

# ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq<sup>1</sup>

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June 2018 Monthly Appendices

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<sup>1</sup> This report is based on research conducted by the American Schools of Oriental Research Cultural Heritage Initiatives. Monthly reports reflect reporting from a variety of sources and may contain unverified material. As such, they should be treated as preliminary and subject to change.

## Other Key Points

- **Aleppo Governorate**
  - Reported Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army members militarized a cemetery and destroyed a shrine in Anqale, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0163**
  - Turkish forces reportedly intentionally damaged a cemetery in Afrin, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0168**
- **Daraa Governorate**
  - Reported SARG and pro-regime forces damaged a mosque in Kafr Shams, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0167**
  - SARG forces reportedly damaged a mosque in al-Hirak, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0169**
  - Reported SARG or Russian airstrikes damaged a mosque in al-Ghariya al-Sharqiya, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0172**
- **Deir ez Zor Governorate**
  - Reported SARG artillery damaged a mosque in al-Susah, Deir ez Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0165**
  - Reported SARG forces damaged a mosque in al-Susah, Deir ez Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0166**
  - Reported US-led Coalition airstrikes damaged a mosque in al-Sha'fah, Deir ez Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0171**
- **Idlib Governorate**
  - An alleged Russian airstrike damaged a mosque in Zardana, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0164**
  - Unidentified perpetrators carried out a car and motorbike bombing attack near a mosque in Idlib, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0170**

## Military and Political Context

The main theaters of military operations during the reporting period in Syria were:

1. Aleppo Governorate:
  - On June 5, the YPG announced that they would withdraw their military advisers from Manbij, claiming that no YPG forces remained in the city.<sup>2</sup>
  - On June 18, Turkish and US forces began independent patrols along the border of territory controlled by Turkey near Manbij.<sup>3</sup>
2. Idlib Governorate:
  - On June 8, suspected Russian airstrikes struck the opposition-held town of Zardana, killing at least 44 people including one rescue worker. On June 11, the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres called for an investigation into the strikes, naming Russia as the likely perpetrator. Russia denied any involvement by its aircraft.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/9fb18b71-01e8-4548-bed2-3c872cc23c80>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/turkish-u-s-units-begin-patrols-near-northern-syrias-manbij-idUSKBN1JE1A3>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idlib/air-strikes-kill-at-least-44-in-syria-monitor-says-it-suspects-russia-idUSKCN1J40RH> ; <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-44437718> ; <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/06/syria-scores-of-civilian-casualties-in-suspected-russian-air-strike-on-idlib/>

- On June 9, al-Qaeda affiliate Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) clashed with pro-regime fighters in the regime-held villages of Fua and Kefraya. Following the attack, airstrikes struck opposition-held towns in the surrounding areas, including the town of Binnish.<sup>5</sup>
3. Hasakah Governorate:
- On June 11, the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) reported that US-led Coalition airstrikes had killed 18 Iraqi refugees in a village in Hasakah Governorate. A spokesman for the US-led Coalition denied the report. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that US-backed forces were fighting for control of the village.<sup>6</sup>
  - On June 28, Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) officials removed imagery affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) from public spaces and main roads in the cities of Hasakah and Qamishli. Plans are reportedly in place to remove PKK-affiliated symbols in other towns near the Syrian-Turkish border.<sup>7</sup>
4. Deir ez Zor Governorate:
- During the reporting period, the US-backed SDF captured several villages from ISIS near the Syrian-Iraqi border.<sup>8</sup>
  - On June 7, the Iraqi Air Force launched an airstrike inside Syria that targeted an ISIS operation's building in the city of Hajin.<sup>9</sup>
  - On June 18, SANA reported that the US-led Coalition had carried out drone strikes against a Syrian army position in the village of al-Hari, near the Iraqi border, resulting in an "unspecified number of deaths and injuries" of both Syrian and Iraqi fighters. Iraqi Shia forces from the Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) also issued a statement accusing US aircraft of firing guided missiles at one of their positions near the Syrian-Iraqi border. Anonymous US officials attributed the strike to Israel.<sup>10</sup>
5. Daraa Governorate:
- On June 19, pro-regime forces launched an offensive to "isolate an opposition pocket" in Daraa Governorate from the rest of remaining opposition-held areas.<sup>11</sup>
  - On June 21, seven major Syrian opposition groups announced a "broad unification initiative under a joint command-and-control structure." Members of the initiative include former US-backed opposition groups and the al-Qaeda linked Bunyan al-Marsous Operations Room.<sup>12</sup>
  - On June 26, a pro-opposition activist reported extensive aerial bombardment in the town of Basr al-Harir with "at least 200 airstrikes and 150 barrel bombings," striking the area as pro-regime forces began their offensive.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/deadly-clashes-as-extremists-attack-besieged-syria-regime-villages-1.738529> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-villages/syrian-villages-besieged-by-rebels-come-under-attack-monitor-idUSKBN1J60IL>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-strike/u-s-led-coalition-denies-state-tv-report-on-syria-strike-deaths-idUSKBN1J71Q1>

