

# *Syrian Defense Minister Visits Yabroud City after Military Victory*

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Damascus, March 17 (RHC-Xinhua) -- On Sunday, Syrian Defense Minister Fahed Jassem al-Fraij visited Yabroud city, north of the capital Damascus, hours after the military forces recaptured the town from the armed rebels, the official SANA news agency reported.

Yabroud, located some 80 km north of Damascus, is an important stronghold of the armed rebels in the mountainous Qalamoun region. It's near the Lebanese town of Ersal, where the rebels obtain weapons and medical treatment.

In mid-February, the army started an offensive to recapture Yabroud by securing its surroundings and then pressing into the city. The battle of Yabroud was part of the offensive the Syrian army has waged to dislodge the rebels from towns and cities in the Qalamoun region. This is aimed at securing the vicinity of Damascus and preventing the flow of arms and fighters from Lebanon in addition to securing the road between Damascus and the central province of Homs and the coastal provinces .



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