

Israel launches foray into Syrian soil after Damascus government falls

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Smoke billows from the site of an Israeli strike on the southwestern Syrian city of Quneitra near

Damascus, December 8 (RHC)-- Israeli regime forces have launched a foray into Syrian soil and entered the southwestern city of Quneitra near the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights after militant groups took control of the Arab country.

The Israeli media reported on Sunday that the regime's tanks had entered Quneitra on the border of the occupied Golan following heavy shelling of surrounding areas. "Israeli forces pushed into the buffer zone in the Quneitra area, and launched artillery shelling in the area," the website of the Times of Israel newspaper said.

The regime's media also reported the entry of Israeli tanks into Khan Arnabeh, which is to the northeast of Quneitra and five kilometers from the border of the occupied Golan.

Quneitra is within the so-called buffer zone established in 1974 between the occupied Golan and Syria, but Khan Arnabeh is beyond that and the regime's forces are not allowed to enter.

The resistance media confirmed reports of the Israeli aggression and said the development took place after the regime increased its deployment in the occupied Golan ahead of the fall of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government in Damascus.

Local reports said schools were canceled in four settlements in the occupied Golan due to the "security situation," adding that the Israeli military had set up checkpoints in the area.

At least four airstrikes targeted the Quneitra countryside after the Israeli tanks entered the area. The occupation forces were also reported to be digging a large trench on the Syrian border and have destroyed what they claim are weapons depots.

The Israeli occupation army declared that in light of the developments in Syria, it had deployed forces to key areas along the border to ensure the security of the Israeli settlements in the occupied Golan Heights.

Israel's opposition leader Yair Lapid also said, "In light of the developments in Syria, it is more important than ever to form a strong regional alliance with Saudi Arabia and the Abraham Accords countries to confront regional instability together."

Earlier in the day, the armed Syrian opposition groups raided the capital Damascus, and took control of the city's radio and television station as well as major military and security centers.

The armed groups, led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) militants, announced that they had fully captured the Syrian capital and confirmed reports of the fall of the Assad government.

HTS leader Ahmed al-Shar'a, known as Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, has called on Syrian people not to get close to government institutes and organizations until an official transfer of power takes place under the supervision of the prime minister.

Syrian Prime Minister Mohammed Ghazi Jalali said the government was ready to "extend its hand" to the opposition and hand over its functions to a transitional government.



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