<sup>7</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/06/syria-situation-report-june-12-28-2018.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/f632810c-86a6-4a4d-8423-813f53b0304e>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-syria-islamicstate/iraq-launches-air-strike-against-islamic-state-in-syria-idUSKCN1J30NL>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-44519092> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-usa/syrian-iraqi-forces-say-u-s-bombs-military-border-positions-u-s-denies-idUSKBN1JD11G> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/06/syria-situation-report-june-12-28-2018.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/06/syria-situation-report-june-12-28-2018.html>

<sup>12</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/06/syria-situation-report-june-12-28-2018.html>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/06/thousands-continue-flee-deraa-syria-assault-intensifies-1806>

- On June 28, suspected Russian airstrikes struck a “basement shelter” in the city of Daraa, killing at least 17 civilians. The Syrian Civil Defense (aka the White Helmets) also reported airstrikes in the the towns of Nawa, Dael, and Kharaba.<sup>14</sup>
- 6. Raqqa Governorate:
  - On June 21, ISIS claimed responsibility for an IED attack that targeted two SDF vehicles in the village of Hammam al-Turkman. It was the first attack in the governorate claimed by the group since October 2017.<sup>15</sup>
- 7. Damascus Governorate:
  - On June 26, Israel launched two missiles that destroyed an Iranian weapons depot near Damascus International Airport. The reported absence of Russian and SARG aircraft suggested that Israel had informed Russia of the planned strike.<sup>16</sup>

**Other Key Points:**

- On June 19, the Syrian Arab Army launched a military offensive to capture the remaining opposition-held territory in the governorates of Daraa, Quneitra, and Suwayda.<sup>17</sup>

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[25115803218.html](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/06/thousands-continue-flee-deraa-syria-assault-intensifies-180625115803218.html)

