

# Iraq Situation Report: December 4-5, 2014

**1** On December 4, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) which include Iraqi Shi'a militias reportedly cleared Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) members from Tal al-Thahab area south of Balad in the northern Baghdad area. On December 5, ISIS members attacked ISF and PMUs stationed in Balad. The ensuing clashes killed seven ISIS fighters and destroyed a number of ISIS vehicles. Meanwhile, ISF and PMUs supported by ISF tanks continued operations to clear the areas of Tal al-Thahab and Hadhira, south of Balad. Iraqi Army Aviation also targeted ISIS in Tal al-Thahab to break an ISIS siege on ISF and PMUs. Also, forces from the IA supported by tribal fighters reportedly engaged ISIS in the ISIS-stronghold of Yathrib sub-district, northwest of Balad. The clashes resulted in displacement of 500 families from the suburbs of Balad to the center of the city.

**2** On December 5, ISIS reportedly took control of the Albu Jwari area located between Baiji and Baiji Oil Refinery while IA Aviation targeted ISIS in the area. This report remains unconfirmed.

**3** On December 5, ISIS launched an attack on ISF and PMUs at an irrigation canal known as Albu Talha which is located between Diyala and Salah ad-Din provinces. The joint forces reportedly repelled the attack. The clashes killed six ISIS members, two PMU members, and injured six others.

**4** On December 5, a local security source stated that 15 coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS in Bashiqa, east of Mosul, killing and injuring "dozens" of ISIS members. In addition, Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga artillery targeted ISIS in Bashiqa.

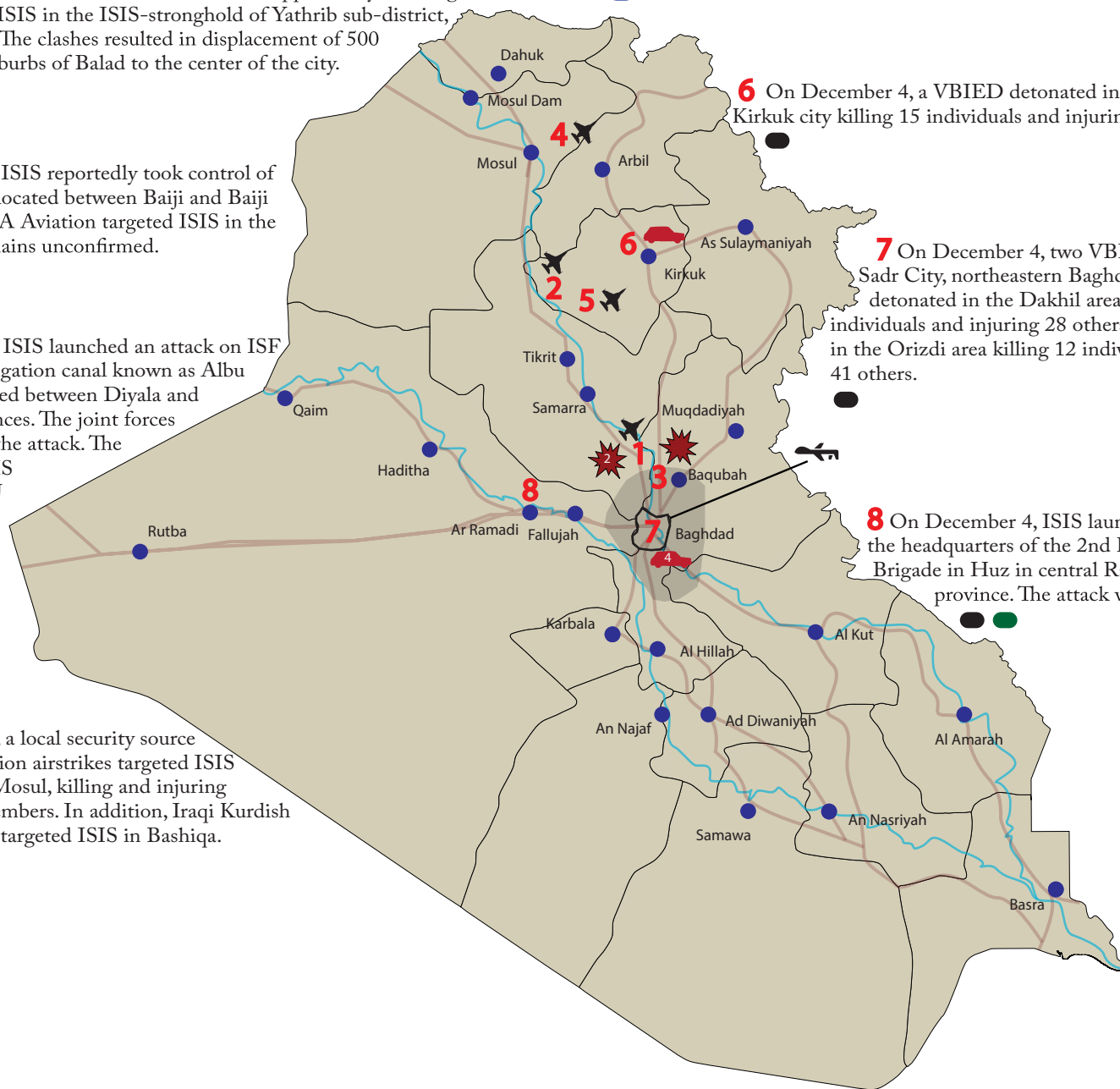
**5** On December 5, Peshmerga forces and coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS using artillery near the Maryam Beg Bridge on the road between Kirkuk city and Rashad sub-district, southwestern Kirkuk province. A coalition airstrike targeted ISIS near Bagara Base between Hawija and Riyadh sub-districts. Bagara functioned as an Iraqi Army base before the June 10 fall of Mosul and it was known as Forward Operating Base McHenry during the presence of U.S. forces in the area. Coalition airstrikes also targeted ISIS near Mula Abdullah village, Maktab Khalid area, and al-Sheikh Issa village.



