

ISF operations in Kabarok village and the transport of civilians to Makhmour and Debaga, 9 May 2016

Kabarok village lies just north of the Qayyarah-Makhmour road, roughly opposite Mahana village. It had 850 civilian inhabitants. All inhabitants were originally from Kabarok apart from around six families who had come from Mahana, which has been uninhabited for some weeks now. Kabarok is now also empty of civilians.

Timeline of events

05.30 am onwards – US artillery began bombarding parts of Kabarok village. Civilians escaped to or were already sheltering inside houses in a safer part of the village that was not targeted by artillery. Some houses held up to 10 families. ISIS fighters in the streets were successfully targeted by coalition airstrikes. There were two ISIS suicide car bombings which inflicted ISF casualties.

10.30 am – ISF entered the village driving out remaining ISIS fighters who then occupied a position on a hill outside the village.

11.00 am – Using a megaphone, ISF told civilians that the village had been liberated and that they should come out of their houses. When civilians came into the streets, ISIS began bombarding them from their hilltop position outside the village. Some of the bombs contained chlorine gas. Four adults were wounded – with one woman losing an arm – and one child was killed. A number of civilians suffered from gas inhalation. ISF gathered civilians together in the local school which was out of range of ISIS attacks. The wounded were taken in ambulance cars to hospital in either Makhmour or Erbil.

02.00 pm – Four trucks arrived to transport civilians to Makhmour. The civilians numbered 850 and only a portion could be transported initially. In the following hours more trucks arrived to carry the remaining civilians to safety in Makhmour.

Debaga Transit Area

As of 6.00 pm on 9 May, 220 women and children from Kabarok were in the three large tents in the fenced area outside the entrance to Debaga camp. This was a transit area.

The men from Kabarok were still in Makhmour undergoing security screening, and more women and children were there awaiting transport to Debaga transit area. It was expected that all 850 IDPs from Kabarok would arrive at Debaga by the end of the night (excepting any kept for secondary screening) and would be transferred to the new camp at Debaga stadium (as far as capacity allows) the following day (10 May).

Debaga Stadium Camp

Eighty-six families currently occupy the stadium camp and there is room for 184 families. An area outside the stadium will house a further 300 families but these tents are yet to be erected.

For now, surplus families will be given tents in the transit area.

Health

As mentioned earlier, the wounded were transferred quickly from Kabarok to hospitals in Makhmour and Erbil.

A small clinic run by the Ninewa Governorate was set up in the transit area. It was staffed by two doctors and four assistants.

Heat stroke was common and about 10 people (out of the first group of 220 women and children) had been treated for symptoms resulting from chlorine gas inhalation (difficulty breathing, muscle cramps, vomiting).

Staff at the clinic said they were short on supplies of oxygen and antibiotics.

NGOs such as MSF and IM are established in Debaga camp and presumably will be available to treat serious cases in the morning.