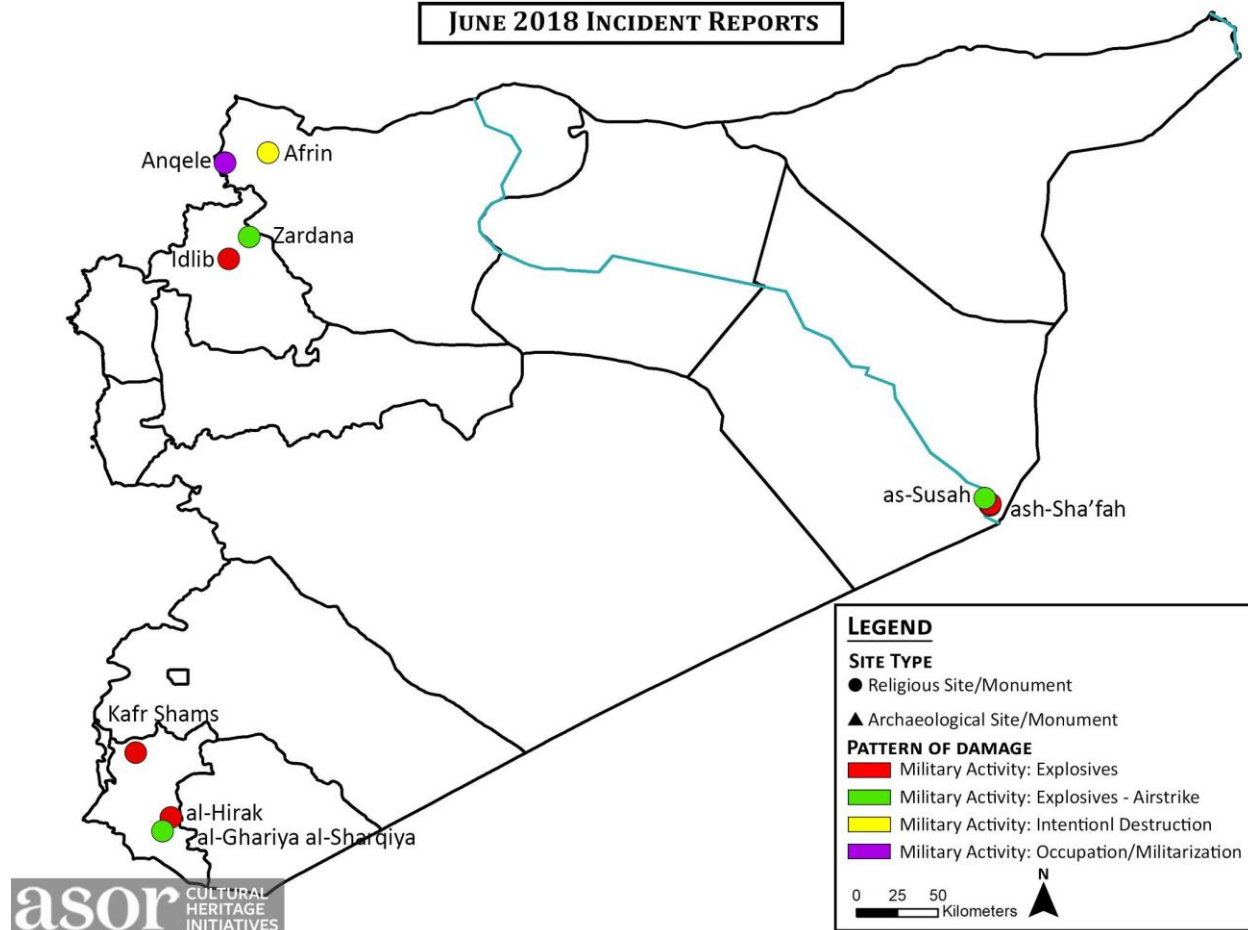
<sup>14</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-44641431>

<sup>15</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/06/syria-situation-report-june-12-28-2018.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/06/syria-situation-report-june-12-28-2018.html>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/06/thousands-continue-flee-deraa-syria-assault-intensifies-180625115803218.html>

# Incident Reports: Syria



Incident Reports for June 2018 (ASOR CHI)

## SHI 18-0163

**Report Date:** June 1, 2018

**Site Name:** Anqale Cemetery; Ali Dada Shrine

**Date of Incident:** Between February 26, 2018 and March 5, 2018

**Location:** Anqale, Afrin Canon, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Cemetery

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army members militarized a cemetery and destroyed shrine.

**Incident Source and Description:** Between February 26, 2018 and March 5, 2018 members of the Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army militarized Ali Dada shrine and an adjacent cemetery.<sup>18</sup> Based on DigitalGlobe satellite imagery, a military base was initially built on the southern part of the cemetery using bulldozers. The Ali Dada Shrine was destroyed as part of this construction. By April 24, 2018 the bulldozed area had expanded to include the full width of the cemetery. Only the northern point of the cemetery was still intact. The base was still occupied as of June 1, 2018 with military vehicles visible.

The specific actors behind the militarization are unknown. Turkish-backed forces, which participated in the initial capture of the area, was reportedly in control of the adjacent town of Senara until at least late June 2018.<sup>19</sup>

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0168**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: occupation/militarization, earthworks/roadworks.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Anqale Cemetery and the Ali Dada Shrine, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Afrin Media Center: <https://twitter.com/nre6172/status/1009321164840341504>

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2018/11/05/olive-branch-military-outpost-built-atop-afrin-cemetery/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.kurdhr.com/2018/07/Reportsinvestigations.html>; <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2018/11/05/olive-branch-military-outpost-built-atop-afrin-cemetery/>

Bellingcat:

<https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2018/11/05/olive-branch-military-outpost-built-atop-afrin-cemetery/>

Kurdish Observatory: <https://www.kurdhr.com/2018/07/Reportsinvestigations.html>

Senara Village News:

<https://www.facebook.com/snaraneews/photos/pcb.2040161842924794/2040161759591469/>



