

Iraq Situation Report: October 30-31, 2014

1 On October 30, the ISF and Popular Mobilization which includes Iraqi Shia militias advanced further along the highway toward Baiji district and reportedly took over the Mazaraa area and the Sinai neighborhood, south of Baiji, in addition to the Seneya refinery located west of Baiji. An airstrike destroyed 37 vehicles of gunmen near Baiji in route to clash with the security forces. Meanwhile, an SVBIED targeted the joint force south of Baiji killing two individuals and injuring 11 others. On October 31, a joint force of ISF and militias launched an assault on Baiji proper and allegedly made gains in neighborhoods in western, southern, and eastern Baiji. The assault initiated clashes with ISIS reportedly killing 71 in the district and 21 others who launched an attack from the eastern side of Baiji. The IP of Baiji opened an alternate directorate in Hajaj, south of Baiji, and called for policemen from Baiji to report and for tribal elements to participate in holding ground south of Baiji to allow the security forces to advance further.



2 On October 30, sources from Rutba reported that a coalition airstrike reportedly targeted ISIS on the outskirts of Rutba, western Anbar causing significant but unspecified losses of ISIS personnel and vehicles in addition to civilians who were in close proximity. The sources reported that the heavy deployment of ISIS in the district makes civilians more vulnerable to the effects of airstrikes. DoD reported that coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS near Qaim.



3 A local source reported that a coalition airstrike targeted ISIS in Bashiqa sub-district, northeast of Mosul, and as well as ISIS positions inside Mosul.



4 The chairman of Barwana sub-district stated that more than a thousand families displaced by ISIS from the Izwiya area of Hit arrived Barwana within the last 48 hours. He added that these families were given shelters in schools and buildings under construction.



5 On October 30, policemen in Zumar sub-district, northwest of Mosul reportedly reported to work at an alternate location because ISIS booby-trapped their original police station with IEDs.



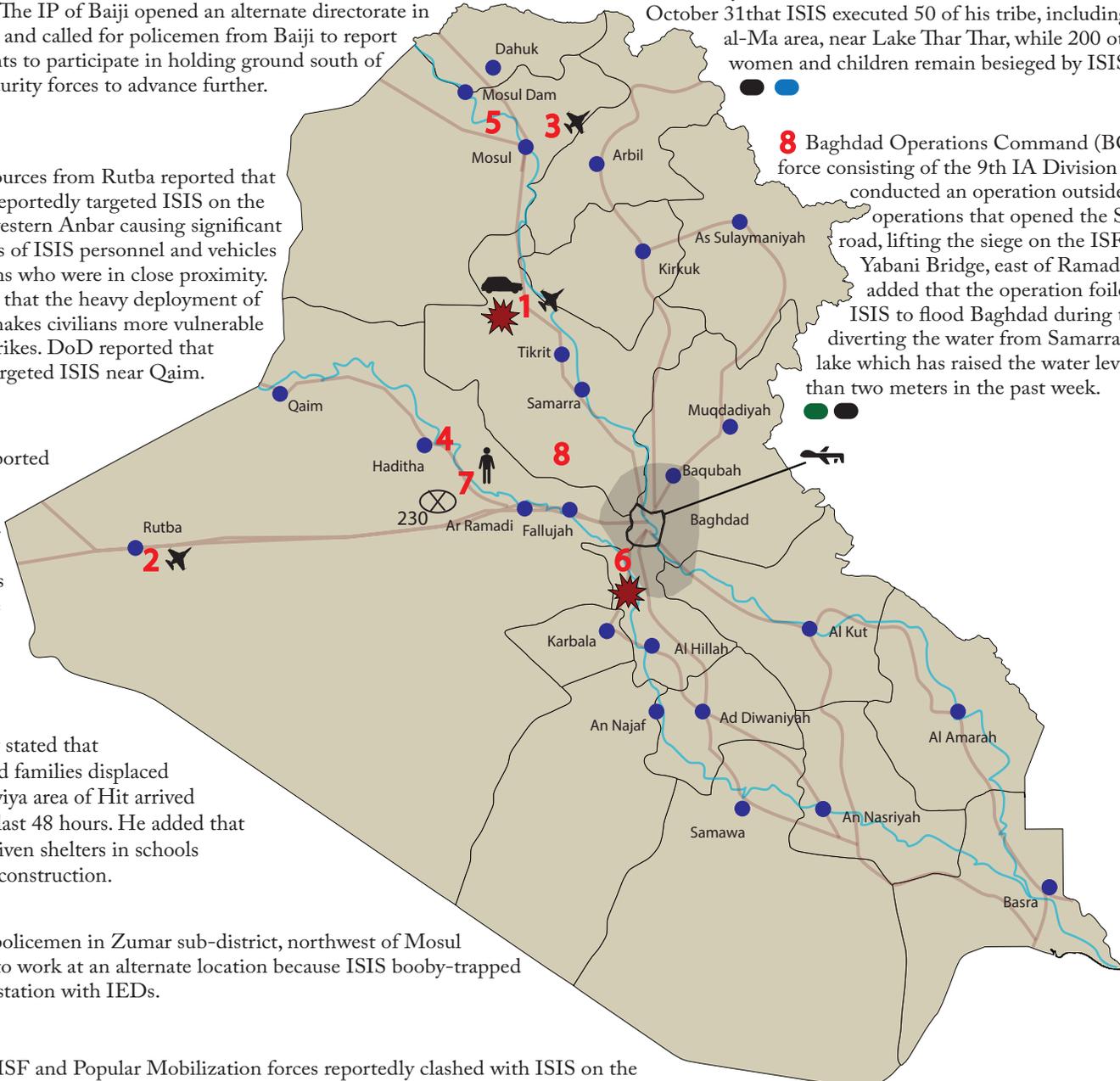
6 On October 30, ISF and Popular Mobilization forces reportedly clashed with ISIS on the outskirts of the Owissat area of northern Babil killing 22 members of ISIS and injuring an unspecified number of others while clashes took place in the Farisiyah and Abd Wayes areas. Meanwhile, a source from Babil Operations Command stated that ISF engineers opened a new route leading to Amiriyat al-Fallujah, southeast of Fallujah, while the ISF continued to dismantle IEDs on the original road to Amiriyat al-Fallujah. Also, forces from ISF and the Popular Mobilization, including Iraqi Shia militias, were reported to be on the outskirts of Jurf al-Sakhar preparing to advance toward Amiriyat al-Fallujah.



