

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نپاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://news.antiwar.com/2017/02/23/turkey-claims-victory-in-offensive-against-north-syrias-al-bab/print/>

Turkey Claims Victory in Offensive Against North Syria's al-Bab

By Jason Ditz
February 23, 2017



After months of offensives and nearly daily statements claiming huge numbers of ISIS fighters killed, Turkey today claimed to have finally captured the city of al-Bab, the last ISIS-held city in the Aleppo Province of northern Syria. Al-Bab was a city of about 60,000 people before the war, and located just east of Aleppo.

Turkey's Defense Ministry says that they are handing the city over to a Free Syrian Army faction, one of the moderate rebel groups Turkey has been backing since their invasion of Syria last August. The forces are still sweeping the town for landmines, saying the city is yet to be fully cleared.

ISIS claimed to have killed more than 400 Turkish troops and allied rebels in the course of fighting over the city, and destroyed 41 Turkish tanks. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the fighting had killed 444 civilians

A big concern now is what Turkey's invasion force does next. Early in the offensive against al-Bab, Turkey had indicated they'd invade Manbij next. Manbij is a city under Kurdish control, and the US is said to oppose such a move. More recently, Turkey has also indicated they'd attack ISIS Raqqa, but such a move is going to take them past Manbij at any rate, risking more fighting.