space. Available nadir angles of satellite imagery can produce challenges to assess structural damage, until multiple angles and ground-level photographic and video materials emerge to help inform the analysis. Image resolution level can also limit the analyst's ability to perceive the full extent of damage present.

Thermal Scarring at Communities near Umm Baru, North Darfur



Market, Um Baru Town, North Darfur

Thermal Scarring observed between 24-27 June 2026

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 24-27 June 2026 shows thermal scarring to a market in Um Baru, North Darfur.

Imagery visualized in near-infrared false color composite



24 June 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel



27 June 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Market, Um Baru Town, North Darfur

Conflict-related damage observed between 04 May-07 July 2026



04 May 2026 © 2026 Vantor

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 04 May and 07 July 2026 shows damage to several structures due to ground-based attacks in the market area of Um Baru.



07 July 2026 © 2026 Vantor

Market, Um Baru Town, North Darfur

Conflict-related damage observed between 04 May-07 July 2026



04 May 2026 © 2026 Vantor

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 04 May and 07 July 2026 shows damage to several structures due to ground-based attacks in the village of Um Baru.



07 July 2026 © 2026 Vantor

Market, Um Baru Town, North Darfur

Conflict-related damage observed between 05 May-07 July 2026



04 May 2026 © 2026 Vantor

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 04 May and 07 July 2026 shows damage to several structures due to ground-based attacks in the village of Um Baru.