The cemetery before its militarization (Afrin Media Center; June 20, 2018)





The cemetery with Ali Dada Shrine visible in the upper right corner (Afrin Media Center; June 20, 2018)





Anqale cemetery and Ali Dada shrine (located in the red rectangle) prior to destruction (© 2018 DigitalGlobe; February 5, 2018)



Military post built over the southern portion of the cemetery and the Ali Dada shrine destroyed. A military vehicle can be seen on site (red arrow). The northern part of the cemetery is intact (© 2018 DigitalGlobe; March 17, 2018)



Extension of the military post to the western edge of the cemetery and the placement of vehicles (red arrows) and tents (blue arrow) on the site (© 2018 DigitalGlobe; April 24, 2018)

**SHI 18-0164**

**Report Date:** June 8, 2018

**Site Name:** Saad bin Mu'ath Mosque (جامع سعد بن معاذ)

**Date of Incident:** June 7, 2018

**Location:** Zardana, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** An alleged Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On June 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired missiles near Saad bin Mu'ath Mosque in the town of Zardana on June 7.<sup>20</sup> The airstrike reportedly damaged the mosque and its furniture. A photograph published by a private Twitter account shows buildings directly south of the mosque have been reduced to rubble, although the extent of the damage to the mosque building itself is unclear.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that between April 24, 2018 and September 18, 2018 there was damage from airstrikes south of the Saad bin Mu'ath Mosque. There is no visible damage to the mosque itself.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0170**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Saad bin Mu'ath Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Private Twitter Account:

<https://twitter.com/shamalharb1422/status/1005049475688263681>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/08/russian-forces-bombed-mosque-zardana-village-idlib-suburbs-june-7/>

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<sup>20</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/08/russian-forces-bombed-mosque-zardana-village-idlib-suburbs-june-7/>



Destruction of buildings south of Saad bin Mu'ath Mosque (Private Twitter Account; June 7, 2018)





The Saad bin Mu'ath Mosque prior to any visible damage (©2018 DigitalGlobe; April 24, 2018)



Red arrows indicate the area of damage from airstrikes south of the mosque; there is no visible evidence of damage to the mosque itself (©2018 DigitalGlobe; September 18, 2018)



**SHI 18-0165****Report Date:** June 12, 2018**Site Name:** al-Ghannam Mosque**Date of Incident:** June 12, 2018**Location:** al-Susah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown.**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG artillery damaged a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On July 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that on June 12, SARG artillery stationed in al-Bukamal City fired mortar shells that landed near al-Ghannam Mosque in the town of al-Susah. According to SNHR, the mortar shells slightly damaged the mosque. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged heritage sites in Deir ez-Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0166** and **SHI 18-0171**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition al-Ghannam Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

SNHR:

[http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453 attacks on civilian vital centers in Syria in the first half of 2018 en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453%20attacks%20on%20civilian%20vital%20centers%20in%20Syria%20in%20the%20first%20half%20of%202018%20en.pdf)

**SHI 18-0166**

**Report Date:** June 16, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Rahman Mosque

**Date of Incident:** June 16, 2018

**Location:** al-Susah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** SARG forces reportedly damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On June 16, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG forces fired mortar shells near the al-Rahman Mosque, causing damage to the mosque.<sup>21</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged heritage sites in Deir ez-Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0165** and **SHI 18-0171**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Rahman Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activities.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/16/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-rahman-mosque-al-sousa-town-deir-ez-zour-suburbs-june-16/>

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<sup>21</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/16/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-rahman-mosque-al-sousa-town-deir-ez-zour-suburbs-june-16/>

**SHI 18-0167**

**Report Date:** June 16, 2018

**Site Name:** Osama Bin Zaid Mosque

**Date of Incident:** June 15, 2018

**Location:** Kafr Shams, Daraa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Report SARG and pro-regime damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On June 16, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that on June 15, SARG and pro-regime artillery fired shells on the Osama Bin Zaid Mosque in the town of Kafr Shams, causing severe damage to the mosques building and its furniture.<sup>22</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Daraa Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0169** and **SHI 18-0172**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Osama Bin Zaid Mosque Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activities.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/16/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-shams-town-daraa-suburbs-june-15/>

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<sup>22</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/16/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-shams-town-daraa-suburbs-june-15/>

**SHI 18-0168**

**Report Date:** June 17, 2018

**Site Name:** Cemetery in Afrin

**Date of Incident:** June 17, 2018

**Location:** Afrin, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Cemetery in Afrin.

**Site Date:** Unknown.

**Incident Summary:** Turkish-backed forces reportedly intentionally damaged a cemetery in Afrin.

**Incident Source and Description:** On June 17, 2018 the Facebook group Afrin Resistance published photographs showing damage to graves at an unnamed cemetery Afrin. According to the group, Turkish occupation “mercenaries” were responsible for destroying the graves.<sup>23</sup>

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0163**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: intentional destruction.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of a cemetery in Afrin, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Afrin Resistance:

<https://www.facebook.com/Azoz.hamido1/posts/1049126228569215>

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Azoz.hamido1/posts/1049126228569215>



Vandalism to an unnamed cemetery in Afrin (Afrin Resistance/Facebook; June 17, 2018)



Vandalism to an unnamed cemetery in Afrin (Afrin Resistance/Facebook; June 17, 2018)



**SHI 18-0169**

**Report Date:** June 20, 2018

**Site Name:** Abu Obayda bin al-Jarrah Mosque

**Date of Incident:** June 20, 2018

**Location:** al-Hirak, Daraa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** SARG forces reportedly damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** In a report published July 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that on June 20, 2018 SARG forces shelled the Abu Obayda bin al-Jarrah Mosque, causing heavy damage to the mosque and its furniture.<sup>24</sup> A photograph published with the report shows debris in the interior of the mosque.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Daraa Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0167** and **SHI 18-0172**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Abu Obayda bin al-Jarrah Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

[http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453\\_attacks\\_on\\_civilian\\_vital\\_centers\\_in\\_Syria\\_in\\_the\\_first\\_half\\_of\\_2018\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453_attacks_on_civilian_vital_centers_in_Syria_in_the_first_half_of_2018_en.pdf)

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<sup>24</sup> [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453\\_attacks\\_on\\_civilian\\_vital\\_centers\\_in\\_Syria\\_in\\_the\\_first\\_half\\_of\\_2018\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453_attacks_on_civilian_vital_centers_in_Syria_in_the_first_half_of_2018_en.pdf)



Damage to the interior of the Abu Obayda bin al-Jarrah Mosque (SNHR; July 8, 2018)

**SHI 18-0170****Report Date:** June 21, 2018**Site Name:** al-Tawhid Mosque**Date of Incident:** June 21, 2018**Location:** Idlib, Idlib Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Unknown**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** A car and motorbike bomb damaged a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On June 21, 2018, the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that a motorbike and car bomb exploded near the al-Tawhid Mosque, damaging its building and furniture.<sup>25</sup> A photograph shared with the report shows debris on the floor of the mosque. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.

For previous reports of damage to al-Tawhid Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0112** in **Weekly Report 103-104**.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0164**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Tawheed Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/21/damages-mosque-idlib-due-two-unknown-source-explosions-june-21/>

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<sup>25</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/21/damages-mosque-idlib-due-two-unknown-source-explosions-june-21/>



Damage to the al-Tawhid Mosque (SNHR; June 21, 2018)

**SHI 18-0171**

**Report Date:** June 24, 2018

**Site Name:** Huthayfa bin al-Yaman Mosque (مسجد حذيفة بن اليمان)

**Date of Incident:** June 24, 2018

**Location:** al-Sha'fah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported US-led Coalition airstrikes damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that on June 24, US-led Coalition aircraft fired several missiles near the Huthayfa bin al-Yaman Mosque in the Rmielen neighborhood in the city of al-Sha'fah. The strikes caused some damage to the building. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from July 10, 2018 corroborates that an airstrike occurred to the southeast of the mosque. There does not appear to be extensive damage to the mosque. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Deir ez Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0165** and **SHI 18-0166**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Huthayfa bin al-Yaman Mosque, as well as the condition of other cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR: [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453 attacks on civilian vital centers in Syria in the first half of 2018 en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453%20attacks%20on%20civilian%20vital%20centers%20in%20Syria%20in%20the%20first%20half%20of%202018%20en.pdf)





The mosque prior to the airstrike (©2018 DigitalGlobe; May 11, 2018)



A crater is seen to the southeast of the mosque (©2018 DigitalGlobe; July 10, 2018)

**SHI 18-0172**

**Report Date:** June 28, 2018

**Site Name:** Abu Bakr al-Seddeiq Mosque

**Date of Incident:** June 27, 2018

**Location:** al-Ghariya al-Sharqiya, Daraa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG/Russian airstrikes damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On June 27, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG or Russian airstrikes fired missiles at Abu Bakr al-Seddeiq Mosque in the town of al-Ghariya al-Sharqiya, causing partial damage to the building, severely damaging its furniture, and rendering it inoperable.

