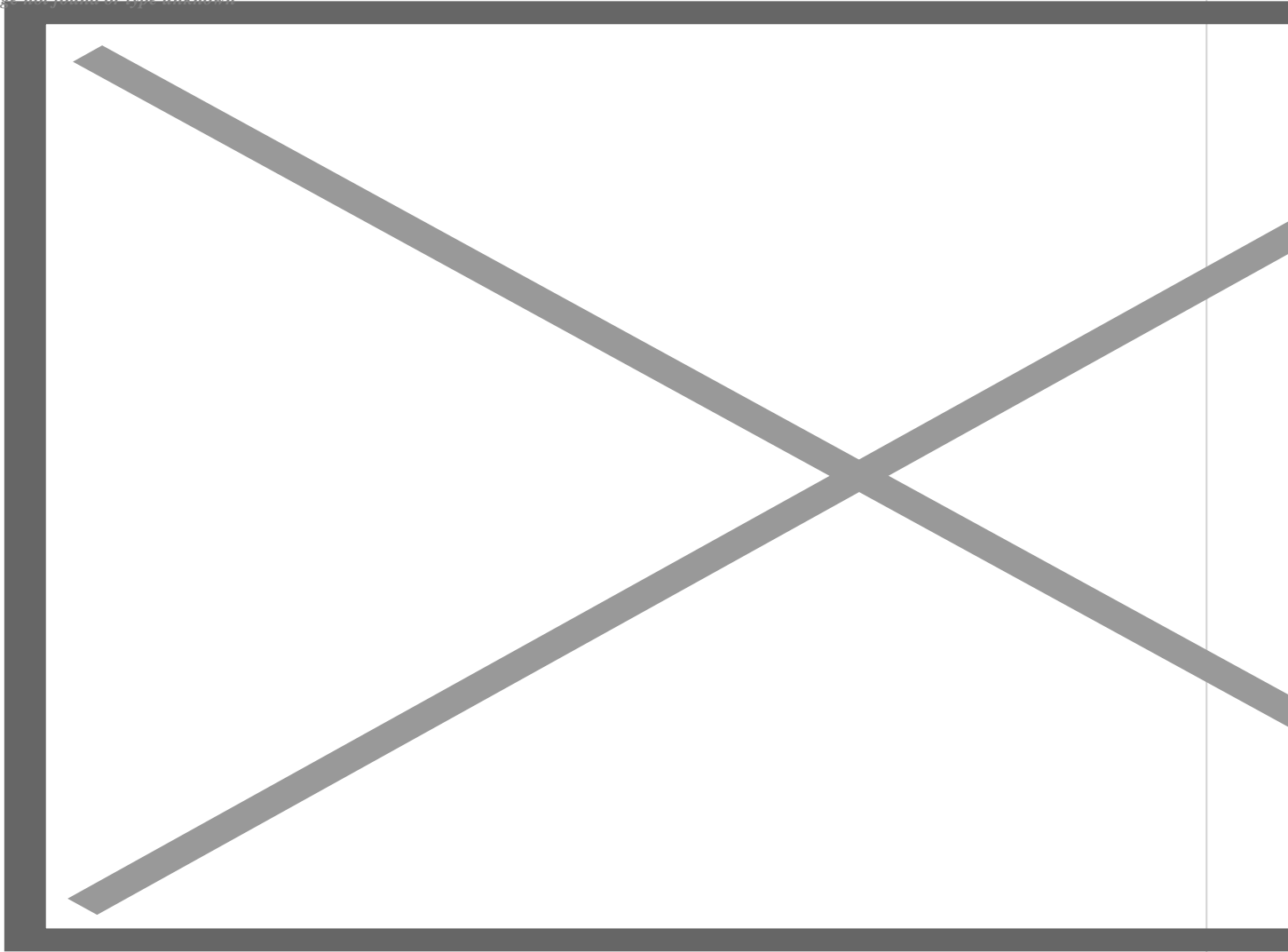


Syria rejects allegations of withdrawing from northern city

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Foreign-sponsored Takfiri terrorists drive along the Aleppo-Damascus M5 highway in the northwestern area of Khan al-Assal, as smoke rises in the distance amid bitter clashes with Syrian government forces on November 29, 2024. (Photo by AFP)

Damascus, December 1 (RHC)-- Syria has dismissed allegations of the country's forces withdrawal from the northern city of Hama in the face of foreign-backed Takfiri terrorists, considering such claims to be part of a "media war" aimed at tarnishing Damascus' ongoing and successful counterterrorism efforts.

