

Video: Khan Shaykhun Liberated, Northern Hama Pocket - Next

By [South Front](#)

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On August 21, the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) and the Tiger Forces liberated the town of Khan Shaykhun and the areas of Khazanat and Tal Taeri, thus fully encircling remaining militants in northern Hama.

The Hayat Tahrir al-Sham strong points of Kafr Zita, Lataminah, and Morek, as well as the nearby settlements of Lahaya, Markabah, Latmin and Sayad are now fully cut off from their radical counterparts in the Idlib zone. A Morek observation post, where Turkish troops are deployed, is also encircled.

Khan Shaykhun, located on a highway linking Damascus with Aleppo, is one of the biggest urban centers in southern Idlib. For years, it had served as the key stronghold of al-Qaeda-linked militants. Currently, SAA troops are working to secure their recent gains and preparing for a further push to clear the rest of northern Hama.



[Watch the video here.](#)

Reacting to the Syrian military advance, a Turkish presidential spokesman, Ibrahim Kalin, said that all observation posts, including the one near Murak, will remain in their positions in Greater Idlib. He also revealed that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will speak with

his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on the phone over the situation in Idlib in the next couple of days.

These remarks were accompanied with common Turkish media propaganda accusing the SAA of violating the ceasefire regime and oppressing so-called moderate rebels. But in fact, Turkey just admitted its tactical loss and inability to rescue militants in this part of Syria.

Another important point of Kalin's statement was dedicated to the US-Turkish 'safe-zone' agreement on northern Syria. According to the Turkish side, joint patrols US and Turkish forces will soon be launched east of the Euphrates, within the area controlled by US-backed Kurdish groups. Ankara see these groups as terrorist organizations and has repeatedly shelled their positions. So, it will be interesting to look how this claim will be implemented if US-backed formations remain deployed in the areas of supposed joint patrols.

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