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US Airstrikes Hit More Syria Oil Refineries

By Jason Ditz

September 28, 2014

Early in the US air war against ISIS in Syria, warplanes destroyed a dozen portable oil refineries seen as economically valuable to ISIS. Today, that trend continued with attacks on three more stationary refineries in northern Syria.

Witnesses in Turkey say that the US airstrikes today hit and destroyed three makeshift refineries along the border. Administration officials have made much of the refineries being a key source of financing for ISIS.

Yet as a practical matter the refineries are also the major civilian economic infrastructure of eastern Syria. With ISIS targets not always easy to single out, the US seems to be just hitting anything of economic value now in the hopes of bankrupting the region and, by extension, ISIS.

That means imposing even more economic hardship on the people of eastern Syria through military force in the near term, and also leaves open the question of how the region will recover when, or indeed if, ISIS is ever supplanted by some new faction.