See the associated incident report in this monthly report for other damaged cultural heritage sites in Daraa Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0167** and **SHI 18-0169**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Abu Bakr al-Seddeiq Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

June 27, 2018: <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/06/27/syrian-russian-regime-forces-bombed-mosque-al-ghariya-al-sharqiya-town-daraa-suburbs-june-27/>

July 8, 2018: [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453\\_attacks\\_on\\_civilian\\_vital\\_centers\\_in\\_Syria\\_in\\_the\\_first\\_half\\_of\\_2018\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/453_attacks_on_civilian_vital_centers_in_Syria_in_the_first_half_of_2018_en.pdf)



Severe damage to the Abu Bakr al-Seddeiq Mosque (SNHR; June 27, 2018)



Severe damage to the Abu Bakr al-Seddeiq Mosque (SNHR: June 27, 2018)





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## SNHR Vital Facilities Report:

On June 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) released a vital facilities report for May 2018.<sup>26</sup> According to SNHR, there were 21 attacks against vital civilian facilities. The sites attacked include three mosques.

- On May 6, 2018 reported Russian warplanes fired missiles near Hamza bin Abdul Muttaleb Mosque in Jisr al-Shughour, Idlib Governorate, damaging the mosque and its furniture. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0101**
- On May 12, 2018 a car bomb exploded near Omar bin Abdul Aziz Mosque in Idlib, Idlib Governorate, damaging the mosque and its furniture. No group has taken responsibility for the bombing.
- On May 26, 2018 a car bomb exploded near al-Saraya Mosque in Jisr al-Shughour, Idlib Governorate, damaging the building and its furniture. No group has taken responsibility for the bombing.

## Heritage Timeline

- June 23, 2018 *The Wall Street Journal* published an article titled “**Belgium Investigates Brothers in Possible Trafficking of Looted Antiquities from Syria**” (by Valentina Pop and Alistair MacDonald). Belgian prosecutors are investigating whether two brothers associated with Phoenix Ancient Art SA illegally exported Syrian antiquities.  
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/belgium-investigates-brothers-in-possible-trafficking-of-looted-antiquities-from-syria-1529755201>
- June 20, 2018 *DipNote*, the Department of State’s official blog, published an article titled “**Tackling Illicit Trafficking of Antiquities and its Ties to Terrorist Financing**” (by Sam Pineda). George Mason University’s Terrorism, Transnational Crime, and Corruption Center completed an initial study on the connection between the illicit trafficking of antiquities and terrorism. The Center provided recommendations on how to improve training for relevant government personnel.  
<https://blogs.state.gov/stories/2018/06/20/en/tackling-illicit-trafficking-antiquities-and-its-ties-terrorist-financing>
- June 18, 2018 *The Associated Press* published an article titled “**Jewish artifacts disappear from Damascus in fog of Syria war**” (by Bassem Mroue). Jewish artifacts from the Synagogue of the Prophet Elijah in Jobar have reportedly gone missing. The artifacts were allegedly in the possession of Syrian opposition forces for safekeeping.  
<https://www.apnews.com/58077d7bfb9e4bc2b0d67c5cc95b8b0f>

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<sup>26</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/06/08/52294/>



