

# *Report says Syrian children kidnapped to be used in false chemical attack in Idlib*

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Damascus, September 1 (RHC)-- Foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants have reportedly abducted nearly two dozen children from the city of Jisr al-Shughur in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib to use them in a fake chemical attack and then put the blame on Syrian government forces.

Local sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Lebanon-based Arabic-language al-Mayadeen television news network that terrorists have kidnapped 20 children over the past weeks in a bid to use them in the expected chemical farce.

The sources noted that the attack would be carried out in Jisr al-Shoghour prison, emphasizing that toxic materials have recently been transferred to the prison's depot through the al-Hassaniyah border crossing, which links the city to Turkey.

The crossing is controlled by the Western-backed White Helmets "aid group, which has been accused of cooperating with Takfiri terrorists and staging false flag gas attacks. The local sources went on to say that another chemical attack would be staged in the Christian-majority village of Hallouz.

Al-Mayadeen, citing unnamed informed sources, reported that some 250 White Helmets members and dozens of foreign militants would take part in the attacks, and that they would be launched a week after Syrian government troops start an offensive in Idlib.

Western governments and their allies have never stopped pointing the finger at Damascus whenever an apparent chemical attack takes place. Syria surrendered its stockpiles of chemical weapons in 2014 to a joint mission led by the U.S. and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which oversaw the destruction of the weaponry. It has also consistently denied using chemical weapons over the course of the foreign-backed militancy, which broke out in 2011.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Major General Igor Konashenkov told reporters earlier this week that the U.S. is seeking to use a fake chemical weapons attack to strike Syria. Konashenkov added that the destroyer USS The Sullivans armed with 56 cruise missiles had arrived in the Persian Gulf several days ago, while a U.S. bomber carrying 24 air-to-surface AGM-158 JASSM cruise missiles has been deployed at al-Udeid airbase in Qatar for this purpose.

A Syrian military official says the country's air defense forces are on full alert ahead of a possible U.S. airstrike. Additionally, guided-missile destroyer USS Ross armed with 28 Tomahawk cruise missiles entered the Mediterranean on August 25, and the vessel is capable of hitting any target in Syria.

The U.S. has warned it would respond to a chemical weapons attack by Syrian government forces with retaliatory strikes, stressing that the attacks would be stronger than those conducted by American, British and French forces back in April.

Last April, the U.S., Britain and France carried out a string of airstrikes against Syria over a suspected chemical weapons attack against the city of Douma, located about 10 kilometers northeast of the capital Damascus. Washington and its allies blamed Damascus for the Douma attack, an allegation rejected by the Syrian government.

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