

Report on Situation in North East Syria, last 24 hours, 11th October 2019, 8am Rojava Information Center

On Wednesday the 9th of October 2019 Turkey started attacking the region governed by the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria.

The Turkish attacks started at 4:00 PM (EEST/GMT+3) with air strikes in the region of Serekaniye (Ras al Ain) and Tel Abyad (Kurdish: Gire Spi).

Overview

On the 10th October 2019, the second day of the attempted occupation of North-Eastern Syria, Turkey continues to indiscriminately shell virtually all cities and towns along the border, from Northern Aleppo all the way to Derik. Airstrikes and attempted ground incursions were focussed around Sere Kaniye (Ras Al-Ayn) and Tel Abyad (Gire Spi). Ground incursions have also been attempted as far east as the city of Dirbesiye. Turkey has made the most significant incursions in the villages west of Sere Kaniye, nearly surrounding the city and cutting off routes. Civilians and SDF military forces remain inside Sere Kaniye, attempting to repel Turkish occupation. Sections of the border wall have been removed by Turkish forces at various points along the border. A worrying trend is an increasing targeting of civilians and infrastructure, including the targeting of Sere Kaniye hospital (by shelling or airstrikes, unclear), shelling of a demonstration in Tel Abyad, shelling of a convoy of society and government officials on the road between Tel Abyad and Raqqa, targeting of the water facilities in Hasakah region, and oil infrastructure in Rimelan.

Sere Kaniye

The heaviest attack has been focussed on Sere Kaniye (Ras Al-Ayn). After airstrikes in the morning Turkey opened the border west of Sere Kaniye and Turkish proxy forces began to occupy the empty villages west of Sere Kaniye, where the population was driven out by the attacks. Heavy ground fighting in the villages lasted the whole day. By night it was reported that Turkey had seized 11 villages, encircling Sere Kaniye from three sides while bombing the city with aircraft. Only the road to Hasakah is still open where Turkish snipers are firing, also wounding civilians as they flee. Airplanes have also struck this road. Some of the heaviest fighting was around the village of Til Helef. In Sere Kaniye there are still civilians and the SDF is defending the city. The hospital of Sere Kaniye was attacked and is now no longer operational- it is unclear whether it was due to shelling or airstrikes. Six civilians were killed in Sere Kaniye by Turkish forces.

Tel Abyad

Tel Abyad has also been the target of the heaviest airstrikes and attempted ground incursions. Airstrikes and shelling continued throughout the day. One of the two civilian demonstrations that happened was shelled by Turkish forces.

Dirbesiye

A ground incursion was attempted by Turkey, in conjunction with shelling. Two women were killed in the village of Til Tishrin near Dirbesiye. There also have been attacks on the road between Dirbesiye and Hasakeh.

Qamishlo

There were ongoing heavy artillery attacks on different civilian neighborhoods in Qamishlo. A woman and a child were killed in these attacks, and a young girl was heavily wounded in the Qidurbek neighborhood. There was also shelling in Amude, a small city close to Qamishlo. Although there are still many people staying in both of these cities, many have fled.

Derik (Al-Malikiyah)

Throughout the day there were fly-overs with military aircraft, intensive shelling of the villages around Derik and fire exchanged over the border. At least one village was evacuated.

Kobane

There were attacks on several villages west of Kobane. Turkish proxy forces who have been based in Jarablus from before the invasion have begun to launch attacks on Kobane from Jarablus. This forced people to flee in the direction of Ain Issa.

Manbij

Turkish proxy forces attacked Manbij. The attacks were answered by the local military council.

Humanitarian Crisis Unfolds

At least 70,000 people have fled the villages and cities along the border region, mostly seeking safety in Raqqa and Hasakeh, as well as seeking to cross at the Semalka border crossing into the Kurdish region of Iraq. International NGOs have begun to evacuate their staff, leaving in many cases only minimal staffing and vastly reduced services. The Camp administration of Al Hol camp (population 68,600), where tens of thousands of ISIS affiliates from Syria, Iraq and foreign countries are detained, stated that there are virtually no NGOs remaining in the camp.

Casualties

According to a report of the Kurdish Red Crescent there are 12 reported civilians killed in the attacks, among them children and 33 injured civilians in the last two days. Two women were killed later in the night in Dirbesiye.

ISIS and jihadist resurgence and presence in Turkish proxy forces

As predicted, ISIS and other jihadist groups are using the Turkish invasion as an opportunity to stage attacks and seize power, with an ISIS attack against SDF forces in Deir ez Zor, reports of abduction, torture and murder of two men in Deir ez Zor, and a motorcycle explosion in Al Bab. The presence of jihadist groups among the Turkish forces has been confirmed, including Sham Front (who are reported committing violence and theft against villagers near Tel Abyad), and former ISIS leader Rami Dahsh. Groups like Al Hamza Division and Shield of Al Hasekeh - who often operate in conjunction with jihadist groups - are also present.