

Fresh Insights into Iran's New Military Base in Syria

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OE Watch Commentary

The accompanying passages from Kurdish, Turkish, and independent sources provide insight into a new military base that Iran is building in Syria. The base, reportedly located in Syria's Aleppo province, is near the territories controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). Pro-Iranian militia groups are apparently transferring arms and ammunition to the base, "located on a hill in the village of Haboubah between al-Khafsah and Meskanah." Tehran's ability to expand its influence throughout the region through its proxy forces and militias poses a threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East.

In early June, a report from *YeniAkit.com*, a Turkish pro-government newspaper noted that a high number of artillery batteries, military ammunition, and vehicles had been brought to the region. The weapons and equipment reportedly entered Syria via Iraq, through the El Bukemal region on the Syrian border. Later, the military vehicles carrying the equipment entered the rural part of Homs via Palmira. In mid-June, the independent human rights organization *Syrian Observatory for Human Rights* reported a second batch of weapons brought to the area by Iranian-backed militias.

The new reinforcement included weapons, ammunition, and medium-range surface-to-surface missiles from the west Euphrates region. The report also sheds light on the recruiting efforts of Iranian-backed militias, particularly Afghani Liwaa Fatemiyoun—an Afghan Shia militia formed in 2014 to fight in Syria on the side of the Syrian government. The group, also known as Fatemiyoun Division, Fatemiyoun Brigade, or Hezbollah Afghanistan, is apparently recruiting in the villages of eastern Aleppo through Iran's spiritual proxies and bureaus that offer financial incentives.



Map of Syria showing major towns.

Source: CIA via Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Syria-CIA_WFB_Map.png, Attribution: Public domain

“The Iranian Revolutionary Guard [Corps] are preparing to establish Iran's largest military base in Syria to date.”

Source: “Iran Establishing Military Base in Aleppo: Monitor,” *BasNews.com* (independent and multilingual news agency based in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq), 24 May 2021. <https://www.basnews.com/en/babat/690729>

Iran is reportedly establishing a military base in Syria's Aleppo province, a monitor revealed on Monday [24 May]. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that a new Iranian military base is under construction near the territories of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

Pro-Iran militia groups have also begun transferring arms and ammunition to the base located on a hill in the village of Haboubah between al-Khafsah and Meskanah near the areas under the control of the SDF and US-led Coalition forces. According to the Britain-based monitoring group, the weapons came from an area to the west of Euphrates and Homs...

Source: “İran'dan Türkiye'nin güneyine dev askeri üs! Bölgeye silah yığıyor (Iran [establishing] giant military base in [area] south of Turkey! Weapons are flowing into the region),” *YeniAkit.com* (Islamic-conservative, pro-government Turkish daily newspaper), 2 June 2021. <https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/irandan-turkiyenin-guneyine-dev-askeri-us-bolgeye-silah-yigiyor-1545268.html>

Iranian Revolutionary Guards are preparing to establish Iran's largest military base in Syria to date. Iranian military forces have moved a huge number of additional forces to establish the military base in the rural part of Homs, in central Syria.... A high number of artillery batteries, military ammunition and vehicles have been brought to the region, according to local source Levant 24. The weapons and equipment entered Syria via Iraq, through the El Bukemal region on the Syrian border. Later, the military vehicles carrying the equipment entered the rural part of Homs via Palmira. It is expected that the military base will be established near the T-4 (Tayfur) military air base in the region. Iran has been increasing its presence in Syria lately.

Continued: Fresh Insights into Iran's New Military Base in Syria

Source: "New reinforcement | Iranian-backed militias bring in surface-to-surface missiles and ammunition to their base opposite Coalition and SDF-held areas in eastern Aleppo," *Syrian Observatory for Human Rights* (an independent and impartial UK-based human rights organization), 14 June 2021. <https://www.syriahr.com/en/218005/>

Reliable sources in the eastern countryside of Aleppo have told the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) that the Iranian-backed militias have brought in new military reinforcement in the past few hours to their recently-established base on a hill in Habboubah village between al-Khafsah and Maskanah, near the bank of the Euphrates river and opposite areas under the control of the International Coalition and Syria Democratic Forces...

According to SOHR sources, the new reinforcement included weapons, ammunition and medium-range surface-to-surface missiles from west Euphrates region. It is worth noting that this is the second batch of reinforcement to be brought to the area in 20 days, while no confirmed information has been reported so far about the goals or objectives.... In the meantime, Iranian-backed militias, led by the Afghani Liwaa Fatemiyoun continued recruitment operations east Aleppo countryside through offering financial incentives. According to SOHR sources, the number of people recruited by Iranian-backed militias since early February has risen to nearly 985. The recruitment operations are concentrated in the areas of Maskanah, al-Sfirah, Deir Hafer, and other areas in towns and villages of eastern Aleppo through Iran's spiritual proxies and bureaus that offer financial incentives.

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