

Iraq Situation Report: November 14-16, 2014

1 On November 14, Iraqi government sources from the Ministry of Defense and Salah ad-Din Operations Command announced that Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) were able to clear Baiji district in Salah ad-Din Province of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS). On the same day, Salah ad-Din governor Raed al-Juburi called on the people of Baiji to return in order to “hold the terrain.” Tribal leaders from Baiji stated that Baiji is cleared and stated their readiness to support the ISF. On November 15, Counter-terrorism Service (CTS) Units reportedly broke the siege of the Baiji oil refinery and connected with besieged ISF and Iraqi Shi’a militia forces. The force reportedly came under ISIS mortar fire but did not suffer any casualties. On November 16, an unnamed source stated that the ISF are still “facing difficulties” controlling the whole of Baiji district due to a large number of ISIS-planted Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in the area.



2 On November 15, Iraqi Army (IA) forces and “joint forces” from the Anbar Operations Command (AOC) surrounded the Garma sub-district east of Fallujah in preparation to clear it of ISIS. Garma is surrounded from the directions of Banat al-Hassan, Taji, Thiraa Dijla, and the area known as the Cement Factories.



3 On November 16, ISIS released 43 members of the Jumaila tribe who are residents of a village in al-Alam sub-district, east of Tikrit. The 43 were among 50 members of the village who ISIS has earlier rounded up. ISIS released the 43 after it “ensured” that they are not members of the ISF. But they were released after being subjected to severe beatings and are reported to be in critical health conditions. The seven remaining individuals were taken to Mosul for “trial.”



4 On November 15, Peshmerga forces took control of the village of Kharapa Rut in Dibis district, northwestern Kirkuk, after clashing with ISIS. ISIS also targeted the North Gas Company in southwestern Kirkuk with four mortar rounds that temporarily stopped production. On November 16, coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS positions in the Hawijah area in southwestern Kirkuk resulting in the killing of 11 ISIS members.



5 On November 15, a leader in the Iraqi Sunni tribe of Abu Nimr, Naim al-Gaoud, stated that ISIS “kidnapped” and took to an unknown location 36 members of the tribe in the Thar Thar area, northeast of Ramadi, who were traveling to Baiji in Salah ad-Din province.