In a statement on Saturday, the Syrian defense ministry said the forces were positioned on the city's northern and eastern countryside, asserting: "Towns near Hama have not been entered." Therefore, Syria urged citizens "not to believe rumors published by opposition media."

Video footage emerging from the battlefields also showed Syrian soldiers confirming their ongoing deployment in the city. The General Command of the Syrian Army, meanwhile, described allegations to the contrary as a "coordinated media war aimed at undermining the morale of our people and our valiant army."

"Our valiant army remains steadfast, strong, and committed to its duty of defending the homeland and its people against all forms of terrorism and its supporters."

In another statement, the General Command likewise reaffirmed the forces' steadfastness in their underway efforts to push back against the Takfiris.

The Syrian army says it is regrouping, and redeploying troops to strengthen its defense lines as part of preparations for a "counterattack" against foreign-sponsored Takfiri terrorists in the northwestern city of Aleppo.

It said the soldiers had engaged in redeployment across a vast array of northern areas in preparation for a counteroffensive aimed at fending off a large-scale attack by the terrorists.

The measure was taken towards "reinforcing defensive lines to absorb the attack, preserve the lives of civilians and soldiers, and prepare for a counterattack," it said.

The forces would, meanwhile, "await the completion of military reinforcements and their deployment across combat axes in preparation for the counteroffensive," the statement pointed out.

It noted that the terrorists engaged in the attack numbered thousands and were deploying heavy weaponry and large drone squadrons, adding that their attacks had claimed the lives of dozens of Syrian soldiers.

"However, they (the terrorists) were unable to establish fixed positions due to the ongoing concentrated and powerful strikes by our armed forces," the statement said.

Earlier this week, members of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) Takfiri terrorist group were reported to have overrun many government-controlled areas and killed dozens of Syrian soldiers in the Arab country's north.

Later, though, it was also reported that the Syrian army had thwarted large-scale terrorist operations in the Aleppo Province through a preemptive strike.

The General Command cited the Russian Coordination Center in Syria as saying that the army and its allied Russian air forces had killed as many as 300 terrorists over the past 24 hours after eliminating 600 of them throughout the two preceding days.

'Israel in alliance with Takfiris'

The statement reminded that the HTS's recent attack on the northern areas came amid intense Israeli aerial assaults against Syria, referring to the terror outfit's alliance with the Israeli regime and Tel Aviv's efforts at targeting Syria's all-out counterterrorism push.

Citing a notable instance of the two sides' alliance, the General Command referred to the HTS' "explicitly thanking Israel for its assassination of [the Lebanese resistance movement] Hezbollah's leaders earlier this year."

The Syrian Social Nationalist Party also confirmed ongoing cooperation between Tel Aviv and the Takfiris, saying, "The terrorist groups are operating under the orders of the occupation forces."

It described the Israeli regime's efforts at enabling resurgence of Takfiri terrorism in Syria as the regime's attempt at making up for its debilitating losses in the face of the regional resistance movements that have put up a successful fight in the face of Tel Aviv's deadly aggression throughout the region, including in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

"It has become evident that the failure of the project to undermine the resistance has driven the enemy to seek compensation on the Syrian front, which is integrally linked to the fronts of southern Lebanon, Gaza, and the West Bank."

The party, however, said it "considers that this scheme will face the same fate as the aggression on Gaza and Lebanon." "What is happening reveals that the position of the Syrian state in support of the resistance continues to unsettle the enemies of the nation and weakens plans for division and colonization."

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