



NORTHERN IRAQ DAILY SECURITY UPDATE



13 August 2012



The overall classification of this brief is:

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

24hr Reporting Period: (0600 - 0600 daily)

UNCLASSIFIED FOUO



NORTHERN IRAQ SECURITY HIGHLIGHTS



Mosul:

- **An IED explosion near Hamam Aleel district, south of Mosul, killed a soldier and wounded three passengers** *(NINA, 12 Aug)*
- **An Asiacell employee was killed by gunmen in the Sina'a area of western Mosul** *(NINA, 12 Aug)*
- **A woman was killed by gunmen at the Nabi Yunis market in eastern Mosul** *(NINA, 12 Aug)*
- **The body of a young man bearing torture marks was found in the Yarmouk area of western Mosul** *(NINA, 12 Aug)*

Kirkuk:

- **The child of a Directorate of Oil Products officer in Kirkuk was kidnapped in southern Kirkuk** *(NINA, 12 Aug)*

Provincial:

- **Police in Salaheddin province arrested thirty-five suspects in the Tuz Khormato district** *(NINA, 12 Aug)*

Erbil:

- **NSTR**



MEDIA – KURDISH TOPICS



Kurdish MP Abducted 'By PKK' In East Turkey *(Al Jazeera, 13 Aug)*

A Turkish opposition member of parliament has been kidnapped by suspected members of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

Huseyin Aygun, from the main opposition Republican People's Party, was abducted on Sunday evening at a roadblock between the town of Ovacik and Tunceli, said party spokesman Haluk Koc during a televised news conference.

"For the first time, a lawmaker has been kidnapped by the terrorist organization," said Koc. In the past the PKK has focused on attacking soldiers, journalists and other civilians. A search operation is now underway.



NTV television reported Mustafa Taskesen of Tunceli province as saying that Aygun was kidnapped under orders from Kurdish rebel command, which is based deep in northern Iraq. He said troops were chasing the rebels and a larger operation would be launched early on Monday.

Turkey has launched military drills near the frontier in a show of strength. The Turkish government said last month that the rebels have seized control of five towns along the border in collaboration with Syria's Democratic Union Party, or PYD an ethnic Kurdish grouping.

Aygun was elected to the Parliament to represent Tunceli, where he worked as a lawyer for 14 years. According to his website, his work focuses on human rights abuses, such as the forcible evacuations of Kurdish villages to deny support to the rebels in rural areas, as well as torture cases.

The kidnapping came days after the government claimed troops have killed as many as 115 rebels in town of Semdinli, and after Aygun's party called for an extraordinary meeting in Parliament on Tuesday to discuss the struggle against the rebels.

Read full article: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2012/08/2012812221313987414.html>



MEDIA – KURDISH TOPICS

Turkish Forces End Anti-PKK Operation In Semdinli In Turkey's Kurdish Region *(eKurdnet, 12 Aug)*

Turkish armed forces have ended an almost three-week operation against Kurdish militants in the southeast Kurdish region of Semdinli (northern Kurdistan), bordering Iran and Iraq, and have killed "a large number" of fighters, the local governor said in a statement on Saturday.

Turkish jets have bombarded Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) positions around the mountainous region in one of most intense bouts of fighting in recent years.

"The aerial-supported operations launched by our security forces on July 23, 2012 ... were completed on August 11, 2012 morning," said the governor's office of Hakkari, the province where Semdinli is located.



"As a result of the operations, conducted with determination and rigor, the terrorist organization PKK was unable to reach its cruel goals and a large number of its members have been rendered ineffective," it said in a statement, employing a euphemism commonly used by officials to mean killed.

Erdogan said on August 7 that 115 PKK militants had been killed in Semdinli. The fighting began after the PKK set up checkpoints and tried to establish a stronghold there.

Murat Karayilan, the acting PKK leader, said last week the group was changing tactics with its battle in Semdinli, according to Firat News, a website close to the militants.

Instead of their traditional hit-and-run ambushes on Turkish security forces, PKK fighters would remain positioned in Semdinli in an attempt to form a stronghold there, he said.

Suspected Kurdish militants ambushed a Turkish military bus in western Turkey on Thursday in an attack that killed one soldier and wounded at least 11 people. Turkish media reported a man was arrested on Saturday in connection with the attack.

Read full article: <http://www.ekurd.net/mismas/articles/misc2012/8/turkey4095.htm>

UNCLASSIFIED FOUO



MEDIA – KURDISH TOPICS



International Rejection For Separation Of Syrian Kurds, Says Researcher (AKnews, 12 Aug)

A specialized researcher in Middle East affairs said the international community refuses the formation of a separate entity for Syrian Kurds, pointing out that this will not prevent some three million Kurdish people from achieving self-determination after the fall of Assad.

