

IS kidnaps 2,000 civilians from northern Syrian town while evacuating

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Damascus: In a yet another act of terror, the militants of Islamic State Friday kidnapped as many as 2,000 civilians while evacuating their last position in the northern town of Manbej near Turkey, said reports.

A convoy of 500 vehicles carrying IS militants and civilians, who were used as human shields, started leaving Manbej toward the town of Jarablus in the northeastern countryside of Aleppo, as part of mediation by local dignitaries between IS and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

It said the deal was not officially declared between both sides, but it marks the end of the IS presence in their last pocket in Manbej, the last IS position on the Turkish borders.

Kurdish activists, meanwhile, said the IS terror group has taken nearly 2,000 civilians as human shield to secure its withdrawal safely from Manbej toward Jarablus.

The terror group opened fire on several civilians who were trying to flee the withdrawing IS convoy, activists added.

Manbej has become almost empty following the IS withdrawal, activists said, adding that the SDF has succeeded to evacuate 2,500 civilians from the al-Sirib neighbourhood.

On August 6, the SDF, backed by heavy air cover from the US-led anti-terror coalition, took control over Manbej.

The SDF, which is led by the Kurdish People's Protection Units, succeeded to capture the town, following months of battle.

- (With IANS inputs)