



DNA Evidence Debunks Turkey's Claims Over Ankara Terror Blast Culprit

Par [Press TV](#)

Mondialisation.ca, 25 février 2016

[Press TV](#) 23 février 2016

Région : [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Thème: [Terrorism](#)

Analyses: [SYRIA](#)

DNA evidence shows that the culprit behind a deadly blast in Ankara was Turkish-born, not Syrian as initially claimed by Turkish authorities, says a security official.

Last Wednesday, a car bomb went off next to several military buses near Turkey's armed forces base in Ankara, killing 29 people. The following day Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu laid the blame for the incident on a Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) fighter, Salih Nekar, hailing from the northeastern Syrian city of Hasakah.

However, the Kurdistan Freedom Hawks (TAK) group claimed responsibility for the blast on its website on February 19.

On Tuesday, a senior Turkish security official, citing DNA evidence collected from the blast site, stated that Abdulbaki Somer, born in the eastern Turkish city of Van, was the bomber. The announcement fully corresponds with claims made by TAK.

« The DNA report has been published. We saw that it was not Nekar, » the Turkish official told Reuters on condition of anonymity as the report is yet to be made public.

« The bomber's DNA matches that of Abdulbaki's father. It looks like the bomber was Abdulbaki Somer, that's what the report is saying, » he said.

According to Turkey's state-run Anadolu news agency, prosecutors have confirmed the report.



Smoke and flames rise over vehicles following a bomb attack that targeted a convoy of military buses in Ankara, Turkey, on February 17, 2016. (AFP)

Turkey regards the YPG and its political arm, the Democratic Union Party (PYD), as allies of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has been fighting for an autonomous Kurdish region inside Turkey since the 1980s.

The leader of the YPG has denied being behind the attack, saying Turkey is using the Ankara blast as a pretext to escalate its attacks in Syria.

Ankara, vowing revenge on those it claimed had carried out the attack, shelled YPG positions in northern Syria for days after the incident while Syrian and Kurdish

forces were making daily gains against Daesh Takfiri terrorists in the country's northern regions near the border with Turkey.

Same 'terrorist structure'

Earlier on Tuesday, Davutoglu said that TAK's claim of responsibility for the blast « aims to divert attention from the YPG » as all armed groups in the region are part of the same « terrorist structure. »

“As a result of rapid work by our security units, it has been clearly understood that this attack was planned and carried out through a cooperation between the YPG and the PKK, » he stated.

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