
MAP SHOWING CONTROL OF TERRITORY AROUND MOSUL

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"[IS] has been installing rocket launchers and placing snipers on the rooftops of civilian houses," she said.

"Those who refuse to allow their houses to be used in this way are threatened or killed. These families are effectively used as human shields, placed squarely in harm's way, caught between IS and Iraqi Security Force fire responding to rocket and sniper attacks."

Ms Shamdassani said IS was also continuing to abduct and forcibly move civilians, and to kill those it suspected of leaking information to the government.

Media captionAyman Oghanna goes on patrol with the Iraqi government forces as they look for civilians

Reports suggest that on Friday, militants publicly shot to death 27 civilians in Muhandiseen Park, in the north of Mosul, she added.

There have also been reports of IS shooting at fleeing civilians, including one from 22 November of an IS sniper killing a seven-year-old child who was running towards troops in the eastern Adan district.

Human Rights Watch meanwhile said on Tuesday that an Iraqi government or US-led coalition air strike targeting IS militants south of Mosul last month had hit a medical facility and killed eight civilians, including five children.

Two IS militants and the IS "transport minister" were also killed in the attack on 18 October in Hamam al-Alil, a witness told HRW.

A healthcare worker said militants had forcibly taken over an office at the clinic and that several had been there at the time of the attack, along with about 50 patients.

"Forces attacking [IS] should take all necessary measures to minimise harm to civilians, including those that [IS] forces may have placed at risk," said Lama Fakih, HRW's deputy Middle East director.

HRW called for an impartial, thorough and transparent investigation into the incident to establish who was responsible and whether it was lawful.