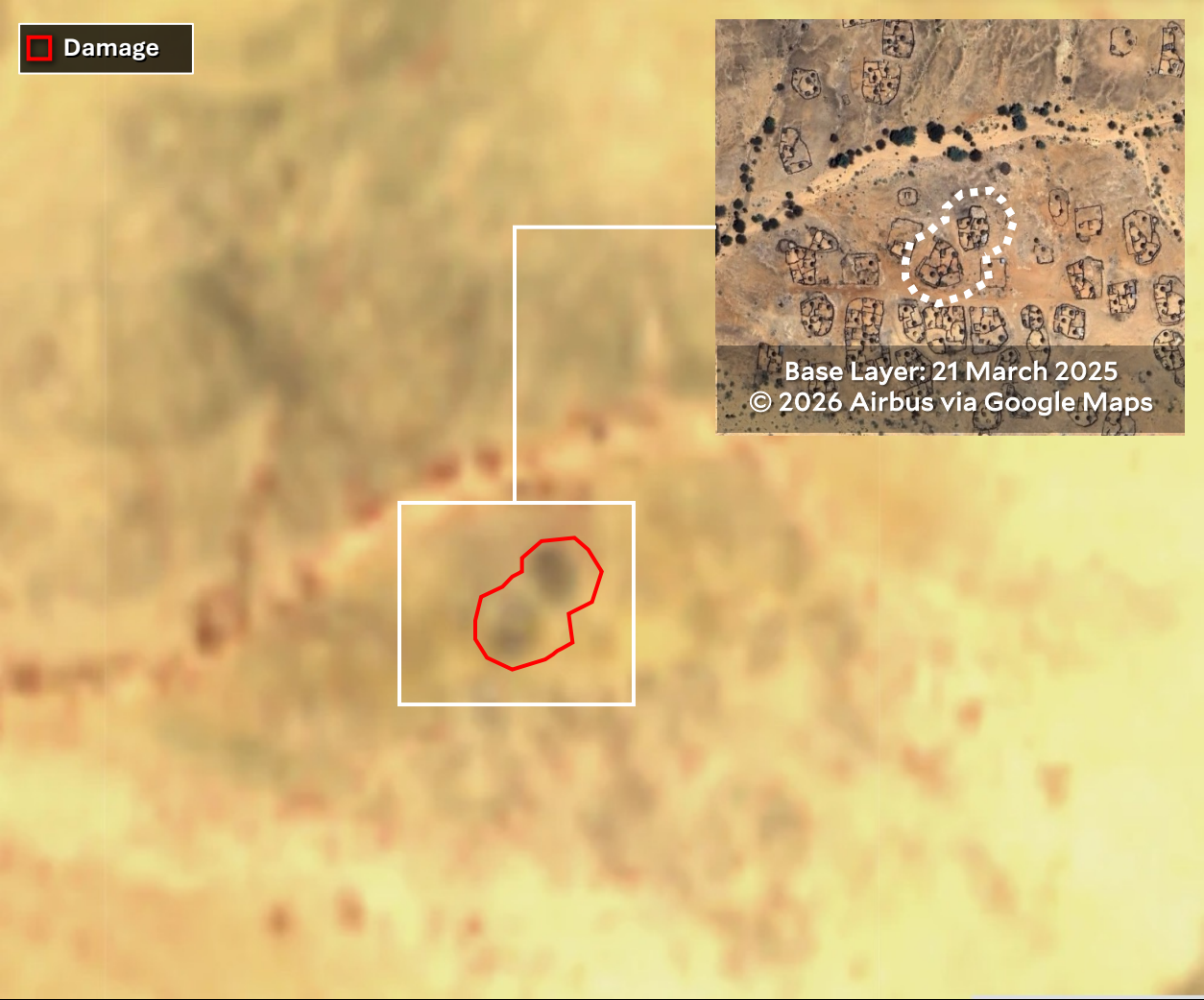