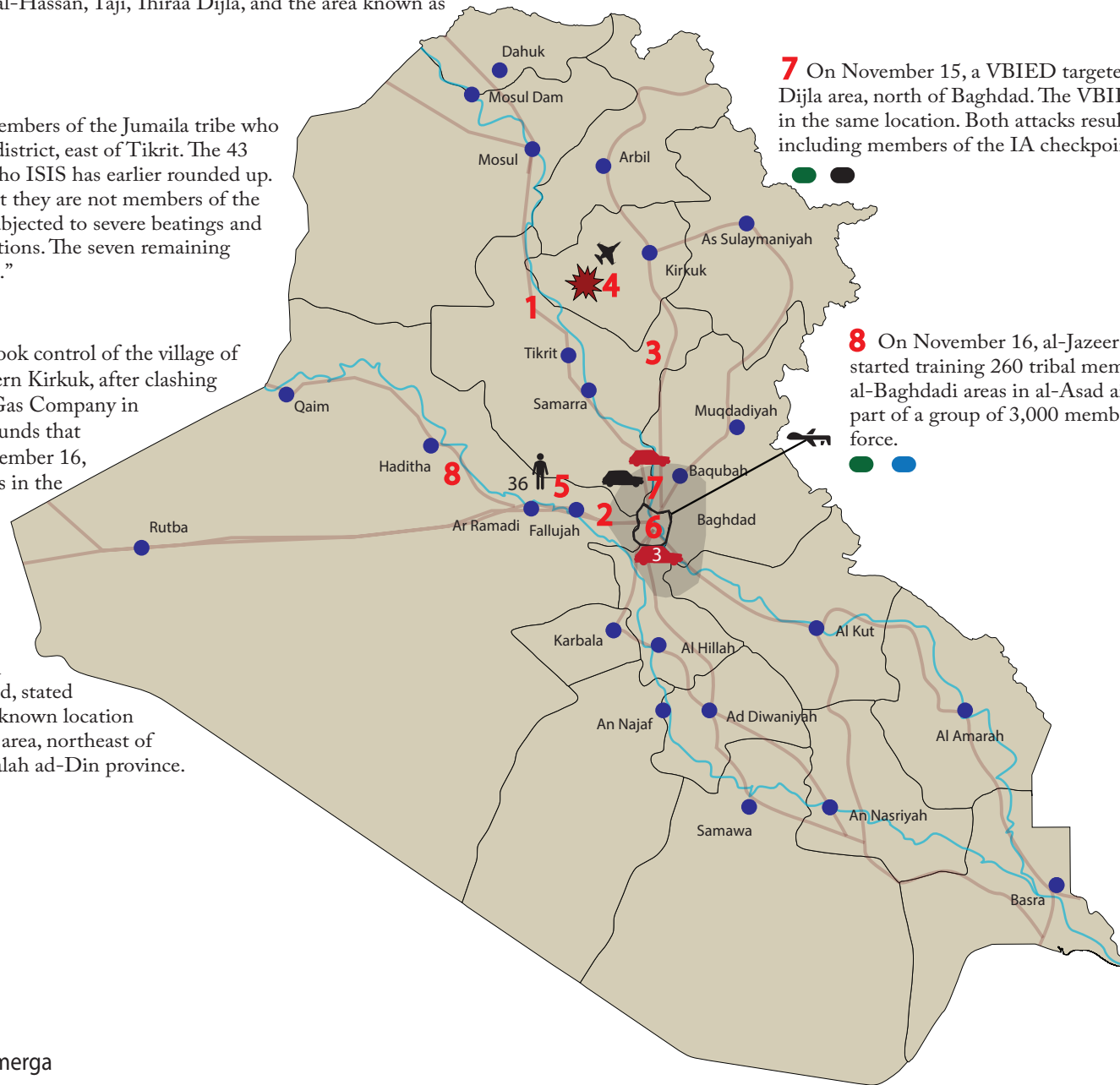
6 On November 14, an IED and two Vehicle-Borne IEDs (VBIEDs) exploded in Baghdad. An IED attack in Baghdad al-Jadida in eastern Baghdad targeted a café and resulted in the death of 1 civilian and injury of 9. A VBIED exploded in Greaat in northern Baghdad targeting a Shi’a religious center and resulted in the death of 7 people and injury of 22 others. Another VBIED exploded near a restaurant on Maghreb Street in eastern Baghdad and resulted in the death of 10 civilians and injury of 36. On November 16, a VBIED exploded in the Abbas Bin Firnas Square in Western Baghdad that resulted in the death of two people and injury of 8. The square is close to an entrance leading to the Baghdad International Airport and a United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI) convoy was passing by the square as the attack took place. No one in the convoy was hurt in the attack.



7 On November 15, a VBIED targeted an Iraqi Army (IA) checkpoint in the Thiraa Dijla area, north of Baghdad. The VBIED attack was followed by a Suicide VBIED in the same location. Both attacks resulted in the death of 9 and injury of 28 including members of the IA checkpoint.



8 On November 16, al-Jazeera and al-Badia Operations Command started training 260 tribal members from Anbar’s Haditha and al-Baghdadi areas in al-Asad airbase in western Anbar. The trainees are part of a group of 3,000 members who will be part of an anti-ISIS tribal force.



- Major Cities
- ★ Major Clash
- ✈ Airstrikes
- 👤 Kidnapping
- 🚗 VBIED
- 🚚 SVBIED
- ✈ Armed Drones
- Peshmerga
- ▨ Coalition
- USA
- ISF
- ISIS
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- Iraqi Shi’a militias



Content: Ahmed Ali
Graphics: Nichole Dicharry

The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have made significant advances against the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in the strategic town of Baiji in northern Iraq’s Salah ad-Din Province. The control of Baiji by the ISF is still not complete, but the ISF are in control of the majority of the area and appear to have denied ISIS the freedom of movement. Strategically, these developments represent a major setback to ISIS. Baiji sits on the vital Baghdad-Mosul highway and by denying ISIS freedom of movement in the area, the ISF can apply increased pressure on ISIS positions in Tikrit south of Baiji. Furthermore, clearing Baiji can facilitate the planning of any future operations to retake Mosul from ISIS and also disrupt ISIS from utilizing the Baiji-Haditha highway towards Anbar province in the west. The ISF, anti-ISIS tribes, and Iraqi Shi’a militias within the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) will, however, require time to completely clear and fully control Baiji. ISIS has been entrenched in the area since June of this year and has created a defense system based on the widespread emplacement of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in buildings and on streets.