

## YPG Converts Town of Mennegh into a Military Zone

02-06-2021

The Afrin Liberation Forces, which are part of the majority-Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), have converted the town of Mennegh and its surrounding villages in the northern part of Aleppo governorate into a military zone. Mennegh has been empty of residents since the YPG forcibly displaced them in February 2016 with Russian air support.

The town is located on a plain between the cities of Azaz and Tal Rifaat, east of the Aleppo-Gaziantep highway and near the Mennegh Helicopter Airport. Rebels captured Mennegh and the surrounding villages in 2012, then the airport in 2013, losing both to the YPG in 2016.

Since then, the Afrin Liberation Forces have taken over some properties left behind by displaced residents of Mennegh, using them as housing for fighters and warehouses for weapons and ammunition. Fighters also converted the town's historic Al-Omari Mosque into a weapons warehouse, according to the correspondent for *The Syria Report* in the area. The Mosque was a church during the Roman era.

Mennegh was once home to around 19,000 people, while the neighbouring villages of Ayn Diqneh, Maranaz, Al-Alqmiyeh, Al-Mazraa, and Al-Malikiyeh were home to 3,000 people, sources from the town's former opposition-run local council told *The Syria Report*. These residents all fled their homes, scattering to the Al-Ayman, Al-Rayyan, Al-Salameh, and Sijjo displacement camps. Some of them found places to live in the city of Azaz.

According to local council sources, no residents remain in Mennegh and the neighbouring villages. They added that the Afrin Liberation Forces have converted the area into a closed military zone due to its location near the frontline with opposition forces stationed in the southern outskirts of Azaz.

The Afrin Liberation Forces reportedly demolished more than half of the town's houses, recycling the construction materials, especially iron and stones, to build fortifications along the frontline with the opposition. Soldiers also dug tunnels and trenches within Mennegh and nearby villages, the local council sources said.

According to a correspondent, even if the Afrin Liberation Forces and YPG withdrew from Mennegh, forcibly displaced residents would be unable to return as many of their homes have been destroyed. Their olive groves were also chopped down in recent years to be used by fighters as firewood.

Residents also fled their homes in a hurry, leaving behind most of their possessions as the YPG made a rapid advance on the town in 2016. According to the correspondent, incoming fighters seized what was left behind and looted homes, transferring the items to the nearby town of Tal Rifaat, where YPG fighters and their families reside.

### **A Sign at the Entrance to Mennegh**

# The Syria Report

---



*Source: The Syria Report*

Copyright ©2001-2021 The Syria Report - all rights reserved. Your use of this Web site is subject to our legal terms & conditions