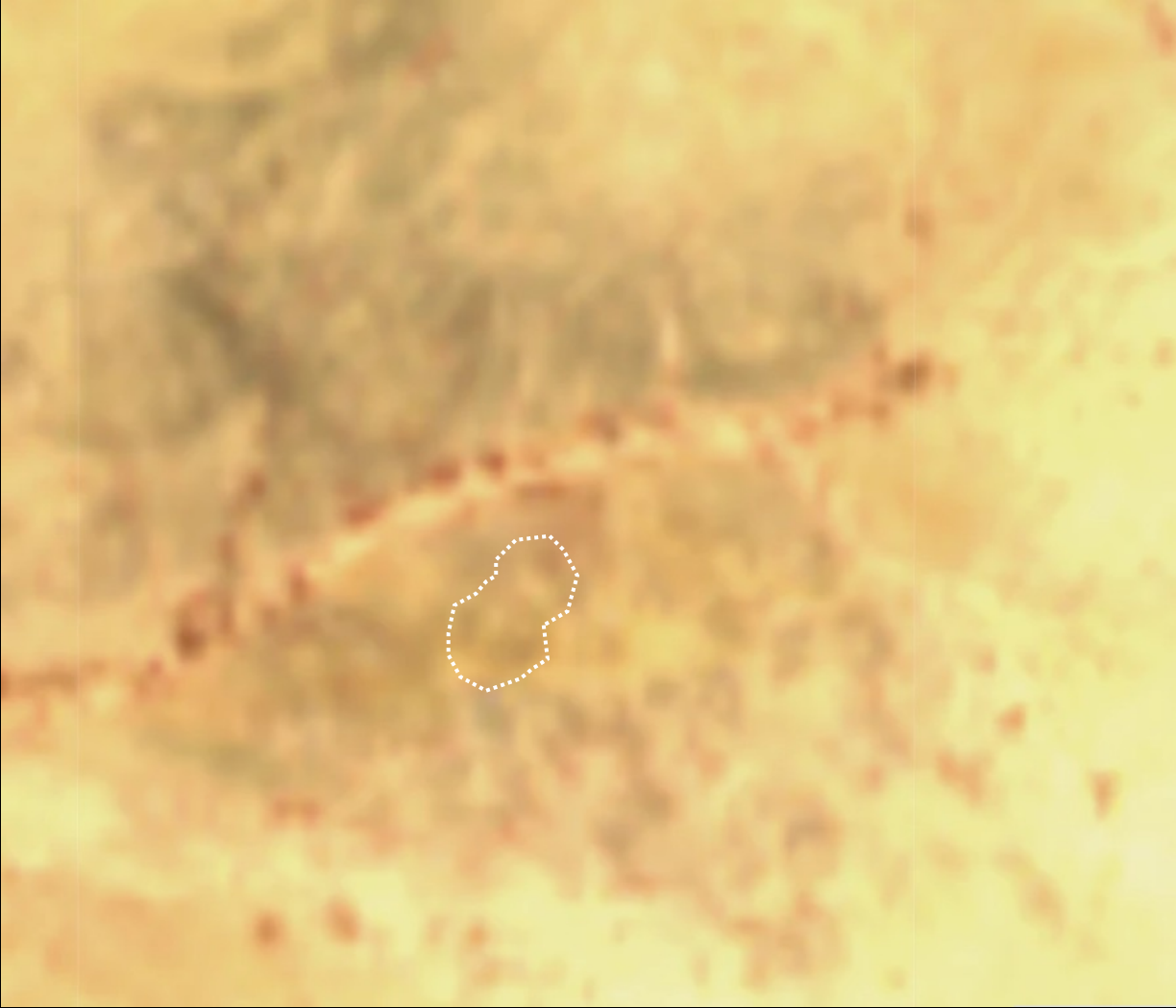
07 July 2026 © 2026 Vantor

