

Video: Syrian Army Repels Large ISIS Attack Near Ithriyah

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At least 6 soldiers were killed and 9 others were injured in an ISIS attack on a Syrian Army checkpoint near the town of Ithriyah, located on the Hama-Aleppo road. According to pro-government sources, at least 5 ISIS members were killed in the clashes.

Regular ISIS attacks in desert areas in central Syria are a serious problem for Syrian government forces. During the past few weeks, the army and its allies completed a series of combing operations against ISIS cells in eastern Homs, southern Raqqa and western Deir Ezzor. It seems that these efforts forced the terrorist group to shift its focus towards eastern Hama.

Nonetheless, there is little doubt that as soon as the Syrian military sends units hunting down ISIS cells along the Palmyra-Deir Ezzor road to the Ithriyah area, ISIS attacks in the Deir Ezzor countryside will resume once again.

[https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR_Syria_19_06_2020\(eng\)re.mp4](https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR_Syria_19_06_2020(eng)re.mp4)

The Damascus government will likely continue lacking resources to clear the entire desert of ISIS cells as long as it needs to keep large forces on the contact line with the Turkish Army and its proxies in Greater Idlib, near the region of Afrin and in northeastern Syria.

Idlib militant groups are not only waging a never-ending propaganda war against the Damascus government, but also find time for regular infighting.

On June 17, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham arrested Abu Salah al-Uzbeki, the founder and former leader of the Katibat al Tawhid wal Jihad terrorist group, which consists mostly of ethnic Uzbeks. Al-Uzbeki and two of his bodyguards were captured by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham forces near the city of Idlib on June 17. The reason for tensions is that Katibat al Tawhid wal Jihad recently distanced itself from Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and signed a pact with Ansar al-Din, another al-Qaeda-linked group. Earlier this month, Ansar al-Din and several other medium and small groups created a new coalition – Fa Ithbatu. Hayat Tahrir al-Sham may have considered this move as an attempt to challenge its dominant position among the so-called moderate opposition.

Usbat al-Tha'ireen, an Iraqi pro-Iranian group formed earlier in 2020, released a new video claiming responsibility for a series of attacks on US forces and facilities across Iraq.

In the video entitled “Victory Comes With Patience” it claimed that:

- On June 8, it shelled Camp Taji damaging a C-130 military transport aircraft of the US Air Force;
- On June 11, it launched rockets at the US embassy in Baghdad's Green Zone;
- On June 16, it launched rockets at the US-operated military section of Baghdad International Airport.

Usbat al-Tha'ireen is the group that killed 3 US-led coalition personnel with a rocket strike on Camp Taji on March 11. Nonetheless, its claims about the damaging of the C-130 aircraft belonging to US military can hardly be verified.

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