Fawaz Gerges, professor of political science at the London School of Economics, said in an interview with the BBC that Syrian Kurds have the ability to form a separate entity but the US and the international community reject that.

"Part of the Kurdish problem lies in Turkey's refusal to establish a closed area between Iraq and Syria to be a stronghold for the PKK, which it has been fighting for decades.

"Kurds and Syrians put at the present time the foundation stone for self-government in Syria, like their counterparts in Iraq. The international rejection will not prevent the largest minority in Syria from [achieving] self-determination.

"The departure of Assad's troops from the Kurdish areas increased the complexity of the crisis and deepened the fears that Turkey's border with Iraq and Syria will be unstable in the coming years.

"Ankara is concerned especially after Damascus returned to encourage the PKK to work against the Turkish authorities. All this coincides with Ankara's insistence on the departure of Assad."



Fawaz Gerges



MEDIA – NATIONAL TOPICS



Iraq: Gunmen Kill 7 Shiites In Targeted Attack *(AP, 12 Aug)*

Gunmen singled out seven Shiite Muslims and shot them in Iraq's north while they were out swimming in a targeted sectarian attack, officials said Saturday.

Shalal Abdoul, mayor of the town of Tuz Khormato, said the attack happened outside the nearby Shiite Turkoman village of Amerili. The attackers arrived on motorcycles and executed the Shiites after separating them from Sunni Arabs, whom they allowed to go free, he said.

"The terrorists want to ignite sectarian strife in our area. Today's attack carries a sectarian message," Abdoul said.

Tuz Khormato is about 130 miles north of Baghdad. Tuz Khormato police Capt. Mazin Abdullah confirmed the attack. Violence has ebbed in Iraq since its height between 2005 and 2008, but lethal attacks continue to occur almost daily. Attacks against Iraqi Shiites are often blamed on al-Qaeda's Iraqi branch, which has declared its intention to take back areas from which the U.S. and its local allies expelled the militants.

Most Iraqi Shiites are Arabs. Turkomen are one of the country's minority ethnic groups, and they include both Sunnis and Shiites.

Also Saturday, Iraq's prime minister urged northern neighbor Turkey to deal with his country through the central government in Baghdad, criticizing Ankara's direct outreach to Iraq's self-ruling Kurdish region.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said in a statement that Iraq rejects efforts by Turkey to treat the minority Kurds' northern territory "as if it is an independent state."

He added that if Turkey wants to maintain good regional relations, it must do so through Iraq. The statement says al-Maliki made the comments during an interview with a Turkish television channel.

Iraq warned Turkey in July that a deal it has to import Kurdish-produced oil is illegal. Relations deteriorated further earlier this month when Turkey's foreign minister paid a surprise visit to the contested Iraqi city of Kirkuk after meeting Kurdish leaders.



MEDIA – NATIONAL TOPICS



Salih Arrives In Baghdad *(Iraqi News, 12 Aug)*

The former Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region and the Secretary General of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, Barham Salih arrived in Baghdad with a Kurdish initiative to settle the crisis between the central government and the KR.

Informed sources stated to Iraqi News on Sunday, “Salih will meet the Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, and some key officials to discuss the current crisis between KR and the central government.”



The sources expected “Salih to have a Kurdish initiative from the President of KR, Masoud Barzani, to settle the crisis.”

Maliki Calls Young People To Participate In Building New Iraq *(Iraqi News, 12 Aug)*

The Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, called the young people to hold the responsibility and participate in building the new Iraq.

In the opening speech of the festival of the Youth Day held by the Ministry of Youth and Sport, Maliki said “The life of the young people in the new Iraq has changed from the previous regime and the ruling of the Ba’ath party where the young people in the new Iraq are not forced to do some thing that they do not want or to participate in the useless wars.”

“No one in the new Iraq oppresses the young people or marginalize them from participating in the political, scientific, economical or educational processes where there were initiatives to the young people to participates in those fields because we need our sons to achieve the highest scientific and artistic degrees,” he added.

He addressed his speech to the young people by saying “We hope you to achieve what we could not achieve by building a safe country and make a good living by the good use of the wealth that were lost in the wars.”

“The future of Iraq and the building process is our responsibility but you hold the responsibility to participate in building the new Iraq either through the youth foundations such as the Ministry of Youth and Sport or by the government itself,” he concluded.



MEDIA – INTERNATIONAL TOPICS

Syrian Opposition Calls For No-fly Zone *(Al Jazeera, 13 Aug)*

A Syrian opposition official has asked for no-fly zones across Syria and safe havens patrolled by foreign forces near the borders with Jordan and Turkey.