Hazan Orshi, Um Baru Locality, North Darfur

Conflict-related damage observed between 12-17 June 2026

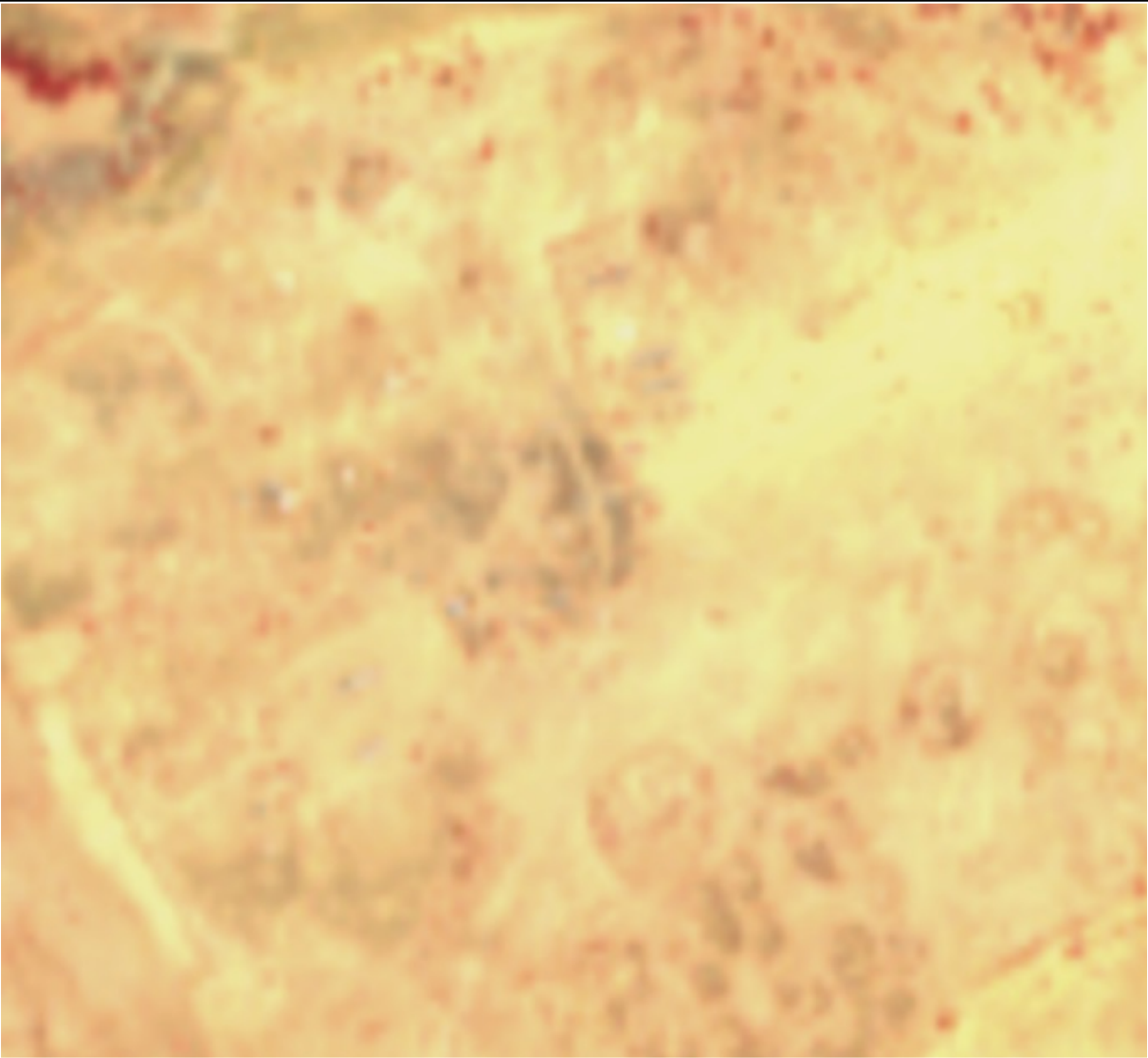
Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 12-17 June 2026 shows thermal scarring to structures in Hazan Orshi, Um Baru locality, North Darfur, near Inj, Um Baru locality, North Darfur.

