

Iraqi Airstrike Kills Senior ISIL Commanders

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – More than a dozen commanders of the Takfiri ISIL terrorist group have been killed after Iraqi fighter jets carried out a precision strike in Iraq's troubled northern province of Nineveh.

The Iraqi Joint Operations Command announced in a statement that the military aircraft struck a terrorist gathering in al-Sahel al-Aysar region, which lies east of the terrorist-held city of Mosul, leaving 19 senior ISIL figures dead, Arabic-language al-Baghdadia television reported.

The statement added that self-proclaimed ISIL governor Ayad Hamed Mohal al-Jumail, better known by the nom de guerre Abu Yahya, was among those killed in the aerial attack.

Hundreds of Iraqi families continue to flee southern Mosul as army soldiers and fighters from

Popular Mobilization Units are taking up positions around the city.

Hisham al-Hashimi, a consultant to the Baghdad government on the anti-ISIL campaign, said the offensive for the liberation of Mosul was slated for late September.

Defense Minister Khalid al-Obeidi recently said high-ranking ISIL terrorist commanders and their families had sold their belongings and fled Mosul as Iraqi forces were closing in on the city.

Mosul fell into the hands of the Takfiri terrorists in June 2014, when they began a large-scale offensive in Iraq.

On Friday, Iraqi security forces managed to wrest control over Khalidiya Island river peninsula, located nearly 90 kilometers west of the capital, Baghdad, in the western province of Anbar.

The achievement came only a few hours after Iraqi government



This file photo shows an F-16 fighter jet operated by Iraqi air force.

soldiers retook al-Kartan region from ISIL extremists, and purged the terrorists from Albu Kan'an district in the same province.

The northern and western parts of Iraq have been plagued by gruesome

violence ever since Daesh terrorists mounted an offensive in June 2014.

The Iraqi army and fighters from the Popular Mobilization Units have been engaged in joint operations to retake terrorist-held regions.

Afghan Forces Retake District in Kunduz Province



Afghan special forces arrive as they launch a counteroffensive to retake Kunduz from the Taliban.

KABUL (Press TV) – Security forces in Afghanistan have retaken control of a northeastern district in the country that had fallen to Taliban militants hours earlier.

Security officials in Afghanistan

confirmed that government forces recaptured the Khanabad district in the restive Kunduz Province from the Taliban militants.

The militants had overrun the district in fierce clashes with

security forces earlier in the day.

The district is a strategic one, connecting Kunduz to Takhar and other northern provinces. Afghan officials had cited a lack of ammunition and reinforcement as the main reason for the district's fall.

"All checkpoints around us collapsed. We did not have sufficient weapons to fight and food to eat for four days. Finally, our check posts collapsed and we evacuated the area and arrived in the center of Kunduz," said Serajuddin, an Afghan National Police (ANP) officer.

Local reports said hundreds of civilians from the area had fled to the east, toward Takhar Province following the Taliban offensive to take the area.

The officials have not provided any details about the number of

casualties in clashes between security forces and the militants.

Taliban militants have intensified their attacks on Kunduz and launched numerous offensives on key districts of the province during the past several months.

The militants have also attempted on several occasions to take control of the provincial capital city of the same name. They did seize it briefly last year before being driven out in a counteroffensive by Afghan military forces.

Afghanistan is still suffering from insecurity and violence years after the United States and its allies invaded the country in 2001 as part of Washington's so-called war on terror. The military invasion removed the Taliban from power, but their militancy continues in the country.

Rift Widening Among Jeish al-Fatah Terrorists in Syria

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Opposition sources confirmed that differences among the terrorist groups forming Jeish al-Fatah coalition have intensified and their coalition is almost on the verge of collapse following their failures in Aleppo battlefields.

"Jeish al-Fatah's violations of civilians' rights in Aleppo and rogue decisions of the coalition's commanders over war plans in Aleppo battlefields have weakened their unity significantly," sources close to the Operation Room for Conquest of Aleppo said.

"The Operation Room, which once was the representative of at least 22 militant groups forming Jeish al-Fatah coalition, is on the verge of collapse," the sources added.

"Leaders of the militant groups' believe that field commanders of Jeish al-Fatah are some non-Syrian mercenaries who do not care about the Syrian commanders of the coalition and try to leave them alone behind military academy buildings to be killed by government forces," they added.

Meanwhile, Syrian army soldiers

and popular forces continued their advances against Jeish al-Fatah terrorists near a strategic village in the southwestern side of military academy buildings, inflicting major losses on the terrorists.

The Syrian government forces, who captured Um al-Qara'a earlier this morning, continued to beat back the terrorists and move towards hills overlooking the village of al-Sharafeh.

Jeish al-Fatah suffered a major death toll in the attacks and left behind its military equipment and

retreated from more positions.

The Syrian army and popular forces launched their attack from their positions in cement factory and are about to capture the hill near al-Sharafeh to reinvigorate their military strength in southwestern districts of Aleppo.

