

Syrian Army takes full control of major IS stronghold in Aleppo

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Damascus: The Syrian army on Wednesday captured the town of Deir Hafer, a major stronghold for the Islamic State (IS) group in northern Syria.

Capturing Deir Hafer in the eastern countryside of Aleppo province comes a week after the Syrian army laid a siege on that town as part of a major military campaign against IS positions.

The Syrian army captured 27 towns and villages around Deir Hafer and secured the 24 km of the highway connecting Aleppo with Raqqa province, the de facto capital of IS, Xinhua news agency reported.

The Syrian army is currently moving toward capturing the town of Maskaneh, the last IS-held town in the eastern countryside of Aleppo.

Capturing Deir Hafer and moving toward Maskaneh will put the Syrian army on the road toward Raqqa, where the US forces and allied Kurdish-led fighters of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) are fighting against IS in the countryside of that province.

There are reports that a full-scale military offensive by the US and the SDF on Raqqa city will be launched earlier next month.

The SDF spokesman, Talal Silo, recently said that the SDF has no problem cooperating with the Syrian army in the battle on Raqqa, but the prospect of such cooperation is still murky.

According to Silo, the Syrian government deems the US military intervention as illegal and considered it as an aggression as Washington stepped in without coordination with the administration of President Bashar al-Assad.

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