

Syria Update: November 18-25, 2014

1 November 19 – 20: JN, Jaysh al-Islam, and other Salafi rebel groups captured seven villages southeast of Aleppo City during an offensive targeting the al-Safira Defense Factories complex, a primary regime facility for the production and deployment of barrel bombs.

2 November 22 - 25: JN, the Islamic Front, and several FSA-affiliated groups launched a three-pronged offensive on the besieged Shiite towns of Nubl and Zahra, northwest of Aleppo city, seizing several outlying areas from Hezbollah and regime forces. In response, YPG forces from the Afrin canton in northwestern Aleppo reportedly provided ammunition, weapons, and medical support to regime forces in Nubl and Zahra.

3 November 18: A U.S. airstrike targeted a storage facility belonging to al-Qaeda operatives affiliated with “Khorasan Group” and JN in the town of Harem on the Turkish border.

4 November 21 - 23: Civilians in several towns in the Jabal al-Zawiya area of southern Idlib Province protested against JN’s detention of local fighters, prompting JN and Jund al-Aqsa to agree to mediation at a local Shari’a court.

5 November 18: JN detonated two car bombs near central Damascus city, targeting the vehicle of a regime brigadier general and the al-Amara police station.

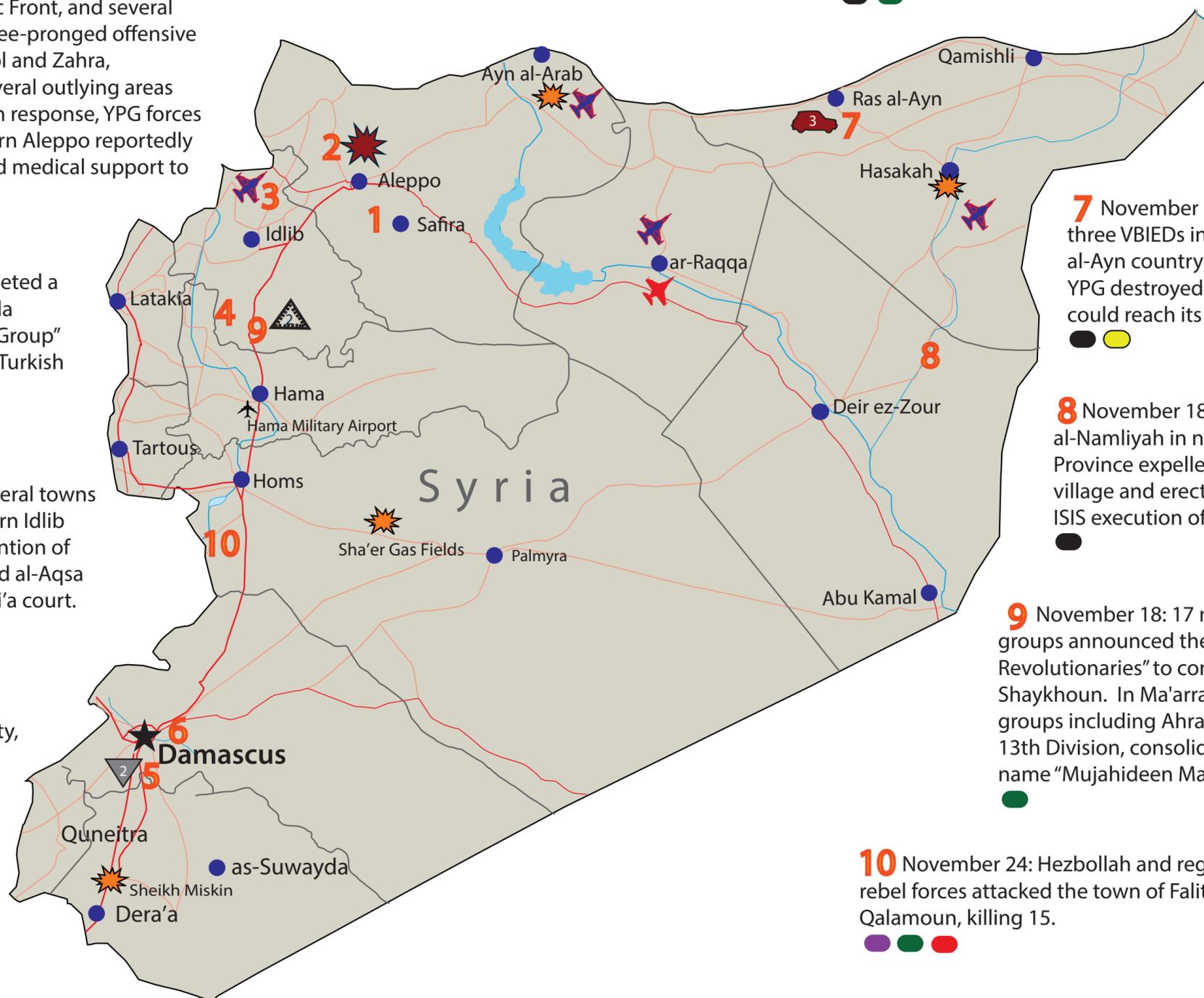
6 November 20 – 23: A group of ISIS fighters attacked a joint Jaysh al-Islam and Ahrar al-Sham (HASI) headquarters in Eastern Ghouta, killing two Jaysh al-Islam members and kidnapping several HASI fighters. Meanwhile, Jaysh al-Umma officially joined the Eastern Ghouta Unified Military Command led by Jaysh al-Islam.

