

ISIS Leader Al-Baghdadi Killed?

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In 2005, US forces captured Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in Iraq, holding him for several years at Camp Bucca.

Little is publicly known about his capture, detention, or how he became ISIS leader. In 2008, the Bush administration transferred authority of all detainees in US custody to Iraqi forces, including Baghdadi.

In 2010, he was freed, assuming leadership of ISIS the same year. He first became known publicly in summer 2014 when its fighters began capturing territory in Iraq and Syria.

Was the Obama administration behind his release? Was he chosen to head the little known terrorist group at that time, serving as imperial foot soldiers?

On May 28, Russian warplanes struck an ISIS command post in northern Syria where Baghdadi and others in his chain of command were discussing exit routes for its fighters from Raqqa through a southern corridor.

At the time, Russia's Defense Ministry said it's believed he was "killed in the airstrike" along with other high-ranking ISIS commanders and hundreds of its fighters.

Emir of Raqqa Abu al-Haji al-Masri, Emir Ibrahim al-Naef al-Hajj, "who controlled the district from the city of Raqqa to the settlement of es-Sohne," and ISIS head of security Suleiman al-Sawah were reported killed by Russia's Defense Ministry.

On Thursday, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Ole Syromolotov said

"(a)ccording to the Russian Defense Ministry, it is highly likely that Daesh leader al-Baghdadi was eliminated as a result of a Russian Aerospace Forces strike on the terrorists' command post in the southern suburb of the city of Raqqa in late May this year," adding:

This "information is now verified through various channels." In mid-June, Sergey Lavrov said he was unable to confirm al-Baghdadi's death.

He was reported killed several times before, only to turn up alive. Is the latest report of his

death premature?

Russia's Defense Ministry believes he's dead. Satellite images of four buildings where he and his chain of command were meeting show they were obliterated – making it appear no one inside could have survived.

How his death along with other ISIS commanders, if true, affects the terrorist group remains to be seen.

Syrian and allied forces, greatly aided by Russian airpower, continue making steady gains against ISIS and other terrorist groups.

At the same time, US imperial designs on Syria haven't changed – wanting pro-Western puppet governance replacing Assad.

As long as this objective remains unchanged, ending Syria's long nightmare remains elusive.

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My newest book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

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