

Iraqi Forces to Liberate Tikrit Within 72 Hours



Tikrit, Iraq, Mar 14, (RHC), -- Iraqi security forces fighting to free the besiege city of Tikrit planned to clear the city from the Islamic State (IS) militants within 72 hours, a militia spokesman said on Saturday.

The city "will be liberated within 72 hours," Karim al-Nouri, a leading figure of the Shiite party Badr Organization and the spokesman of the government-backed militia of al-Hashed al-Shaabi, said in the town of Awja, south of Tikrit.

The Iraqi troops and government-backed Shiite and Sunni militias since Tuesday have carried out a major offensive to free Tikrit and gained some ground in the city, some 170 km north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad.

However, they have been moving slowly and cautiously amid heavy clashes with the militants, including a large number of IS snipers, while they also have to deal with hundreds of roadside bombs and booby-trapped houses.

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