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SYRIA'S CIVIL WAR RESURGENCE

After a period of relative calm since 2016, the Syrian civil war has reignited with Islamist militants, led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), launching a surprise offensive and capturing significant territories, including Aleppo and Hama.

Key Actors :

1. The Assad Regime, supported by Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah.
 2. Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), dominated by Kurdish militias backed by the U.S.
 3. HTS, a jihadist group controlling Idlib, backed by Turkey.
- Geopolitical Shifts: Russia's focus on Ukraine, Iranian setbacks due to Israeli airstrikes, and Hezbollah's engagement with Israel have weakened regime defenses, creating opportunities for HTS advances.
 - Consequences: The collapse of regime forces in the north has triggered attacks by smaller rebel groups in the south, raising the likelihood of a prolonged civil war.

Multiple Choice Questions :

1. Which of the following factors contributed to the resurgence of militant offensives in Syria?

1. Reduction of Russian military presence in Syria due to the Ukraine war.
2. Turkey's direct military intervention in northern Syria.
3. Israeli airstrikes weakening Iranian and Hezbollah forces.
4. Lack of U.S. support for the Assad regime's counter-offensive.

Select the correct answer using the codes below :

- A. 1 and 3 only B. 2 and 4 only
C. 1, 3, and 4 only D. All of the above

Answer : A. 1 and 3 only

Explanation : The reduction of Russian military focus and Israeli airstrikes on Iranian and Hezbollah forces created vulnerabilities for the Assad regime. Turkey's backing of HTS was indirect, and U.S. involvement remained confined to supporting Kurdish forces, not the Assad regime.

2. Which of the following statements about Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) is/are correct?

1. HTS originated from al-Qaeda's Syrian branch, Jabhat al-Nusra.
2. HTS has openly renounced Islamist ideology to gain international recognition.
3. HTS launched the offensive from Idlib and quickly captured Aleppo.
4. HTS is led by a former lieutenant of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Select the correct answer using the codes below :

- A. 1 and 3 only B. 2 and 4 only
C. 1, 3, and 4 only D. All of the above

Answer : C. 1, 3, and 4 only

Explanation : HTS evolved from al-Nusra and retains its Islamist ideology, though it has distanced itself from al-Qaeda. The offensive was launched from Idlib, leading to the swift

Source : The Hindu Editorial 06/12/2024

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