

Iraqi forces push deeper in IS-held Ramadi

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Baghdad: Iraqi security forces on Saturday moved deeper into the heart of the city of Ramadi, where they have been fighting for five days in fierce clashes against the Islamic State (IS) militants.

The security forces, backed by Iraqi and US-led coalition aircraft, have liberated the Houz district after heavy clashes with IS militants, bringing the troops closer to the adjacent government complex in central Ramadi, some 110 km north of Iraqi capital Baghdad, the source told Xinhua.

The latest troops' advance was substantial for the Iraqi security forces and allied paramilitary units, as it gives them control over the key city of Ramadi, despite the fact that the surrounding neighbourhoods are still captured by IS militants and dotted with roadside bombs and booby-trapped buildings.

"The air strikes were very powerful and accurate, and were instrumental in regaining ground, as they helped detonate bombs and killing large number of IS militants," the source said.

The recapture of Houz district, which stretches from the southern part of Ramadi to central city, came after two days of clashes and heavy air strikes against IS militants.

- IANS