

Video: Erdogan Forces Recaptured Nayrab but Lost Another Dozen of Villages to Syrian Army

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On February 24 morning, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and other Idlib groups supported by the Turkish Army launched a new attempt to capture the village of Nayrab from the Syrian Army. Turkish-backed rebels bedecked with ISIS insignias once again reached the vicinity of the village, but were forced to retreat under strikes from the Syrian Army and the Russian Aerospace Forces. Pro-Turkish sources complained that 'regime troops' are using mines, road blocks, fortifications and even trenches to protect their positions. The devilry of the Assad regime has no bounds.

In the evening, Turkish-led forces carried out a second attack on Nayrab entering its eastern part and engaging army troops in a series of clashes. The fighting in the area continued overnight and by February 25 Idlib groups have established control of at least a half of the town. Pro-Turkish sources claim that entire Nayrab is in the hands of Turkish-led forces. Pro-government sources say that the clashes are ongoing.

The attack on Nayrab took place amid the ongoing Syrian Army advance in southern Idlib, south of the M4 highway. Government forces have cleared over a dozen of settlements from Turkish-led forces since the resumption of the offensive in the area on February 23. In the course of this effort, Syrian soldiers captured 3 vehicles and eliminated up to 10 militants. The advance is ongoing.

https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/IMR_25_02_2020.mp4

On the same day reports appeared that 13 Turkish soldiers were killed in airstrikes in the area of the Syrian Army operation in southern Idlib. According to pro-Turkish sources and Russian media, the incident happened somewhere near the villages of Kafr Nabl, Bara and Kansafra. According to Turkish authorities, 21 Turkish service member had died in the Greater Idlib operation so far. If the February 24 incident is confirmed, the number of casualties of Turkish forces in their Idlib adventurism will overcome 30.

The developments on the ground demonstrate that even with a direct Turkish involvement Idlib groups have not enough resources to oppose the Syrian Army advance across the region. So, while they were concentrating their efforts on Nayrab, their defense collapsed on another chunk of the frontline.

Meanwhile, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan confirmed his intention to meet with the leaders of Russia, France and Germany, on March 5 in Istanbul to discuss the situation in Idlib. This strange format, excluding Iran, another backer of the Damascus government and

key player in the conflict, is likely seen by the Turkish leadership as a useful tool to make a 'collective effort' to pressure Russia over its strong support to the Syrian Army actions against terrorists. It also reveals that despite the recent decline of the EU involvement in the conflict, key EU states remain at least diplomatic supporters of terrorist factions operating in the country. At the same time, the initiative of the meeting itself demonstrates that Turkey is not so determined to turn its military threats against Syria into reality as it wants to demonstrate.

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