

# *U.S. Combat Drone Goes Down in Southern Iraq*

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Baghdad, June 5 (RHC)-- An Iraqi security source says a U.S. unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) has crashed in the country's southern province of Basra as it was supposed to join the US-led air campaign against the so-called ISIL positions in the western Iraqi province of Anbar.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the remote-controlled drone, which had taken off from an airbase in the Persian Gulf kingdom of Qatar, experienced a technical failure and went down in al-Lahis desert on the outskirts of the provincial capital of Basra, located 550 kilometers (340 miles) southeast of the capital, Baghdad, on Thursday, Arabic-language al-Forat news agency reported. The report added that the UAV exploded moments after the crash.

Meanwhile, at least 31 members of the ISIL Takfiri terrorist group have been killed in airstrikes by Iraq's Air Force in the country's conflict-stricken northern province of Salahuddin. Twenty-two ISIL extremists were killed after Iraqi fighter jets carried out precision strikes north of the provincial capital of Tikrit, located 140 kilometers (87 miles) northwest of Baghdad. Iraqi military aircraft also destroyed a number of Takfiri militant hideouts.

Elsewhere in Iraq, nine ISIL militants were killed when Iraqi warplanes struck ISIL positions in the city of Shirqat, located some 300 kilometers (190 miles) north of the capital.

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