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## Officials: Recent Arms Influx Preparing Rebels to Attack Damascus

By Jason Ditz

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On Monday, it was revealed that the CIA is overseeing what is being called a “sharp” increase in weapons being smuggled to the Syrian rebels from abroad. Officials are not only confirming this, but say it is part of a specific policy to set up an attack on the capital.

Syria’s government has mostly given up on fighting rebels in small battles nationwide, and has the bulk of its military forces in and around the capital city of Damascus. Arab officials say the surge in arms is part of a “master plan” to conquer Damascus militarily.

Exactly when the attack will come is still unclear, and the officials say it would take “days or weeks” for the push to begin in earnest. With Syria’s military having plenty of time to dig in around the capital, it could be a bloody siege indeed.

It does explain rebel interest in seizing the border zones with Turkey and Jordan, since the weapons are pouring in now on both fronts. Though rebel commanders continue to maintain “progress” in winning the war outright, they still seem stalemated in the major cities and added weapons don’t mean they’re going to run over Syria’s military.

The rebels also seem more divided than ever, with the CORF leadership in tatters and the Islamists openly clashing with secularists in the east. This could make it difficult to organize the sort of huge offensive outsiders seem to be envisioning.