Imagery visualized in near-infrared false color composite.



Market, Hazan Orshi, North Darfur

Thermal scarring observed between 27 June-04 July 2026



27 June 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 27 June and 04 July 2026 shows thermal scarring to a market in Hazan Orshi, Um Baru locality, North Darfur. This damage is located within 2 kilometers of the damage in Hazan Orshi that occurred between 12-17 June 2026.

Imagery visualized in near-infrared false color composite.



04 July 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Abu Leha, Um Baru Locality, North Darfur

Damage observed between 13-15 April and 27 June-02 July 2026

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 13-15 April and 27 June-02 July 2026 shows thermal scarring to structures in Abu Leha, Um Baru locality, North Darfur.

Imagery visualized in near-infrared false color composite.



13 April 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel



15 April 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel



27 June 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel



02 July 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Abu Leha, Um Baru Locality, North Darfur

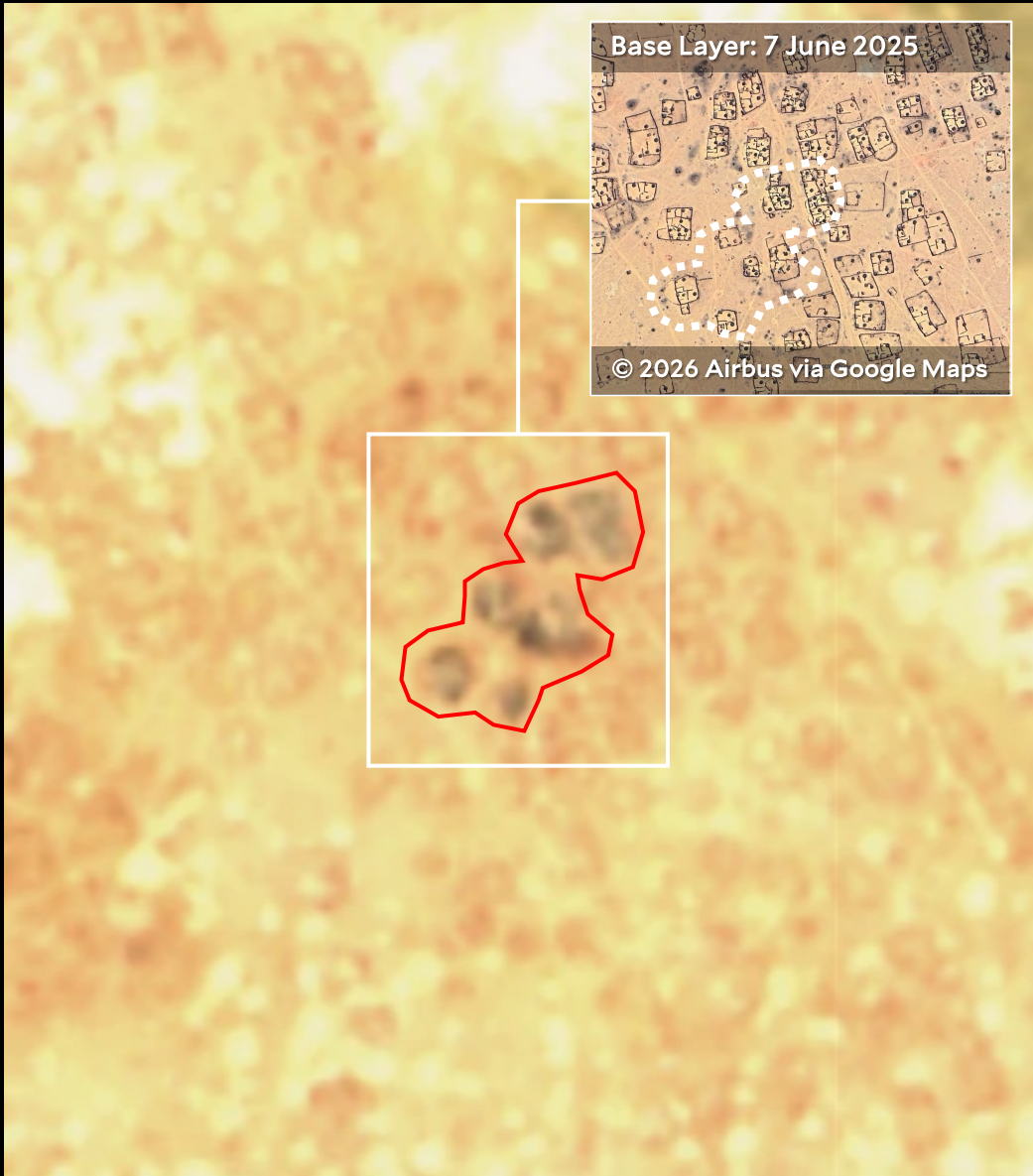
Damage observed between 13-15 April 2026

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 13-15 April 2026 shows thermal scarring to structures in Abu Leha, Um Baru locality, North Darfur.

