

## TARGETING THE TURKMEN AT THE HUSSEINIYA OF SAYID AL-SHUHADA IN THE TURKMEN DISTRICT OF TUZ KHURMATU

By Mofak Salman

On the Wednesday 23rd of January 2013 the Turkmen people, politicians and local officials were gathered at the Husseiniya of Sayid al-Shuhada in the Turkmen district of Tuz Khurmatu which is located 60km south of the city of Kerkuk and east of the province of Tikrit. The Turkmen gathering were mourning the death of the Turkmen citizen, Ahmed Salah Asker who was assassinated by terrorist in Tuz Khormatu using a silencer gun. <sup>[1][2]</sup>

The suicide bomber was wearing explosives around his waist. He entered the Husseiniya of Sayid al-Shuhada and he blow himself up in the middle of a funeral killing over 42 people and wounding 75 others, according to security and medical officials. <sup>[3][4][5]</sup>

The blast on Wednesday 23rd of January 2013 that struck the Sayid al-Shuhada mosque in Tuz Khurmatu was designed to have a maximum effect by targeting the funeral of a relative of a politician, Ahmed Salah Asker who was killed a day earlier and worked at the health sector in Tuz Khormatu.



Mourners at the funeral of Turkmen citizen Ahmed Salah Asker who was assassinated by terrorist with silencer gun



Brother of the Turkmen citizen Ahmed Salah Asker who announced Turkmen has to protect themselves without depending on the Iraqi government and other governments

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bizturkmeniz.com/tr/showArticle.asp?id=26667>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www1.alforattv.net/modules/news/article.php?storyid=84903>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.shafaaq.com/en/news/4889-bombing-outcome-in-tuz-khormato-rises-to-25-dead-and-88-injured-people-.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.democraticunderground.com/1014377920>

<sup>5</sup> Iraq bars Turkish ambulance plane from landing in Kirkuk, 10 February 2013 /MÎNHAC ÇELİK, İSTANBUL;  
<http://www.todayszaman.com/news-306636-iraq-bars-turkish-ambulance-plane-from-landing-in-kirkuk.html>



Mourners at the funeral of Turkmen citizen Ahmed Salah Asker wrapped with a Turkmen flag



The deputy of the ITF Ali Hashim Muhtaroglu condemning the attack on the Ahmed Salah Asker who was assassinated by terrorist group with silencer gun



The deputy of the ITF Ali Hashim Muhtaroglu condemning the attack on the Ahmed Salah Asker who was assassinated by terrorist group with silencer gun



Colloquies of Ahmed Salah Asker who was assassinated by terrorist were condemning the attack

After the explosion corpses were on the ground of the Husseiniya of Sayid al-Shuhada. The suicide bomber managed to enter and blow himself up in the middle of the mourners and no group claimed responsibility of the attack. This attack came after more than four weeks of anti-government protest in the city of Rumadi.

The deputy chief of the Iraqi Turkmen Front Ali Hashim Muhtaroglu, a provincial councillor in Salaheddin province Ahmed Abdulwahid Koja and the member of the Kerkuk provincial council, Munir Alqafili were among the injured.

The blast also took the life one of the most prominent and well known writers and poets, Mohammed Mehdi Bayat, who had successfully played a tremendous role in promoting and reviving the Turkmen literature in Turkmeneli.



The Turkmen poet and writer Mohammed Mehdi Bayat who was killed in the blast at the Husseiniya of Sayid al-Shuhada in Tuz Khormatu

The blast took the life of one of the well-known Turkmen poets and writers, Mohammed Ali Kasap, who was born 1946 in the Turkmen district of Tuz Khormatu.



The Turkmen poet and writer Mohammed Ali Kasap who was killed in the blast at the Husseiniya of Sayid al-Shuhada in Tuz Khormatu

The Turkmen poet and writer, Mohammed Ali was extremely patriotic and he fought his homeland Turkmeneli with his pen and published his articles in various newspapers in general and specifically, Ak Su and Turkmeneli newspapers. The Turkmen poet and writer, Mohammed Ali was rewarded several rewards for his fantastic work and continuously stood and fought for

the Turkmen cause, revealing the injustice and unfairness toward the Turkmen in Iraq. His death was a great lost for the Turkmen.



Showing some of his articles that had been published in various newspapers

The funeral was for Ali Hashim Muhtaroglu's brother-in-law, who was shot dead in Tuz Khurmatu on Tuesday afternoon. <sup>[6]</sup> The attack caused an outraged among the Turkmen and there was huge condemnation from the public, political groups and the US government.



Photo of the deputy of ITF Ali Hashim Muhtaroglu 'injured during the blast

After the blast the Turkish government dispatched an air ambulance from Ankara to transport the injured by suicide bomber to Turkey for treatment.

Following an assault on Jan. 23, Ankara decided to assist with the treatment of the injured that were moved from Tuz Khurmatu to Kirkuk. Turkey sent its air ambulance but Iraqi officials did not allow the plane to land. Iraqi government claimed the refusal was due to bad weather conditions.

On the next day, permission to air ambulance was once again denied, but this time, with an excuse that a device essential to the landing was damaged. The incident was one of several in a series of recent squabbles between Turkey and the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and especially after accommodating the fugitive deputy prime minister Tarik Alhashimi in Turkey who wanted by the Iraqi government to face terrorist charges.

