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Chad Rebels Take Town on Sudanese Border

By Reuters

N'DJAMENA — Chadian rebels captured the small town of Ade on the border with Sudan on Wednesday, the latest in a series of raids in the lawless east of the central African country.

The rebel Union Forces for Democracy and Development entered the town early on Wednesday. It lies on the road to the main regional town Goz Beida, a hub for Western aid agencies.

``We took the town without any fighting,'' UFDD spokesman Ali Moussa Izzo told Reuters by satellite phone. ``We are still here in Ade.''

A Chadian army source confirmed a rebel column had taken the town, more than 800 km (500 miles) east of the capital N'Djamena.

``They took the town and moved on,'' said the source, who asked not to be identified. ``They are trying to avoid combat.''

The insurgency against Chadian President Idriss Deby has been characterized by hit-and-run raids by several groups fighting to end his 16-year rule.

The UFDD rebels said weekend attacks around the remote northeastern settlement of Ounianga Kebir, more than 600 kilometers (375 miles) north of Ade, would open up a new front in their low-intensity war in the land-locked oil producing state.

Chad accuses Sudan of supporting the rebels and trying to export the conflict from its violence-torn Darfur region. Khartoum denies this and says N'Djamena backs the insurgents in Darfur.

Ethnic and political violence in Darfur, which has killed 200,000 people since 2003, has spilled across the border into eastern Chad and northern Central African Republic, displacing hundreds of thousands of people and threatening to destabilize the region.