

Syria Still Shrouded with Constant Mortar Attacks



Damascus, April 2, (RHC), -- At least three people were killed on Wednesday by multiple mortar attacks targeting the southern province of Sweida and the capital Damascus amid reports of intense fighting on the southern edge of Damascus, local media and witnesses said.

Two people were killed and seven others were wounded when armed militant groups fired a mortar shell that struck a funeral procession in the southern province.

However, it wasn't immediately clear if the firing on the funeral was intentional or accidental, as mortar firings are often imprecise.

In the capital Damascus, a mortar shell landed at the al-Faiha sport city in Damascus' northern district of Burnieh, killing one person and injuring others.

Other mortar shells have also struck the Damascus' south-eastern suburb of Jaramana injuring seven people, reports said, adding that another three mortar rounds struck the Mazzeh 86 district, causing property loss.

The intensification of mortar shelling against government-controlled areas, which has become a daily routine in Syria, has coincided with intense battles currently underway between government troops and

armed militant groups in Damascus' eastern suburb of Jobar, a hotbed for insurgency against the administration of President Bashar al Assad.

The clashes in Jobar started just days earlier, and have been rattling the residents of nearby government-controlled districts, witnesses told Xinhua. The battles continued into Wednesday morning amid activists' reports that the Syrian troops have waged a wide-scale attack against Jobar and other adjacent rebel-held suburbs east of Damascus.

Witnesses said that Syrian army troops have fanned out in the Damascus street of Fares al-Khouri in the government-controlled district of al-Abbasyeen, which is adjacent to Jobar.

Witnesses told Xinhua that Syrian troops have discovered tunnels dug by the rebels, which connect the besieged Jobar with the Abbasyeen. The rebels were allegedly planning to unleash an attack against Abbasyeen, but Syrian troops foiled their attempts by blasting the tunnels.

The Syrian army has been battling the rebels in central and northern Syria, but Jobar has emerged as a "potential threat". Syria's permanent representative to the UN, Bashar al-Jaafari, said on Tuesday that "terrorist groups" were planning to launch attacks using chemical weapons in Jobar to frame the Syrian government.

Activists said Syria's three-year-old crisis has killed more than 150,000 people since the eruption of mass opposition protests against Assad's administration in March 2011.

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