

## Video: US Deploys Patriot Air Defense Systems in Iraq. Houthis Attack Saudi Capital

By [South Front](#)

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*The United States has deployed Patriot anti-air batteries to the bases hosting US troops in Iraq, AFP reported on March 30 citing US and Iraqi sources. The first Patriot battery was delivered to Ain al-Asad last week, while the second one was being set up at a base in Erbil. There are at least two more batteries earmarked for deployment in Iraq. However, they are yet to reach their destinations. For now, they are located in Kuwait.*

It remains unclear whether Baghdad actually gave its nod of approval to the deployment. However, the US plans to bring Patriot systems to Iraq have not been a secret. Moreover, Washington strictly rejected the demand of the Iraqi government to withdraw forces from the country. The deployment of Patriot systems is a part of the larger US effort to regroup its forces in the country in response to the growing tensions.

On January 3, a US strike on Baghdad International Airport assassinated several prominent Iraqi and Iranian officers, including the head of Iran's Qods Forces, Qassem Soleimani, and the deputy commander of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. Iran answered to this attack with a retaliatory strike on the US military bases of Erbil and Ain al-Asad. The aggressive behavior by the US also caused a growth of tensions with the Iraqis and led to an increase of rocket attacks on its forces and facilities across the country. Since then, the Pentagon has been working to secure US forces and reduce negative consequences of the January 3 venture. Despite these efforts, the US influence in this part of the Middle East continues to decrease.

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In Syria, US forces are deployed in the oil-rich areas on the eastern bank of the Euphrates and near the city of al-Hasakah. According to statements by the Syrian and Russian foreign ministries, US special services and private military companies are exploiting the seized oil fields to fund their operations across the region.

The security situation in eastern Syria also remains tense. On March 29 and 30, ISIS prisoners rioted in the Ghuweiran Prison controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces. The Kurdish-led group lost control over a large part of the facility for more than 24 hours before it was able to take it back. Several ISIS members fled. A security operation to hunt them down is ongoing.

The situation on the frontline in southern Idlib, western Aleppo and northern Latakia is relatively calm. Both pro-government forces and Idlib militants are resupplying and

regrouping their forces using the current ceasefire regime.

The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Yemeni forces led by the Houthis is heating up. On March 28, the Yemenis launched a new wave of strikes on targets inside Saudi Arabia. According to the Houthis' spokesman, they employed Badir-1 artillery rockets, Zulfiqar missiles, and Qasef-2K and Samad-3 suicide drones against vital economic and military targets in the provinces of Jizan, Najran and Asir, as well as the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

In its own turn, Saudi Arabia claimed that its forces intercepted two missiles over Riyadh and launched an intense bombing campaign against the supposed missile infrastructure of the Houthis in Yemen.

Over the past months, Saudi-backed forces have suffered a series of setbacks in the battle against the Houthis in northern Yemen and the Yemeni movement seized control over a larger chunk of the Saudi-Yemeni border.

Therefore, taking into account the current complex geopolitical situation in the Middle East, the shift of the military hostilities to Saudi soil was widely expected.

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