

《CCTV9英语新闻：叙利亚军队夺回古城帕尔米拉》

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DAMASCUS, March 25 (Xinhua) -- The Syrian army captured the airbase of the millennia-old city of Palmyra in central Syria, as part of the sweeping progress against the Islamic State (IS) group, a military source told Xinhua.



A Syrian soldier poses with the Syrian flag and flashes the victory sign at a battlefield in the countryside of Homs province, central Syria, on March 19, 2016. The Syrian army made notable progress on Saturday against the Islamic State (IS) group in the town of Qaryatain in Homs countryside. (Xinhua file photo/Ammar)

In a blitz offensive, the Syrian army captured the airbase east of Palmyra on Friday, the military source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The fresh progress came just hours after the Syrian troops backed by Russian air force and Shiite fighters, including those with Hezbollah, captured the ancient citadel of that oasis city in the eastern countryside of the central province of Homs.

The city fell to the IS militants last May and the Syrian army started a broad offensive to recapture it two days ago.

Local media said the IS militants withdrew from the ancient citadel of Palmyra toward the al-Amiriyeh district, adding that the terror group had tried to bring in reinforcements from its strongholds in the northern province of al-Raqqa, but the Syrian army struck the backup forces of the IS.

Since capturing it last May, the terror-labeled IS group destroyed the city's notorious military prison and several Islamic tombs.

The IS also put on public executions of soldiers and people accused of working for the government.

Palmyra contains the monumental ruins of a great city that was one of the most important cultural centers of the ancient world.

Syria has many prehistoric, Greek, Byzantine and Islamic heritages. Before the crisis, Syria had attracted many multinational archaeological missions coming for searching new clues of historical facts on the development of civilizations.

