

Clashes between Government of Syria (GoS) armed forces and GoS-backed militias² against armed opposition groups increased this week. On 24 August, opposition snipers killed a GoS soldier on the Hursh Bayanin frontline near Jabal al-Zawiyah, Idlib Governorate.³ The same day, GoS armed forces and the Turkish-backed Syrian opposition's National Liberation Front clashed near Jabal al-Zawiyah, Idlib Governorate.⁴ On 25 August, armed opposition fighters killed a GoS soldier on the Jobas frontline in Idlib Governorate.⁵ On 26 August, Hayyat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) snipers killed two GoS soldiers on the frontlines in western Aleppo Governorate.⁶ On 27 August, GoS armed forces clashed with armed opposition groups in al-Rawiha, Benin,gr IwC Governorate.

gunmen injured a former opposition fighter affiliated with GoS air force intelligence in Tasil, Dara'a Governorate.²⁸ On 25 August, unidentified gunmen killed two GoS 4th Division fighters in Dara'a city.²⁹ On 25 August, unidentified gunmen injured an alleged GoS armed forces collaborator and killed his child in Jasim, Dara'a Governorate.³⁰ On 26 August, unidentified gunmen kidnapped a Hezbollah collaborator in Jamleh, Dara'a Governorate.³¹ On 26 August, unidentified gunmen attacked a GoS armed forces checkpoint in Tafas, Dara'a Governorate.³² On 30 August, an IED planted by an unidentified armed group injured an alleged collaborator for the Russian-backed 5th Corps in Jasim, Dara'a Governorate.³³ Since GoS regained control of Dara'a Governorate, attacks against former opposition fighters and GoS soldiers and officials have steadily increased.

GoS armed forces and GoS-backed militias clashed with ISIS in Homs Governorate. On 25 August, GoS armed forces, the GoS-backed National Defense Forces, and Iranian-backed Quds brigade launched a new operation against ISIS in the Badia desert region of Homs Governorate.³⁴ This coincided with a new Russian anti-ISIS operation in northeastern Syria. On 28 August, a bus carrying GoS armed forces soldiers hit 2 IEDs allegedly planted by ISIS, killing 4 GoS soldiers near Palmyra, Homs Governorate.³⁵

COVID-19 cases continued to rise in GoS-controlled territory. As of 30 August, there were 2703 reported COVID-19 cases in GoS-controlled territory, an increase of some 400 from the previous week (see figure 2).³⁶ As COVID-19 has spread around Syria, medical personnel have been affected particularly by the virus. Since the start of the pandemic, 45 medical doctors in Damascus and Rural Damascus Governorate have reportedly died from COVID-19.³⁷

²⁸ <https://www.syriahr.com/en/181145/>

²⁹ <https://www.syriahr.com/en/181150/>

³⁰ <https://www.syriahr.com/en/181248/>

³¹ <https://www.syriahr.com/en/181498/>

³² <https://www.syriahr.com/en/181356/>

³³ <https://www.syriahr.com/en/181932/>

³⁴ <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/syrian-army-kicks-off-massive-desert-operation-to-eliminate-isis-cells/>

³⁵ <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/bus-carrying-syrian-army-soldiers-targeted-by-terrorists-in-eastern-homs/>

³⁶ <https://sana.sy/en/?p=201572>

³⁷ <https://tinyurl.com/y2twod2a>

Russia began a new operation against ISIS in northeast Syria. On 24 August, an ISIS-planted landmine killed two GoS-backed militiamen near Al-Rusafa, Ar-Raqqa Governorate.³⁸ The same day, GoS and Russian armed forces dispatched military reinforcements to Deir-ez-Zor Governorate to fight against ISIS.³⁹ On 26 August, Russia announced a new military operation named "White Desert" against ISIS in central and eastern Syria.⁴⁰ This followed the killing of a Russian general by ISIS the previous week. On 27 August, ISIS clashed with GoS armed forces and GoS-backed militias in western Deir-ez-Zor Governorate.⁴¹ On 28 August, ISIS attacked GoS armed forces and the NDF in western Deir-ez-Zor Governorate.⁴² 14 GoS

