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Assad's forces kill 85 in Damascus suburb, activists say



Syrian forces and militia men loyal to President Bashar al-Assad killed at least 85 people when they stormed a Damascus suburb after five days of fighting, opposition activists in the area said on Sunday. There was no immediate confirmation of the activists' account of what they described as a "massacre", including of women and children, at Jdeidet al-Fadel. Syrian authorities have banned most independent media since the uprising began two years ago. Jamal al-Golani, a member of the Revolution Leadership Council opposition group, said the number of dead may be higher than 250, mostly shot at close range, but the presence of army patrols made documenting all of them difficult. The killings happened over several days as and after pro-Assad forces stormed an area where there were up to 270 rebels, Golani said, adding that he had counted 98 bodies in the streets and 86 people who he said had been summarily executed in makeshift clinics where they were lying wounded. Abu Ahmad al-Rabi', an activist in the adjacent district of Jdeidet Artouz, said: "We documented 85 summarily executed, including 28 shot in a makeshift hospital after Assad's forces entered Jdeidet al-Fadel. We fear that the victims of the massacre are much higher."