Imagery visualized in near-infrared false color composite



13 April 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel



15 April 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Abu Leha, Um Baru Locality, North Darfur

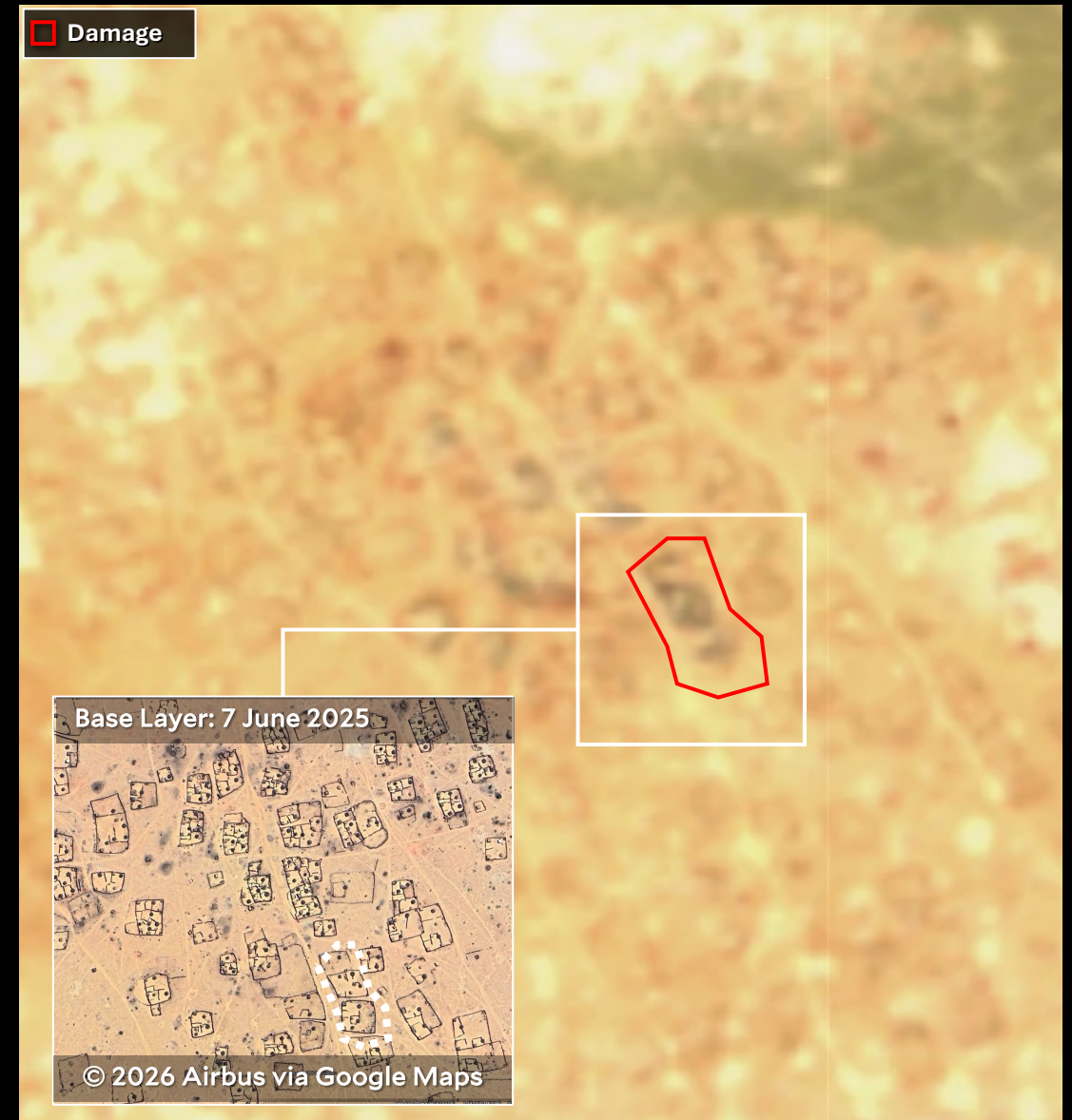
Damage observed between 27 June-02 July 2026



27 June 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 27 June-02 July 2026 shows thermal scarring to structures in Abu Leha, Um Baru locality, North Darfur.

