IS capital put on emergency

US military officials are monitoring reports that Islamic State have declared a state of emergency in Raqqa.

Social media and news reports that suggest IS may have come under siege in its self-declared capital in Syria are being closely watched by the US-led anti-IS coalition.

Col Steve Warren, spokesman for the coalition said: “We have seen this declaration of emergency in Raqqa, whatever that means.”

“We know this enemy feels threatened, as they should,” he told CNN on Friday,

Media reports have indicated that the terrorist group is moving personnel around the city and attempting to put up covers to shield potential targets from airstrikes and ground attacks.

Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), who are fighting to liberate IS-occupied land, Spokesman Tajir Kobani announced earlier this week that commanders of the SDF-affiliated groups in Northern Syria had coordinated plans for a joint final operation for liberating Raqqa from the IS.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Shia militant group Hezbollah yesterday blamed Sunni extremists for killing its top military commander in Syria and vowed to keep fighting to defend President Bashar al-Assad’s regime.

The IS jihadist group, meanwhile, overran a government-controlled hospital in the eastern city of Deir Ezzor, killing 20 members of pro-regime forces and taking medical staff hostage, a monitor said.

Badreddine, who was on a US terror sanctions blacklist and wanted by Israel, was killed in a blast on Thursday night near Damascus international airport.

In Deir Ezzor, IS attacked Al-Assad hospital yesterday as it pressed an advance aimed at controlling all of the oil-rich city and its vital airbase, the Observatory said.

The attack sparked clashes with regime forces providing security for the hospital in which six jihadists were also killed, the monitor said.

Meanwhile, Turkey state-run Anadolu Agency yesterday said the Turkish military and US-led coalition forces killed 45 Islamic State militants in shelling and an air strike north of the Syrian city of Aleppo.11