
ISIS BLOWS UP FIVE OIL WELLS IN IRAQ

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Five oil wells set on fire is the latest disaster caused by ISIS militants. The de facto rulers of Mosul set the wells on fire in a bid to stop the Iraqi army, which has been steadily advancing to the capital of the terrorist group, Fars News reports. In addition to the well blow-ups, ISIS also mined roads in the vicinity.

The wells were located near the Qayyrah refining complex in the province of Nineveh, where the Iraqi army has been preparing to take on Mosul – the city that fell to the militants in 2014. A day ago the army successfully took control of the Qayyrah airbase, which is 60 miles south of Mosul.

Blowing up the wells is a desperate measure: ISIS relies on oil for its funding and the destruction of refineries and oil tankers in the territories under its control has been a priority for the army. Earlier this month, media reported that the terrorist group is digging pits in the oil fields around Mosul to use as storage, and is also constructing makeshift teapot refineries to process the crude.

The information came from aerial photos taken by Stratfor, showing scores of tiny little refining units. These typically require just a pit for the crude and a portable furnace to separate the fuel fractions.

ISIS bore down on Iraq and Syria in 2014 and managed to capture large swathes of the two countries before their respective armies started striking back. Oil has been essential for the organizations survival – theyve been more than just surviving, even thriving. One analysis from Al Jazeera notes that the terrorist group can count on the services of petroleum engineers and technicians, and that even at prices of US\$20-40 a barrel, its making US\$1-1.5 million a day from sales of crude.

The buyers are hard to identify on this black market, but the main route for exporting the crude has been established to be through Turkey, according to a research paper from Columbia Universitys institute for the study of human rights.

Kaynak/Source: