

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نیاشد 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

Al Jazeera

Gaddafi threatens to take fight to Europe

7/9/2011

Muammar Gaddafi has threatened to take the war in Libya to Europe while rebels come under heavy fire as they renew their push against his forces.

Thousands of Gaddafi supporters rallied in the Green Square in Tripoli, Libya's capital, for Friday prayers, underscoring his refusal to step down after four decades in power and five months of fighting.

Large numbers also turned out in the desert town of Sabha, 800km to the south, in an apparent attempt to show that Gaddafi still enjoys support in the areas of Libya he still controls.

In a speech on Libyan television, Gaddafi threatened to send hundreds of Libyans to carry out attacks in Europe in revenge for the NATO-led military campaign against him.

"Hundreds of Libyans will martyr in Europe. I told you it is eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth. But we will give them a chance to come to their senses," he said in an audio speech.

Ali Abu-Sowah, a religious preacher, told worshippers that Libya could implement reform without the intervention of the West and accused the rebels of being Western stooges.

"How can we allow such meddling when we see what happened in beloved Iraq and Afghanistan?" he said.

NATO has denied the Libyan government's charge that it has intentionally carried out air raids to aid rebel advances, saying it is sticking to UN mandate to protect civilian lives.

'Writing on the wall'

Gaddafi's threatening rhetoric contrasted with a prediction by Britain, one of the main backers of the campaign against Gaddafi, "the writing is on the wall" for him.

"I think it's heading towards a clear conclusion - eventually, we don't know when that will be, when Colonel Gaddafi realises that his departure is essential to the future of Libya and its people," William Hague, the British foreign secretary, told the Reuters news agency in an interview on Friday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

"I think the pressure on the regime is increasing all the time. We have intensified the military campaign, it will be intensified further. The economic pressure is intensifying also, and so is the diplomatic pressure."

And in what may be the latest financial squeeze on Gaddafi, Turkey has frozen \$1bn of Libyan central bank reserves deposited in its banks, a Turkish newspaper reported on Friday.

The developments on the diplomatic front came as opposition fighters on the ground took fresh casualties, after advancing on two fronts in the past two weeks against Gaddafi's forces.

At least six fighters were killed and 17 injured on Friday on the frontline near Misrata, on Libya's Mediterranean coast, according to local medical workers.

They had come under heavy artillery fire from Gaddafi's forces.

Approaching Zlitan

A rebel sympathiser in Misrata told the Reuters news agency that opposition forces had been moving closer to neighbouring Zlitan, one of a chain of government-controlled towns blocking their advance to Tripoli.

As they advanced, pro-Gaddafi troops inside the city fired rounds of explosives to block their progress, the sympathiser said in an e-mail.

"The rebels are waiting for NATO back-up or for Gaddafi forces to run out of ammunition to make a move to take the city centre," he said.

On the other major front, in the Western Mountains region southwest of Tripoli, NATO jets bombed forces loyal to Gaddafi several times, their bombs landing about 3km east of the village of Qawalish, according to one rebel fighter.

After weeks of static fighting, the rebels made significant advances on Wednesday: pushing west from Misrata to within 13km of Zlitan, where large numbers of pro-Gaddafi forces are based, and seizing the village of Qawalish in the southwest.

Taking Qawalish brings them closer to having control of a major highway into Tripoli.

Rebel advances over the last two weeks have allowed normal life to resume in towns no longer in shelling distance of Gaddafi's troops.

Rebels staged a military parade on Friday evening in Zintan, one of the main towns in the Western Mountains. Children thronged the streets to watch the rebels drive through on tanks.

People fired rifles in the air including one small boy who opened fire with a Kalashnikov assault rifle while perched on his father's shoulders.