As consequences, the heavily injured people were taken to Erbil then they were transported to Istanbul, Turkey to get medical treatment.<sup>[7]</sup>

No one has been arrested for the blast and no group claimed responsibility for the attack. In the view of many Turkmen the attack on the Turkmen in Tuz Khurmatu was politically motivated. The goal and the objective of the terrorist bombings is to displace the Turkmen from the district of Tuz Khurmatu and link the district into the Kurdish Regional Government which is totally rejected by the Turkmen in Turkmeneli.<sup>[8]</sup>

In the view of many Turkmen the aim of the bombings and assassinations in the district of Tuz Khurmatu is to intimidate the Turkmen and force them to leave their home areas. In the eyes of many Turkmen, this is a Kurdish plan and agenda to force the Turkmen citizens out of the district of Tuz Khormatu and make Turkmen district a part of the Kurdistan Region, an idea that the Turkmen totally reject. They would prefer to remain under the control of the central government in Baghdad.



Scenery of the injured Turkmen in the blast at the Tuz Khormatu hospital

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<sup>7</sup> Iraq bars Turkish ambulance plane from landing in Kirkuk, 10 February 2013 /MİN HAC ÇELİK, İSTANBUL;  
<http://www.todayszaman.com/news-306636-iraq-bars-turkish-ambulance-plane-from-landing-in-kirkuk.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://nakshaat.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=14&t=25749#ixzz2ItkICZPq>



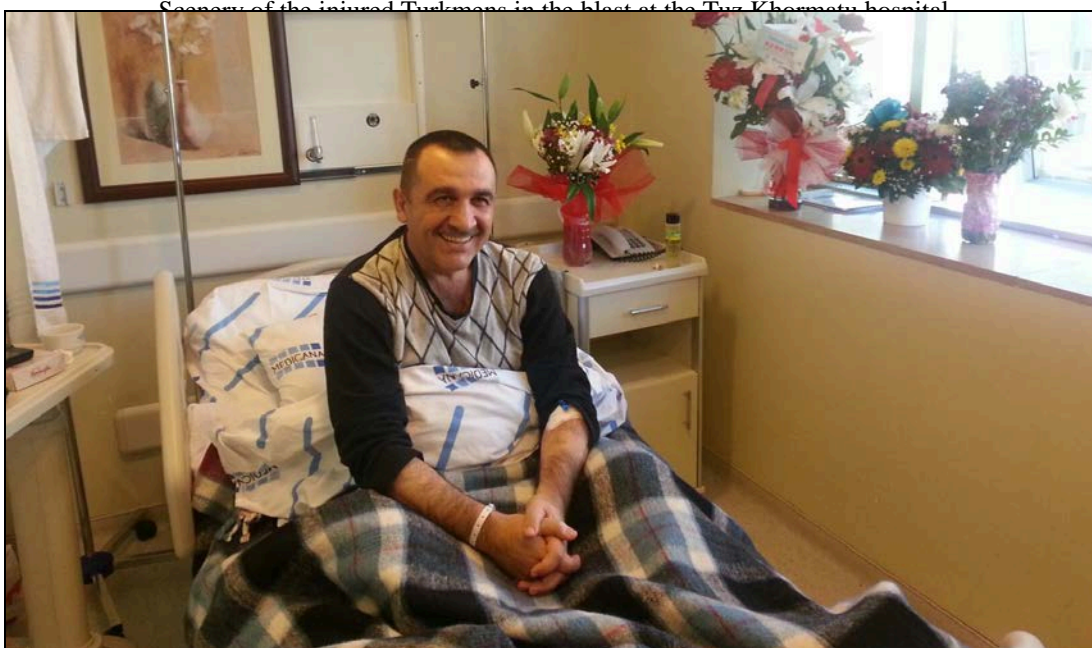
Scenery of the injured Turkmen in the blast at the Tuz Khormatu hospital



Scenery of the injured Turkmen in the blast at the Tuz Khormatu hospital



Scenery of the injured Turkmen in the blast of the Tuz Khormatu hospital



The deputy of the ITF Ali Hashim Muhtaroglu after he had treatment in Istanbul

After the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime in 2003, the Turkmen in Iraq have been subjected to ethnic cleansing by the Kurdish militia. They have been subjected to kidnapping, assassination and discrimination by the central Iraqi government and the Kurdish regional government.

The demography of the Turkmen populated area has been completely altered by Kurdish militia. The Turkmen lands that have been confiscated by the Saddam Hussein government have not been returned to the Turkmen land owners, the reverse happened; more Turkmen lands have been confiscated by the Kurds from outside of the city of Kerkuk.

The Kurdish goal is to annex the city of Kerkuk and link it to the Kurdish Regional Government because in the future, declaring a Kurdish State in northern of Iraq would not survive without controlling the oil of Kerkuk.

Since the central government in Baghdad and regional countries surrounding Iraq are failing and helpless to stop targeting, assassination, kidnapping and killing of the Turkmen, the only way for

the Turkmen to cease the Kurdish influence, obliteration and aspiration in annexing the city of Kerkuk and other Turkmen lands to Kurdish Regional Government is to establish Turkmen Militia to defend the Turkmen, establishing Turkmen Secret Police, Turkmen National Intelligent Organization and finally establishing Turkmen Assingation Team to assassinate the terrorist who are attacking, targeting the Turkmen and forcing them to leave their homeland Turkmeneli. Otherwise, without having a Turkmen militia, the identity will be completely erased and their homeland will be overtaken by the Kurds to fulfill their dream and aspiration establishing a greater Kurdistan.



Photos of the some of the Turkmen who killed in the blast at the Husseiniya of Sayid al-Shuhada in Tuz Khormatu



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