**6** On December 4, a VBIED detonated in the Shorja area in Kirkuk city killing 15 individuals and injuring 20 others.

**7** On December 4, two VBIEDs detonated in Sadr City, northeastern Baghdad. One VBIED detonated in the Dakhil area killing nine individuals and injuring 28 others. Another detonated in the Orizdi area killing 12 individuals and injuring 41 others.

**8** On December 4, ISIS launched an attack on the headquarters of the 2nd Rapid Response Brigade in Huz in central Ramadi in Anbar province. The attack was repelled.



- Major Cities
- 🚗 VBIED
- ✈️ Airstrikes
- 🚁 Armed Drones
- 💥 Major Clash
- 🚚 Coalition
- ISF
- ISIS
- Anti-ISIS Tribes
- Peshmerga
- Iraqi Shi'a militias



Content: Sinan Adnan and Ahmed Ali  
Graphics: Brian Fisher

The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) continues to concentrate its effort in the area of Balad in the northern Baghdad belt. Its offensive south of Balad has triggered a major response by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Iraqi Shi'a militias within the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs). The increased response by these forces indicates the seriousness of the situation and ISIS intent to disrupt the Baghdad-Samarra highway. ISIS is launching its attacks from the Yathrib sub-district, east of Balad, and is also forcing the ISF and PMUs to consolidate their effort south of Balad, closer to Baghdad. In the north, the Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga and ISIS continue to clash in Kirkuk which is another sign that ISIS continues to engage the Peshmerga. The situation has resulted in a stalemate between the two forces, and ISIS attacks have been concentrated in southwestern Kirkuk. It will be important for the Peshmerga to watch for ISIS attacks in the northwestern parts of the province, including the areas of Dibis.