Yemen, Map of War: Saudi Offensive, Resistance and Counter-Attacks by Yemeni Forces

July 22-30, 2015

The big Saudi success in Aden has turned out to be a failure. Saudi proxies with the support of Operation Golden Arrow have been expanding areas of control north of Aden, showing local gains rather than total victory.

The Al Houthis have been successfully defending al Anad air base and advancing in number of points including Aden. The only hope of the Saudi-led forces is the rumored withdrawal of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh from the al Houthis, who rely in part on forces loyal to Saleh, or a full-scale invasion.

1. July 23-30, Pro-Saudi militants allied with the Saudi-led coalition continue to battle the Yemeni government forces for control of Aden. The clashes have been going at the Yemen-controlled al Anad air base in the Lahij governorate, north of Aden, since Saudi's proxies attempted to seize al Anad air base on July 19, 22, 24 and 26. The al Houthis have control in the Taiz governorate and have been counter-attacking in al Dhaleh city, which was lost in late May. Although Saudi forces had momentum advancing on the north, the Yemen government looks determined to remain in control of the territory it holds.

2. July 24, AQAP refused to leave al Mukalla, Hadramawt. A local AQAP fighter Omar al Nahdi told that AQAP will not abandon Hadramawt and will stay to protect the governorate from the al Houthis. AQAP seized al Mukalla on April 2 and established a council with local tribes to oversee governance of the city. Previous reports indicated that AQAP was negotiating with local tribes in al Mukalla to withdraw from the city and establish a security force.

3. July 25, In Aden Southern Resistance militants reportedly captured Abdul Khaliq al Houthi, who is the al Houthi overall military commander and brother of the al Houthi leader, Abdul Malik al Houthi.

4. July 25, Aden clashes appear to have invigorated ISIS Wilayat Aden. On Saturday Pro-ISIS Twitter accounts posted a photo series of ISIS Wilayat Aden fighters training at the al Shaikhain training camp in Aden. It is unclear when and where in Aden the photos were taken. ISIS Wilayat Aden most recently claimed an attack on the al Houthis on July 18. Separately, ISIS Wilayat Hadramawt militants posted via Twitter on July 26 photos of militants establishing military equipment in an unidentified location in Hadramawt.

5. July 25, Pro-Saudi militant group "Southern Resistance" pushed al Houthis out of al Wahat, north of Aden. Meanwhile, a Saudi coalition airstrike hit a housing

complex in Mocha, killing at least 100 civilians.

6. July 26, The Saudi coalition and its proxies on Saturday announced a cease-fire that will take effect at 11.59 p.m. (20.59 GMT) on Sunday evening for five days to allow for the delivery of humanitarian aid, but didn't stop the storm of al Anad air base. Yemeni leader Abdel-Malek al Houthi was reported to have rejected the truce, arguing it would benefit only militant groups Islamic State and Al-Qaeda. The Yemen government publicly accuses Saudi forces of being in cahoots with Islamist militants like Al-Qaeda, something the coalition denies. Thus, a unilateral Saudi Arabia-proposed ceasefire broke down the moment it began.

7. July 26, Notwithstanding the failed truce, Houthi forces held up 16 trucks carrying humanitarian aid from the World Food Programme through Yemen's Al Hudaydah province to support displaced persons in the major city of Taiz.

8. July 27-28, Coalition warplanes carried out raids near Sanaa late Saturday and Sunday. The targets included Sanaa residential areas and a military base near the city. In the city, a bomb exploded underneath a passenger bus, killing three people and wounding five in the southern district of Dar Selm, local police report.

9. July 29, Saudi fighter jets bombarded Harad district in the northwestern province of Hajja and a government building in the southwestern province of Ad Dali'. The Saudi coalition also launched airstrikes on several regions in the central province of Ma'rib.

10. July 29, At least three people were killed in a car bomb attack in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa. At least six people also sustained injuries. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. The terrorists also claimed responsibility for a bombing which reportedly killed nearly 30 people in the Yemeni capital.

The Saudi forces offensive seems to be decreasing as the al Houthi government remains entrenched in north-central Yemen. Yemeni forces have been continuing to conduct counter-attacks in Aden, Ma'rib, al Dhaleh, near the Saudi border and to defend its positions in al Anad air base, Lahij and Taiz.

The US experts hope that the withdrawal of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh's support would probably weaken Yemen government and lead it to consolidate forces farther north to prevent being overstretched across south and central Yemen. The reasoning behind these assumptions is representatives from Yemen's ruling party headed by Saleh, are reportedly in negotiations with U.S., British, and UAE diplomats to find a peaceful solution to the ongoing war. Nonetheless, loyal to Saleh military units are fighting for al Houthi government.

Despite denial, the Aden Saudi operation synchronized with increasing ISIS activity in Aden and the recent confirmed attacks aimed on the al Houthi government forces.

ISIS groups will likely seek to carry out more attacks on Yemeni government forces in Sanaa, Aden and Lahij. Moreover, AQAP militants in Hadramawt have roughly stated that their purpose is "to protect the governorate from the al Houthis". Sure enough, ISIS and AQAP are likely secret allies of the Saudi coalition and its proxies in Yemen.

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