Beat: News

Al-Shabaab Attacks Military Base Outside Afgoye Town

CEP: Eye on Extremism Report

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AFSData Global Media Partners - Somalia.
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“Al-Shabaab militants attack the government base in Sabid area of the Afgoye district in the Lower Shabelle region. The attack was followed by a fierce gun battle between the two sides, which resulted in casualties on both sides. Somali military officials say they have repulsed an Al-Shabaab attack and the situation is now calm. Most of the Lower Shabelle region is the scene of a series of attacks and clashes, which have caused various casualties.”

Mali
Reuters: Lawyers Ask ICC Not To Convict Accused Malian Islamist

“Lawyers for a Malian Islamist rebel accused of being central to the persecution of residents in Timbuktu and the destruction of the city's holy sites told judges at his war crimes trial he was wrongly targeted. “He should not be convicted because he happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, with the wrong ethnicity,” defence lawyer Melinda Taylor said of her client Al Hassan Ag Abdoul Aziz. According to prosecutors Al Hassan was a key member of the Ansar Dine Islamist group which controlled every aspect of daily life after their takeover of Timbuktu in 2012. Al Hassan headed an Islamic police force that terrorized the population of Timbuktu, the prosecutors say. He is charged with war crimes including torture and sexual slavery. As well as trying to impose sharia Islamic law across a divided Mali, the al Qaeda-linked fighters used pick-axes, shovels and hammers to shatter earthen tombs and centuries-old shrines reflecting the local Sufi version of Islam in what is known as the “City of 333 Saints”.

Defence lawyers in their opening statement did not deny Al Hassan was a member of Ansar Dine. However, they painted him as a man simply trying to maintain order in a chaotic situation in Timbuktu after it was taken by the rebels. In addition the defence says Al Hassan has mental problems after being allegedly tortured while in detention in Mali before being sent to the ICC.”

Africa
Reuters: At Least 14 Dead In East Congo Refugee Camp Attack

“At least 14 people were killed in an overnight attack on a displaced persons camp in east Democratic Republic of Congo's Ituri province, the latest violence in an area overrun by militants, the army and a civil society leader said on Tuesday. Rebels raided a site outside the eastern town of Fataki where hundreds of civilians have sought refuge in recent months, killing 14 people including children, army spokesman Jules Ngongo Tsikudi said. Civil society leader Dieudonne Lossa gave a provisional death toll of 15 and blamed a militant group known as CODECO, accused of staging another attack on a nearby artisanal mining site on Sunday that killed at least 35. Reuters was not able to reach CODECO for comment on Tuesday. The group is one of several armed militias, including an Islamic State affiliate, wrangling over land and resources in Congo's mineral-rich east - a conflict that has claimed thousands of lives and displaced millions over the past decade.”

Syria
Kurdistan 24: April The Bloodiest Month In Northeast Syria Due To ISIS's Ramadan Campaign: RIC

“ISIS carried out 54 sleeper cell attacks across northeast Syria in April, killing 52 and injuring 32 as part of a campaign it launched during Ramadan, according to the latest monthly Rojava Information Centre (RIC) report published on Monday. On Apr. 17, ISIS spokesperson Abu Omar al-Muhajir claimed the group would avenge the killing of the previous ISIS leader Abu Ibrahim al-Qurayshi, who was assassinated in February alongside his spokesperson Abu Hamza al-Qurashi. Since then, there has been a huge increase in ISIS attacks in northeast Syria, Iraq, and other countries. “Following the spokesperson's statement, North and East Syria saw sleeper

cell attacks (in April) rise to 54 – 36 of which were conducted on or after April 17th," read the RIC report. "ISIS claimed over a dozen more attacks, though RIC has not been able to independently verify them, and they are thus not reflected in this report's statistics." "Of the 18 security forces and 34 civilians killed in April, 16 and 23, respectively, occurred after the campaign's declaration," the report added.

"Excluding the January battle in Heseke (Hasakah), this is the highest monthly death toll since RIC began recording these statistics." ISIS launched a large-scale attack on al-Sina'a prison in late January in an attempt to release the thousands of ISIS militants imprisoned inside."

Source: Provided by ARAC International research partner CEP. For full updates sent to ARAC by CEP click the link below.

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