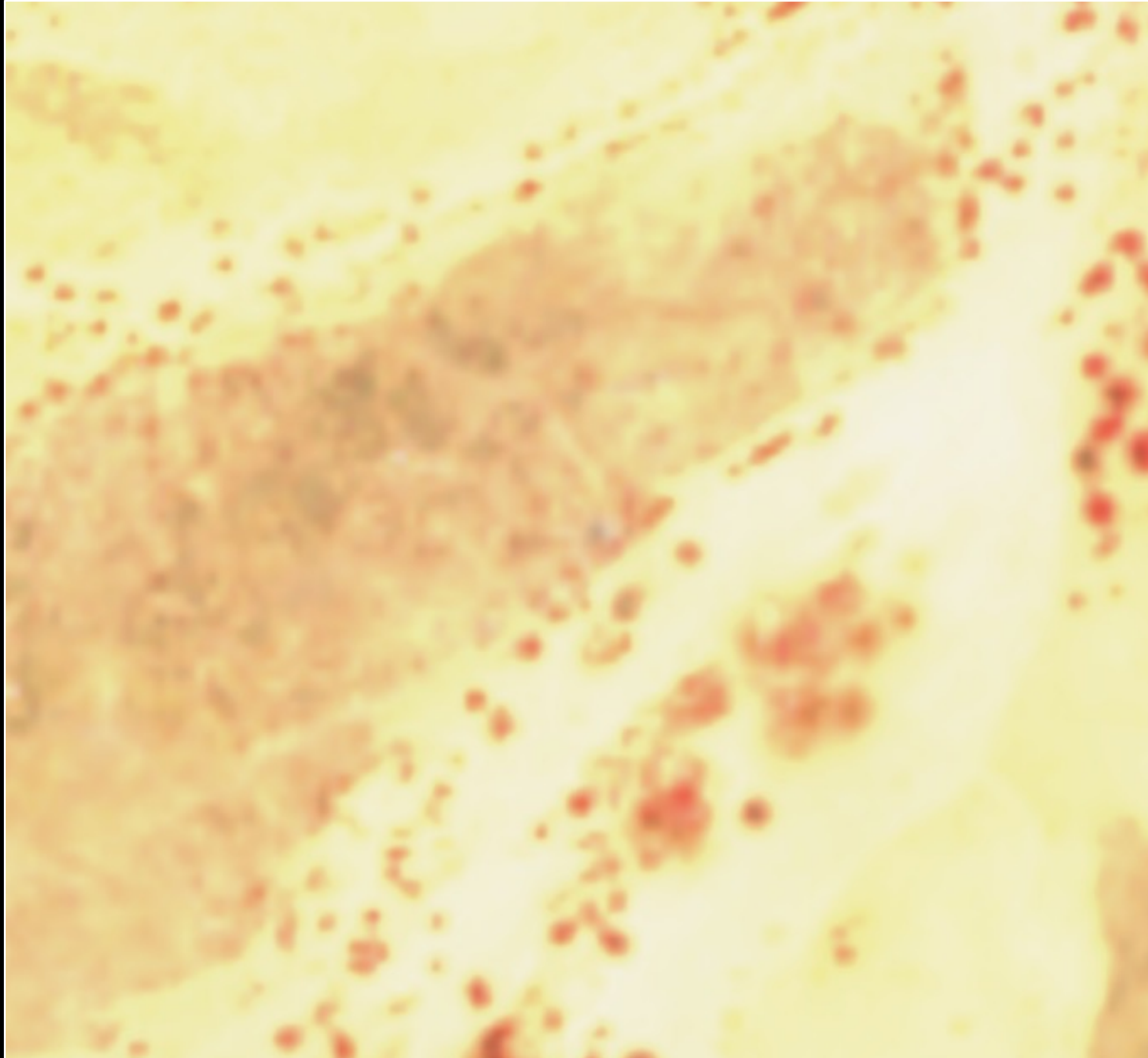
Imagery visualized in near-infrared false color composite.



