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Over 100 Killed as al-Qaeda Seizes Most of Fallujah

By Jason Ditz

January 3, 2014

Final death tolls are still up in the air and the fighting is ongoing, but well over 100 people are confirmed dead today in fighting over the Western Iraqi cities of Ramadi and Fallujah, and Fallujah appears to have fallen more or less entirely under al-Qaeda of Iraq's (AQI) control.



Officials reported 71 AQI fighters and 32 civilians dead, and an unknown number of tribal fighters as well as Iraqi military and police are also dead in the fighting, which has grown in intensity over the past few days.

Monday's violent crackdown on protests in Ramadi gave way to mass resignations in parliament and bigger protests in Anbar Province, which AQI used as an opportunity to attack police stations and seize chunks of both Ramadi and Fallujah.

They still hold part of Ramadi, but their big possession is Fallujah, where Iraqi security forces are no longer seen, and where virtually the whole city is under their control. AQI has issued a statement declaring Fallujah an "independent Islamic state," and at the moment the only resistance they're facing anywhere near the city is from local tribal leaders, with the military pushed back to the highway leading from the area into Baghdad.