Abdel Basset Sida, head of the Syrian National Council, said the United States had realized that the absence of a no-fly zone to counter President Basher al-Assad's air superiority has hindered rebel movements in the country.



Abdel Basset Sida

"There are areas that are being liberated," Sida told Reuters by telephone from Istanbul on Sunday. "But the problem is the aircraft, in addition to the artillery bombardment, causing killing, destruction."

He said the establishment of secure areas on the borders with Jordan and Turkey "was an essential thing that would confirm to the regime that its power is diminishing bit by bit".

He was speaking a day after the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said her country and Turkey would study a range of possible measures to help Assad's foes, including a no-fly zone, although she indicated no decisions were necessarily imminent.

"It is one thing to talk about all kinds of potential actions, but you cannot make reasoned decisions without doing intense analysis and operational planning," she said after meeting Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu in Istanbul.

A no-fly zone imposed by NATO and Arab allies helped Libyan rebels overthrow Muammar Gaddafi last year. The West has shown little appetite for repeating any Libya-style action in Syria, and Russia and China strongly oppose any such intervention. On Sunday Syrian troops stepped up their attacks on rebel-held areas across the country, as state media reported the death of one of its reporters, blaming "terrorists".

Read full article: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/08/2012812233833353319.html>



MEDIA – INTERNATIONAL TOPICS



Syria Crisis: Arab League Postpones Syria Talks *(BBC, 11 Aug)*

Arab League foreign ministers have postponed a meeting in Saudi Arabia to debate the crisis in Syria.

The ministers had been due to discuss a new envoy to Syria to replace Kofi Annan, who resigned earlier this month.

The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said the US and Turkey are working together on detailed plans to support the Syrian opposition.

Fighting has continued in the Syrian capital, Damascus, and the second city of Aleppo.

Speaking on a visit to Istanbul, Mrs. Clinton said both the US and Turkey were making preparations to respond to the possible collapse of President Bashar al-Assad's government, the use of chemical weapons and increases in the number of cross-border refugees.

UN mission Mr. Annan resigned from his position as UN-Arab League envoy to Syria earlier this month, after his proposed six-point peace plan failed to come into effect and violence escalated.

His replacement had been due to top the agenda for foreign ministers who had been due to gather on Sunday in the Saudi city of Jeddah.

But the Arab League's deputy secretary general, Ahmed Ben Helli, told reporters the meeting has been postponed, and no new date had yet been set.

He did not say why the meeting had been delayed.

Read full article: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19230641>





MEDIA – INTERNATIONAL TOPICS



New Egyptian President Orders Military Chief To Retire *(Reuters, 12 Aug)*

Egypt's Islamist President Mohammed Morsi dismissed Cairo's two top generals and quashed a military order that had curbed the new leader's powers, in a move that further stamped his authority on the country and its army.

There had been much debate over the fate of Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, 76, who until Morsi's election in June had ruled Egypt as head of a military council since Hosni Mubarak was toppled last year. The timing of Sunday's announcement to replace him as armed forces head was nevertheless a surprise.

However, an embarrassing debacle for the army on the border with Israel, where 16 Egyptian troops were killed by Islamist militants a week ago, may have given Morsi the opening he needed to step up the pace in rolling back the military's influence, pushing aside Tantawi and military chief of staff Sami Anan.

Morsi's spokesman called it a "sovereign" decision by the head of state, and aimed at "pumping new blood" into an army that has shown signs of hoping to control the novice president. A fellow Islamist said Egypt could not go on having "two heads". Secular activists, wary of political Islam, nonetheless welcomed a "first step toward establishing a civilian state".

Morsi himself later said: "The decisions I took today were not meant ever to target certain persons, nor did I intend to embarrass institutions, nor was my aim to narrow freedoms.

"I did not mean to send a negative message about anyone, but my aim was the benefit of this nation and its people," he said, praising the work of the armed forces and saying his decision would free them to focus on their professional tasks.

Read full article: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/48639143/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/



Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi, center, head of the military council Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, left, and Egyptian armed forces Chief of Staff Sami Anan, right, attended a graduation ceremony of military cadets last month. On Sunday, Morsi ordered Tantawi and Anan into retirement.



REVISED TRAVEL WARNING



REVISED TRAVEL WARNING FOR IRAQ

The Department of State has revised the Travel Warning for Iraq. Review the link online at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_5653.html

WORLDWIDE TRAVEL WARNING

The Department of State has revised the worldwide Travel Warnings. Review the link online at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html



ERBIL DAILY SECURITY UPDATE



QUESTIONS

Please direct all questions to:
[Erbil RSO Intel Mailbox@state.gov](mailto:Erbil_RSO_Intel_Mailbox@state.gov)