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## **IRAQ SENDS REINFORCEMENTS TO BORDERS WITH SYRIA, JORDAN**

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Iraqi News (May 7, 2017)

Rutba (IraqiNews.com) Iraq has sent military reinforcements to a highway linking its soil with Syria and Jordan, an army officer was quoted saying Sunday as the border regions witness an escalation of assaults by Islamic State militants.

Jordans news agency Petra quoted Col. Ahmed al-Dulaimi, from the Iraqi army, saying that military and paramilitary reinforcements were sent to the international road extending from the city of Rutba, Anbar, to Jordan and Syria. He said the deployments seek to blocking sneaking attempts by the Islamic State members.

Islamic State militants have recently escalated attacks against government and paramilitary troops in Rutba. An earlier attack late April left two soldiers dead and eight wounded.

Iraqi and U.S.-led coalition fighter jets have regularly pounded locations held by the Islamic State at the stronghold towns of Annah, Qaim and Rawa, killing dozens of militants.

Thousands of civilians are thought to be held in Islamic State captivity at those locations. It is widely expected that the Iraqi government will launch a major security offensive in Anbar once it is done with its U.S.-backed campaign to drive out IS from Mosul, the groups principal stronghold in Iraq, which has been running since October 2016.

Military officials have been quoted over the past few weeks telling of preparations to invade IS havens in the province.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said recently that protecting the borders with Syria and Jordan was a priority for the coming period.

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Kaynak/Source: