

Iraq Situation Report: December 11-12, 2014

1 On December 11, leader in Albu Nimr Tribe, Sheikh Naim al-Gaud stated that ISIS retook the Mahbubiya area located between Hit and Baghdadi sub-district in western Anbar province. He added that tribal forces in the area did not have enough ammunition. Meanwhile, an anonymous security source stated ISIS continued to clear the area, killing the commander of the commandos' battalion of the 7th Iraqi Army (IA) Division. On December 12, ISIS also took control of the area known as Kilometer 18 in western Anbar.



2 On December 11, ISIS reportedly attempted to enter Shura sub-district, south of Mosul to arrest some of the "notables" in the area. Tribal gunmen did not allow ISIS in the area, initiating clashes that lasted for two hours. No casualties were reported.



3 On December 11, the commander of 4th Brigade at the Walid Border crossing stated that ISIS destroyed eight communications towers in Rutba, western Anbar, disrupting communications between the border crossings and other ISF commands. He added that the ISF worked to overcome this incident.



4 On December 11, a local source from Ninewa stated coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS in buildings formerly used by the ISF in Baaj area, southwestern Ninewa.



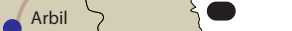
5 On December 11, four mortar rounds targeted the vicinity of Karbala city in south central Iraq. Reports also state that Katyusha rockets were launched toward Karbala. The MoD stated they inflicted damage in the city's western neighborhoods and resulted in the death of one civilian. According to a local official, the mortar rounds originated from the Nukhaib area on the Karbala-Anbar border. Two Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs) were also defused in Karbala.



6 On December 11, Ministry of Defense stated that Mutasim sub-district, southeast of Samarra in Salah ad-Din province was cleared from ISIS, and that security forces started dismantling IEDs emplaced by ISIS on the roads and buildings. On December 12, Ministry of Defense stated that forces from Samarra Operations Command (SOC) supported by Iraqi air force killed 15 ISIS members and destroyed one vehicle outfitted with a heavy machine gun in the Seweya area which is part Mutasim sub-district. Iraqi Shi'a militias likely participated in the operations.



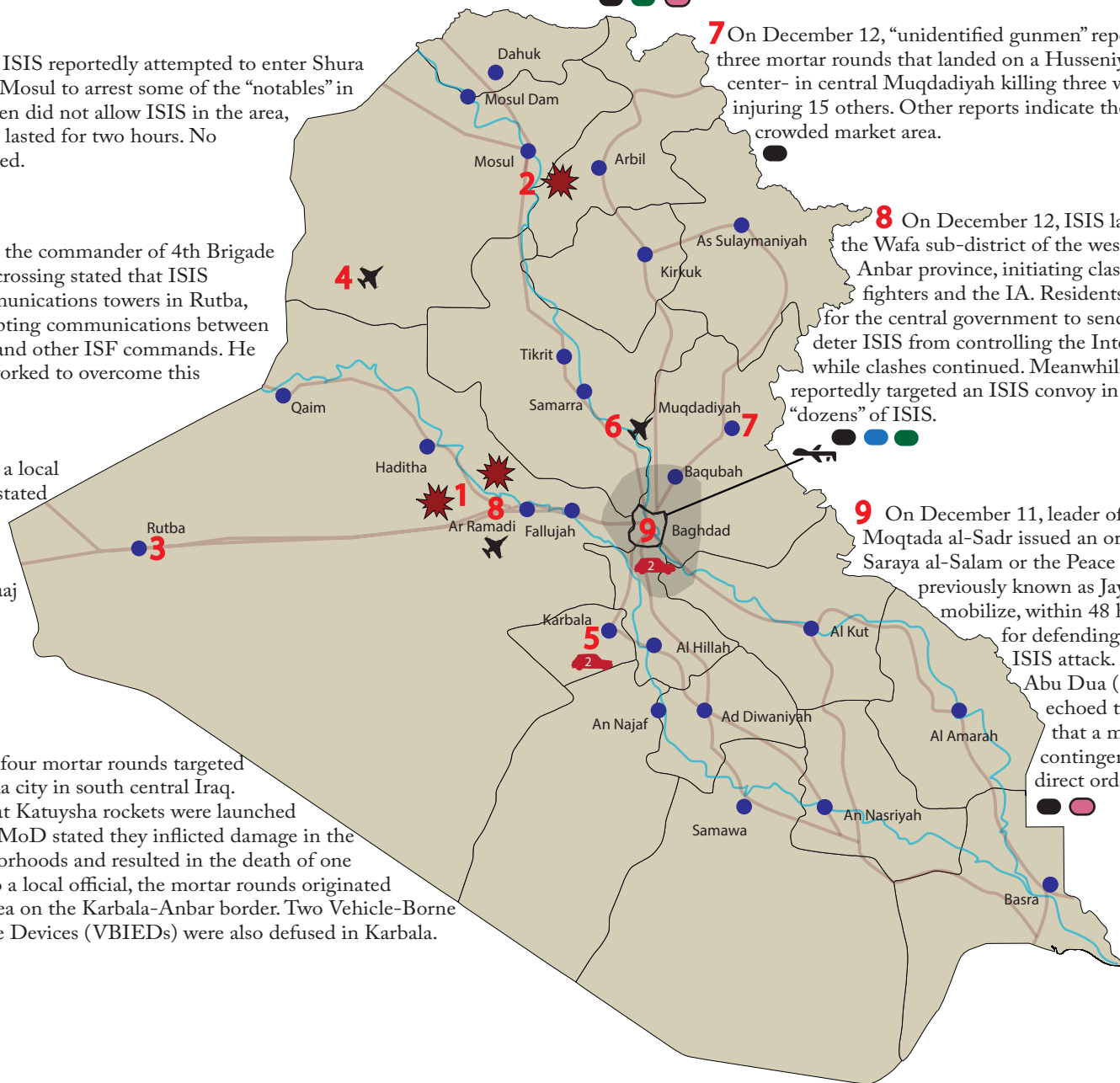
7 On December 12, "unidentified gunmen" reportedly launched three mortar rounds that landed on a Husseniyyah- Shi'a religious center- in central Muqdadiah killing three worshipers and injuring 15 others. Other reports indicate the mortars fell in a crowded market area.