7 November 23: ISIS reportedly detonated three VBIEDs in Kurdish villages in the Ras al-Ayn countryside. Local sources reported the YPG destroyed one of the VBIEDs before it could reach its target.

8 November 18: Residents from the village of al-Namliyah in northeastern Deir ez-Zour Province expelled ISIS militants from the village and erected barricades following the ISIS execution of three residents.

9 November 18: 17 mainly FSA-affiliated rebel groups announced the “Union of Southern Idlib Revolutionaries” to consolidate the defense of Khan Shaykhoun. In Ma’arrat al-Numan, several rebel groups including Ahrar al-Sham and the FSA affiliated 13th Division, consolidated their defenses under the name “Mujahideen Ma’arrat al-Numan.”

10 November 24: Hezbollah and regime forces clashed after JN and rebel forces attacked the town of Falita, northwest of Yabroud in Qalamoun, killing 15.



- Opposition Forces
- Pro-Regime Forces
- ISIS
- U.S.-Led Coalition
- YPG
- Jabhat al-Nusra (JN)
- ★ Major Clash
- ▽ Car Bomb
- 🚗 VBIED
- △ New Operations Room

Background Kinetic Activity

- ✈ Coalition Airstrikes
- ✈ Major Regime Airstrikes
- ★ Low-level clashes



by Jennifer Cafarella and Christopher Kozak

Jabhat al-Nusra and Rebel Forces Attack Regime Hold-Out in Northern Aleppo: JN and rebel forces attacked regime and Hezbollah forces in the heavily-fortified Shi’a towns of Nubl and Zahra northwest of Aleppo City. This attack was likely intended to free up an alternate supply route to rebels in Aleppo City. If successful, the operation could serve to counteract a recent increase in regime pressure on a rebel primary supply line through Handarat in the northeastern outskirts of Aleppo City. The YPG’s decision to support the regime in the defense of Nubl and Zahra increases the likelihood of a rumored JN offensive against the Afrin canton, allegedly the location of JN and ISIS negotiations in Aleppo.

Jabhat al-Nusra Faces Protest in Idlib Province: The eruption of local civilian protests against JN in Southern Idlib Province may lead JN to reduce its aggression against local commanders and remaining Syrian Revolutionaries Front (SRF) members after JN ousted the SRF and Harakat Hazm from the area. Nonetheless, JN continues to formally implement Shari’a law in the province and has not faced meaningful resistance in response to its overt governance activities.