

## **Syrian army kills 150 rebels during Damascus offensive**

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**Damascus:** The Syrian army has killed over 150 rebels during the three-day long military showdown in the eastern part of the capital Damascus, state news agency SANA reported on Wednesday.

Hundreds of rebels were wounded during the battles, said SANA, adding that the government forces also destroyed three explosive-laden vehicles, and killed seven suicide bombers before reaching their destination at military posts east of Damascus.

The report came a day after the Syrian army confronted the second wave of rebel attack from the rebel-held neighborhood east of Damascus on government-controlled areas in the eastern parts of the capital that started on Tuesday morning.

On Sunday, the rebels of the Al Qaeda-linked Nusra Front and like-minded groups unleashed the first attack on the capital, raiding down the city with tens of mortar shells and explosive bullets.

The military forces called in reinforcements from the elite forces of the 4th Division and the Syrian Republican Guards' unit, to help protect the capital eastern part.

So far the rebels failed to make a notable breakthrough, but the offensives they waged and the counter attacks from the Syrian army reminded the capital's people of the first days of the armed rebellion in eastern Damascus.

"The Syrian forces are fighting intense battles with the terrorist groups north of Jobar neighbourhood," said SANA, citing a military source.

Meanwhile, the state news agency said that the Syrian air force carried out intense airstrikes against the rebel positions in the Eastern Ghouta countryside, from which the rebels unleashed their offensives against the capital.

- (With IANS inputs)