8 On December 12, ISIS launched an attack on the Wafa sub-district of the west of Ramadi city in Anbar province, initiating clashes with tribal fighters and the IA. Residents reportedly called for the central government to send reinforcements to deter ISIS from controlling the International Highway while clashes continued. Meanwhile, an Iraqi airstrike reportedly targeted an ISIS convoy in the area, killing "dozens" of ISIS.



9 On December 11, leader of the Sadrist Trend, Moqtada al-Sadr issued an order for members of Saraya al-Salam or the Peace Brigades (PB), previously known as Jayesh al-Mahdi to mobilize, within 48 hours, in preparation for defending Samarra from an ISIS attack. Also, Leader of PB, Abu Dua (Kadhim) al-Issawi echoed the call but stated that a movement is contingent upon another direct order from Sadr.



- Major Cities
- Coalition
- Airstrikes
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- VBIED
- Iraqi Shi'a militias
- Armed Drones
- ISF
- Major Clash
- ISIS



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The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) is continuing an aggressive posture in Anbar province in western Iraq. ISIS attacked near Ramadi again this week, adding attacks west of Hit and regaining some territory there. The situation in Anbar represents a stalemate between ISIS, the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), and anti-ISIS tribes. But ISIS still enjoys freedom of movement in the province even as coalition and U.S. airstrikes continue to bombard ISIS positions there. ISIS also shut down the communication towers in western Anbar near border crossing which indicates a possible push by ISIS towards the crossings. This is especially likely in light of ISIS attacks near the two border crossings of Trebil and al-Walid last month. In Karbala, ISIS is also targeting the Arbaeen religious visit. ISIS also attacked a number of mosques and Shi'a shrines throughout Iraq, including Baghdad and Muqdadiah. ISIS has not been successful with its attacks due to increased security measures by the ISF. However, it will be important to watch for possible attacks tomorrow when the Arbaeen visit culminates. These attacks can take place in other locations such as Baghdad's Kadhmiyah shrine and likely Samarra in Salah ad-Din province, which is home to the Askari shrine. Meanwhile, ISIS continues to conduct security operations south of Mosul to control tribal resistance, and the ISF cleared ISIS from Mutasim south of Samarra.