02 July 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Market, Qarbara, North Darfur

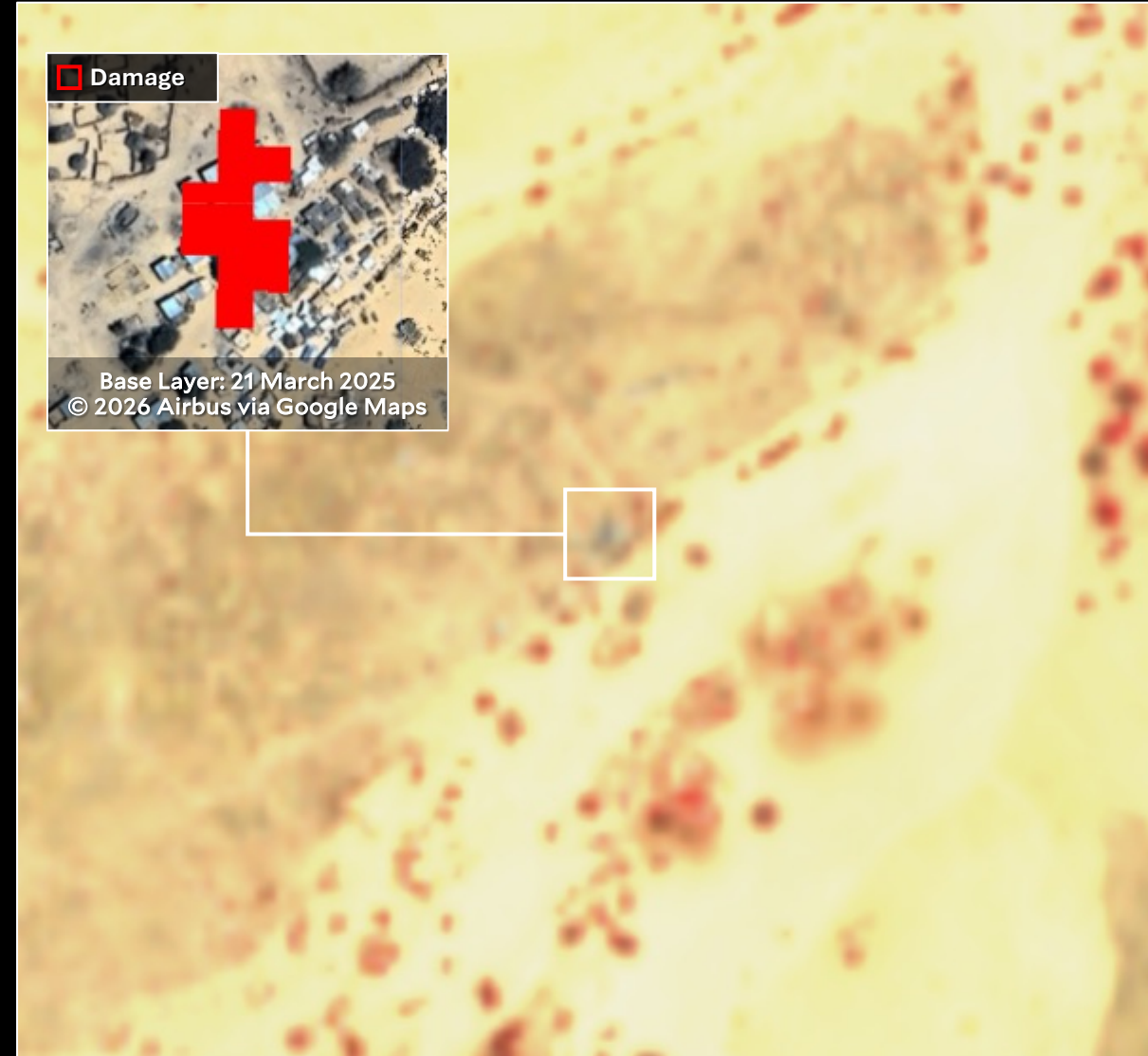
Thermal scarring observed at market area between 22 June-07 July 2026



22 June 2026 © 2026 Copernicus Sentinel

Analysis of satellite imagery collected between 22 June and 07 July 2026 shows thermal scarring to a market in Qarbara, Um Baru locality, North Darfur.

Imagery visualized in near-infrared false color composite.



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¹ Sudan Tribune, "إحراق (8) قرى في شمال دارفور ومناوي يندد بالصمت الدولي" *Sudan Tribune*, 14 June 2026, <https://sudantribune.net/article/315071>, archived at <https://perma.cc/R3A6-3BC7>;

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³ Eric Reeves, "UPDATE FROM PROJECT ZAMZAM, November 16, 2025" *Sudan Research, Analysis, and Advocacy by Eric Reeves*, 16 November 2025. <https://sudanreeves.org/2025/11/16/update-from-project-zamzam-november-16-2025/>, archived at <https://perma.cc/W5M2-GLE4>;

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⁶ Sudan War Monitor, “إخبار عن تجدد المواجهات بدارفور والدعم السريع يعلن استرداد بنر سلبية وابو قمرة وكلبس” *Sudan War Monitor*, 11 July 2026, <https://sudanwarmonitor.com/p/538>, archived at <https://perma.cc/WHN3-4VY3>;

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