- June 16, 2018 *Heritage for Peace* published a newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage.**” The newsletter details recent developments in Syrian cultural heritage.  
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-16-june-2018/>
- June 11, 2018 *Al-Fanar Media* published an article titled “**Newspaper Pledges to Return ISIS Documents to Iraq**” (by Ursula Lindsey). *The New York Times* has announced that the so-called “ISIS Files,” a cache of documents discovered in Iraq relating to life under ISIS rule and removed by a NYT journalist, will be turned over to the Iraqi Embassy in Washington, D.C.  
<https://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2018/06/newspaper-pledges-to-return-isis-documents-to-iraq/>
- June 10, 2018 *Art-Crime Blogspot* published an article titled “**Syria has ratified the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects.**” Syria has ratified the UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects. This will allow it to work more effectively with other signatories to protect cultural property. <https://art-crime.blogspot.com/2018/06/syria-has-ratified-1995-unidroit.html>
- June 9, 2018 *TASS* published an article titled “**Russian Archaeologists eyeing excavations in Palmyra after restoration of Tadmor.**” Russian archaeologists plan to begin new excavations at Palmyra after an initial phase of stabilization projects.  
<http://tass.com/science/1008849>
- June 8, 2018 *Al-Monitor* published an article titled “**Iraq's Christians, Muslims agree to revive site of ancient church**” (by Saad Salloum). A local Muslim community and a visiting Christian tour group hope to launch an initiative to restore the Church of Kokheh an Assyrian Christian church traditionally said to have been founded by Mar Mari in the 1st century CE south of modern-day Baghdad.  
<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/06/christians-muslims-want-to-revive-visits-to-old-church.html>
- June 7, 2018 *University of Leiden* published an article titled “**How can you rescue clay tablets from the war in Syria?**” The Dutch National Museum of Antiquities and the University of Leiden cooperated to produce an exhibit that explores how scanning and 3D printing can help preserve heritage in danger.  
<https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/news/2018/06/scanning-for-syria>

June 6, 2018

*The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**Google and the World Monuments Fund highlight Iraqi heritage under threat**” (by Helen Stoilas). The World Monuments Fund (WMF) has partnered with Google Arts & Culture on a series of online exhibitions and stories that highlight efforts to preserve Iraq’s built heritage. The project includes drone footage of ancient sites like Borsippa and Ctesiphon, 3D models of destroyed or damaged monuments such as the Ishtar Gate at Babylon, and documentation of damaged or destroyed sites, including Nimrud, Hatra, and Mosul’s Old City.

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/google-and-the-world-monuments-fund-highlight-iraqi-heritage-under-threat>

- **DGAM** published an article titled “جولة للمدير العام لكل من حلب وحمص وحماه” (**The Director-General tours Aleppo, Homs, and Hama**).” The Syrian Director-General visited several cities to view ongoing restoration work at the Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo, the Hama Museum, and the Homs Museum.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=177&id=2397>
- *Xinhua* published an article titled “**Historic caravanserai in Syria’s Aleppo revives after years of war.**” Khan al-Wazir hosts a number of traditional activities and performances during Ramadan.  
[http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-06/06/c\\_137235367.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-06/06/c_137235367.htm)

June 5, 2018

*ABC News* published an article titled “**Tracking the smugglers’ trail of priceless Islamic State loot to art markets in the West**” (by Anne Barker). Law enforcement officials in Europe and the USA have seized antiquities looted from Syria, Egypt, and Libya in recent weeks.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-06/priceless-antiques-looted-by-is-smuggled-into-western-markets/9833554>

June 4, 2018

**Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage - June 4, 2018.**” The newsletter documents recent damage to heritage in Syria as well as some positive developments.

<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-4-june-2018/>

- *The Conversation* published an article titled “**Satellite imagery is revolutionizing the world. But should we always trust what we see?**” (by Melinda Laituri) The author discusses the usefulness and limitations of satellite imagery.  
<https://theconversation.com/satellite-imagery-is-revolutionizing-the-world-but-should-we-always-trust-what-we-see-95201>

June 3, 2018

*The Mainichi* published an article titled “**Syrians receiving training in Japan to restore damaged cultural heritage sites.**” Four Syrian cultural heritage officials are receiving training in a variety of techniques, including antiquities preservation at the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara in Nara Prefecture.

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180603/p2a/00m/0na/005000c>

May 30, 2018

*Syria: Direct* published an article titled “**While the Islamic State Fades in Syria, its Legacy of Antiquities Smuggling flourishes.**” (by Barrett Limoges). Despite the territorial decline of ISIS, the looting and smuggling of antiquities continues throughout the country.

<https://syriadirect.org/news/while-the-islamic-state-fades-in-syria-its-legacy-of-antiquities-smuggling-flourishes/>