

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

U.S.A. starts air strikes in Iraq

11th August, 2014



The USA has started targeting forces of the Islamic State (IS) in northern Iraq. Several US air strikes have taken out heavy weaponry that the Islamic State captured from the Iraqi army.

President Obama said the new attacks are to protect American residents in Erbil, the capital of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region. IS recently changed its name from ISIS (the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria). The group now controls a quarter of Iraq (including the country's largest dam) and a third of Syria. Mr Obama made it clear that there would be no boots on the ground. He said: "Even as we support Iraqis as they take the fight to these terrorists, American combat troops will not be returning to fight in Iraq."

Another reason for the air strikes on the IS is to protect Iraq's Yazidi people and other minority groups. The Yazidis are ethnically Kurdish. Their religion includes elements of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Zoroastrianism. The IS told the Yazidis to convert to Islam, pay a tax, or face death. Earlier this week the UN warned of a humanitarian catastrophe with the possibility of ethnic cleansing at the hands of the IS. The IS have reportedly taken hundreds of Yazidi women hostage. Obama said the latest US military action is also, "a humanitarian effort to help save thousands of [Yazidis] who are trapped on a mountain without food and water and facing almost certain death".

Sources: Xinhuanet / TASS / Aawsat

Writing

The U.S. should use air strikes and troops to defeat the IS. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

targeting / heavy weaponry / captured / capital / autonomous / third / boots / troops / reason / ethnically / religion / humanitarian / catastrophe / ethnic cleansing / trapped

True / False

- The USA and Britain has started bombing the IS group in Iraq. T / F
- Barack Obama said he wants to protect U.S. residents in Iraq. T / F
- The group IS used to be called ISIS and ISIL. T / F
- Barack Obama has not ruled out sending troops into Iraq. T / F
- The air strikes are to help the IS stop attacking minority groups. T / F
- The IS said the Yazidis must choose between Islam, tax or death. T / F
- Reports are that thousands of Yazidi women have been kidnapped. T / F
- A million Yazidi people have been trapped by the IS. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. targeting | a. disaster |
| 2. weaponry | b. self-governing |
| 3. captured | c. defend |
| 4. autonomous | d. arms |
| 5. combat | e. parts |
| 6. protect | f. aiming at |
| 7. elements | g. fighting |
| 8. convert | h. confronting |
| 9. catastrophe | i. seized |
| 10. facing | j. change |

Discussion – Student A

- A Baghdad priest said Christianity is facing its worst crisis ever. What do you think?
- Why does the IS want to rid Iraq of the Yazidis and others?
- How can so many people be trapped on a mountain?
- Why are humanitarian catastrophes becoming more common?
- What should the world do to help the Yazidis?
- Do you think things in Iraq will get even worse from now?
- What will Iraq and Syria be like in five years from now?
- What questions would you like to ask President Obama?

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Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. air strikes have taken | a. other minority groups |
| 2. the capital of Iraq's autonomous | b. hands of the IS |
| 3. The group now controls | c. on the ground |
| 4. there would be no boots | d. or face death |
| 5. combat troops will not be | e. Kurdistan region |
| 6. protect Iraq's Yazidi people and | f. a quarter of Iraq |
| 7. Their religion includes | g. returning to fight |
| 8. convert to Islam, pay a tax, | h. help save thousands |
| 9. ethnic cleansing at the | i. elements of Judaism |
| 10. a humanitarian effort to | j. out heavy weaponry |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the air strikes on Iraq?
- What do you know about the IS?
- How long do you think the US will be in Iraq this time?
- How has the IS managed to take over so much territory?
- What is the danger of the IS becoming stronger?
- Are the USA, UK, etc. responsible for the turmoil in Iraq?
- Does the USA have a responsibility to stop the IS?
- What will happen if US troops once again enter Iraq?

Spelling

- taken out heavy rypawnoe
- dauptecr from the Iraqi army
- protect American ssedntrie in Erbil
- Iraq's uonsouaotm Kurdistan region
- take the fight to these rsrtisorte
- American mbcota troops
- Yazidi people and other iroyntim groups
- The Yazidis are lecahityln Kurdish
- Their religion includes eenstelm of Judaism
- ethnic enncgsila at the hands of the IS
- warned of a aimnruaaithn catastrophe
- taken hundreds of Yazidi women astegho

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. g
6. c	7. e	8. j	9. a	10. h

Role Play

Role A – U.S. boots on the ground

You think putting US boots on the ground is the best way to help Iraq. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ideas (and why): support for Iraqi army, dividing Iraq by religious beliefs or money for reconstruction.

Role B – Support for the Iraqi army

You think support for the Iraqi army is the best way to help Iraq. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ideas (and why): putting US boots on the ground, dividing Iraq by religious beliefs or money for reconstruction.

Role C – Divide Iraq by religious beliefs

You think dividing Iraq by religious beliefs is the best way to help Iraq. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ideas (and why): support for Iraqi army, putting US boots on the ground or money for reconstruction.

Role D – Money for reconstruction

You think money for reconstruction is the best way to help Iraq. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these ideas (and why): support for Iraqi army, dividing Iraq by religious beliefs or putting US boots on the ground.

Speaking – Iraq answers

Rank these – What are the best ways to help the situation in Iraq.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| - US boots on the ground | - Divide Iraq on religion |
| - Support for Iraqi army | - Long-term bombing of IS |
| - Money for reconstruction | - Aid drops for refugees |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.