

Headlines:

- **Trump: The Face of State Terrorism**
- **Iraqi Forces Enter Tal Afar**
- **Bannon's Exit Signals Trouble for Trump**

Details:

Trump: The Face of State Terrorism

At least 100 civilians have been killed over the past 48 hours by US-led air strikes targeting fighters in Raqqa, the de-facto capital in Syria of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. The deaths came on the second consecutive day of a ferocious bombing campaign in Raqqa, more than half of which has been captured by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) battling ISIL, which is also known as ISIS. Despite the usual US claims of collateral damage one has reconcile the fact that these strikes are targeted at civilian heavy locations, as confirmed by SOHR director Rami Abdel Rahman, "The tolls are high because the air strikes are hitting neighbourhoods in the city centre that are densely packed with civilians," thus proving that the statements of US officials of collateral damage are nothing but lies. This act of terror comes at a time when Trump has stated that, "We (USA) are not nation building again. We are killing terrorists," in regards to Afghanistan. But if a nation is use air superiority to help a ground force it backs to win a war in its favour, this is nothing but the enforcement of its political will.

Iraqi Forces Enter Tal Afar

Iraqi forces have fought their way into the outskirts of the city of Tal Afar, one of so-called Islamic State's last remaining strongholds in the country. Iraq's prime minister launched the assault on Tal Afar on Sunday, a month after declaring victory in Mosul. Despite this claim to success, Mosul remains in utter ruins with most of its inhabitants fleeing and or dead. Tal Afar, which had a predominantly ethnic Turkmen population of 200,000 before it fell to IS in June 2014, sits on a major supply route between Mosul, about 55km (35 miles) to the east, and the Syrian border, 150km (90 miles) to the west. If the Iraqi forces under the guise of Western intervention are to claim back the country territory, Tal Afar is a strategic location and plays an important role at this stage. It seems however that its fate will be similar to that of Mosul; a place where many innocent Muslims lived and died.

Bannon's Exit Signals Trouble for Trump

This week saw the exit of White House Chief Strategist Stephen Bannon. The executive chair of far-right news website Breitbart was essentially sacked by the White House after serving under Trump since his election. Many have been bewildered by this move, with most claiming that Trump's days are numbered as this is another in an increasing list of people sacked from his backroom staff. In place of such individuals, are military men who have increasingly taken up roles within the White House and are heading strategic roles. For example, MacMaster who is the National Security Advisor and Mattis who is the Secretary of Defence, have manoeuvred themselves into such roles. We are now seeing a new phase where military men are inserting themselves into the politics of the USA which may bring a new phase in diplomacy. As for Trump, it seems the leash around his neck is getting tighter as the days go on.