7 On October 30, ISIS reportedly kidnapped 250 members of the Albu Nimr tribe and executed 150 others in Anbar. The dead bodies were found in the thermal energy plant site west of Ramadi. Also, ISIS publically executed 30 fighters from the Albu Nimr tribe in the Furat sub-district near Hit and kidnapped two Sheikhs from the tribe for trying to locate the dead bodies of their sons. On October 31, leader of the Albu Nimr tribe stated that 150 of the tribe's youth departed Furat sub-district on October 30 toward Haditha but were executed by Albu Asaf tribe after they getting lost on the way. A leader of the Albu Nimr tribe, Naem al-Gaud stated on October 31 that ISIS executed 50 of his tribe, including women, in the Ras al-Ma area, near Lake Thar Thar, while 200 others including women and children remain besieged by ISIS in this area.



8 Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) stated that the a force consisting of the 9th IA Division and Federal Police conducted an operation outside the BOC area of operations that opened the Samarra-Ramadi road, lifting the siege on the ISF units near the Yabani Bridge, east of Ramadi. The commander added that the operation foiled an attempt by ISIS to flood Baghdad during the rainy season by diverting the water from Samarra dam to Thar Thar lake which has raised the water levels in the Tigris more than two meters in the past week.



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Content: Sinan Adnan
Graphics: Brian Fisher

Tribal dynamics in Anbar are evolving as ISIS pursues its Euphrates offensive. ISIS is targeting members of the Albu Nimr tribe in Hit district in retaliation for their anti-ISIS stance. This targeting has ranged from the execution of anti-ISIS male members of the tribe to the displacement of large numbers of families from the district, creating a humanitarian crisis as families fled through the desert. This has prompted the local police and members of the Ubaid tribe to launch an operation against ISIS in response. The participation of elements from the Ubaid tribe in sheltering the families of Albu Nimr in Barwana indicates cooperation between anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni tribes. It is important to watch for signs of Sunni tribal resistance against ISIS as a result of this development. Such resistance is critical in the fight against ISIS for both the Iraqi and U.S. governments and should be capitalized on to generate anti-ISIS tribal momentum similar to that of the first "Awakening" of 2005-2006. It is unclear if the Albu Assaf tribe is supportive of ISIS, as alleged by the tribal Sheikh, or a representation of inter- or intra-tribal rivalry. This is especially the case given that Albu Nimr tribal leader and CoR member Sheikh Ghazi al-Gaud accused another tribal leader of the same tribe of allowing ISIS to enter the Furat sub-district of Hit. Meanwhile, the assault of the ISF and the militias on Baiji is of strategic importance given the geographical importance of the area for both the ISF and ISIS. If this assault succeeds, it would be the first major urban center the ISF and militias succeed in retaking from ISIS since the fall of Fallujah from government control in the beginning of 2014. Tribal dynamics in Anbar are evolving as ISIS pursues its Euphrates offensive.