Reports said earlier today that Syrian Army men and their popular allies launched a fresh round of attacks on Jeish al-Fatah's positions and captured a key hill overlooking the southern and southwestern districts of Aleppo.

Bombing ...

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More than 200 people had packed onto a narrow street in the district of Sahinbey, close to the Syrian border, for the Kurdish wedding when the explosion occurred around 11 p.m., witnesses said.

"We had just walked past the wedding and offered our good wishes when we heard the blast," said Ibrahim Ates, who lives in the area. "Suddenly people started running past us. When we went back to see what had happened, everyone was on the floor, and there were body parts scattered everywhere and blood splattered on the walls."

Mahmut Togrul, a lawmaker with the Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party who visited the scene of the attack on Sunday, said the wedding had been a traditional Kurdish ceremony and had taken place in a predominantly Kurdish neighborhood.

"Besna and Nurettin Akdogan, the bride and groom, survived the attack and are in stable condition," Togrul said. "Many of the victims that died were children," he added.

The attack came nearly two months after militants suspected of being affiliated with Daesh stormed Istanbul's main airport with guns and bombs, killing at least 44 people.

Turkey has been rocked by a wave of urban terrorist attacks in the past year as it confronts multiple threats, including Daesh, which recently lost ground in northern Syria, and Kurdish insurgents, who have resumed a war with the Turkish state in the southeast and were blamed by the authorities for four bombings in the past week.

Turkey is also reeling from a failed coup last month that aimed to topple the government of President Erdogan and that left at least 240 people dead.

Erdogan said on Saturday that there was no difference among the various terrorist organizations attacking the country.

Televised footage showed scenes of chaos in the aftermath of the blast at the wedding. Crowds gathered, shouting "God is the greatest" as forensic teams arrived at the site. Ambulances were seen rushing to the street and leaving with bodies covered in white sheets. On Sunday, police found parts of a suicide vest in the area where the blast took place, the Gaziantep chief prosecutor's office said in a statement.

"Everyone here is devastated," said Hilmi Karaca, a Kurdish activist who witnessed the explosion. "We can't even carry out the funerals because the bodies are in pieces. They are struggling to identify the victims."

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim condemned the attack and vowed to continue to fight terrorist groups. "No matter what this treacherous terror organization is called, we as the people, the state and the government will pursue our determined struggle against it," he said.

Earlier on Saturday, Yildirim told reporters that Turkey would take a more active role in addressing the conflict in Syria over the next six months and was willing to accept a role for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad during a transitional period. But he insisted that Assad would have no place in Syria's future.

"In this area, we live in a ring of fire," said Karaca, the activist. "We live in a place where mothers are weeping for their dead children just hours after crying tears of joy at a wedding."

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"Today, Iran has such a position that it can pick its political friends and trade partners and does not have to cooperate with a specific country or region in the world," he added.

On Wednesday, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for European and American Affairs Majid Takht-e-Ravanchi underlined the importance of Zarif's tour, saying it will open a "new chapter in the relations between Iran and Latin America."

He also described Latin America of "high significance" to Tehran and stressed that "there are many areas for cooperation between Iran and the countries of that region despite a long distance."

Vowing to Liberate City Soon

Iraqi Military Planes Drop Thousands of Leaflets Over Mosul

MOSUL (FNA) – The Iraqi air force dropped tens of thousands of leaflets over Mosul in western Iraq calling on the residents of the city to prepare themselves for the its imminent liberation.

"We have informed Mosul citizens that the ISIL's end is near as it is spending its last days and they should prepare themselves for welcoming the Iraqi troops," the Iraqi army announced in a statement.

Iraq's joint military forces are now behind the gates of the city of al-Qayyara which is 63 kilometers

from Mosul and ready to start the third phase of the liberation operations of Mosul city and its surrounding areas.

A senior military commander announced that Iraq's joint military forces have completely seized back a strategic island to the east of Ramadi in Anbar province.

"The Iraqi security and Hashd al-Shaabi (volunteer forces) managed to fully liberate al-Khaleidiya Island 23 kilometers to the east of Ramadi and also take full control of the surrounding villages and regions of the island," Commander of

Anbar Liberation Operations Major General Esmail Mahlawi said.

He noted that the liberation of al-Khaleidiya Island comes after recapturing of the Bu Kana'a region which was the last military base of the terrorists in Al-Khaleidiya Island area.

Meantime, the Hashd al-Shaabi Command Center in a statement announced that over 150 terrorists from different countries, including two Americans, 7 Russians, 4 Chechens and many Saudis, were killed in the al-Khaleidiya Island liberation operation.

General Mahlawi said that the

Iraqi forces killed 700 ISIL terrorists during an anti-terrorist offensive on Khaleidiya Island.

"Security forces have so far killed 700 ISIL members since the beginning of Khaleidiya Island liberation battles," said General Mahlawi.

The final anti-terrorist offensive on Khaleidiya Island started in late July. The city of Ramadi was occupied by ISIL terrorists in May 2014. The government forces succeeded in retaking the city after weeks of fierce fighting from December 2015 to February 2016.