

## Video: On the Verge of the Battle for Central Syria

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Global Research, January 28, 2022

[South Front](#) 27 January 2022

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Terrorism](#)

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*As of January 27, Syria security remains precarious despite a slight improvement in the country’s northeastern, northwestern and southern regions.*

In the northeastern region, the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced on January 26 that it had retaken control of Geweran prison in the city of al-Hasakah where hundreds of ISIS terrorists were holding up.

The terrorists launched a large attack on the prison late on January 20 to free their comrades. However, they ended up capturing the entire prison and nearby areas.

[https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/27.01.2022\\_IMR\\_Syria.mp4](https://southfront.org/wp-content/uploads/video/27.01.2022_IMR_Syria.mp4)

The SDF said that its military operation to secure the prison and nearby areas, codenamed the People’s Hammer, was successfully concluded. More than 1,600 terrorists surrendered after running out of water, food and medical supplies. 32 hostages who were held by the terrorists were also freed.

However, the SDF’s victory is questionable to say the least. An unknown number of terrorists are still holding up at some parts of Geweran as well as in nearby areas, possibly to carry out suicide attacks. Gun shots and explosions are still being heard in the vicinity of the prison as of the morning of January 27.

It’s also worth noting that British special forces were spotted along with other formations of US-led coalition near Geweran prison on January 25. On the same day, news sources revealed that the SDF and the US-led coalition, who failed to storm Geweran prison for five consecutive days, were holding talks with the terrorists occupying the prison. Their evacuation to central Syria was reportedly discussed.

The terrorists, many of whom are foreigners, may have withdrawn to central Syria after reaching a deal with the SDF and the US-led coalition with help from British negotiators. More than two thousand terrorists who were holding up at Geweran prison are still missing.

It appears that only the weak and injured terrorists have surrendered to the SDF, while the commanders and more experienced terrorist have fled on their own or under a deal.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the battle of Geweran prison claimed the lives of 124 ISIS terrorists, seven civilians and 50 personnel of the SDF and its security forces.

Regardless of the outcome of the battle, ISIS attack on Geweran prison was a large blow to the SDF and the US-led coalition. ISIS is yet to share its account of the attack's last days. The terrorist group will likely reveal the number of the terrorists who managed to flee the prison very soon.

In the northwestern region, known as Greater Idlib, the situation remains calm as of January 27.

A few, minor ceasefire violations by the al-Qaeda-affiliated Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and its allies were reported on January 25 and 26. However, there were no casualties.

A harsh snow storm affecting Greater Idlib and nearby areas will likely keep the situation in the region calm at least for another week.

Meanwhile, the situation in central Syria remains tense. Government forces and their allies continue to operate against ISIS in the region.

On January 26, fighter jets of the Russian Aerospace Forces and attack helicopters from the Syrian Arab Air Force carried out more than 50 airstrikes on hideouts, equipment and personnel of ISIS in: the outskirts of the town of Ithriyah in the eastern Hama countryside; the outskirts of the town of al-Sukhnah in the eastern Homs countryside and the outskirts of the town of al-Resafa in the southern Raqqa countryside.

The Russian and Syrian airstrikes were likely a response to an attack by ISIS cells' that targeted a convoy of the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) near the ancient city of Palmyra in the eastern countryside of Homs on January 24. Seven service members of the SAA were killed and 24 others were wounded as a result of the attack. A tank and seven light military vehicles were also damaged.

The attack highlights the threat posed by ISIS cells in the central region. This threat will not likely end anytime soon.

In Syria's southern region, which includes Daraa, al-Quneitra and al-Suwayda, the situation has been clam. No attacks on government forces were reported as of January 27. Security measures implemented by the government appear to be working, at least for the time being.

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