

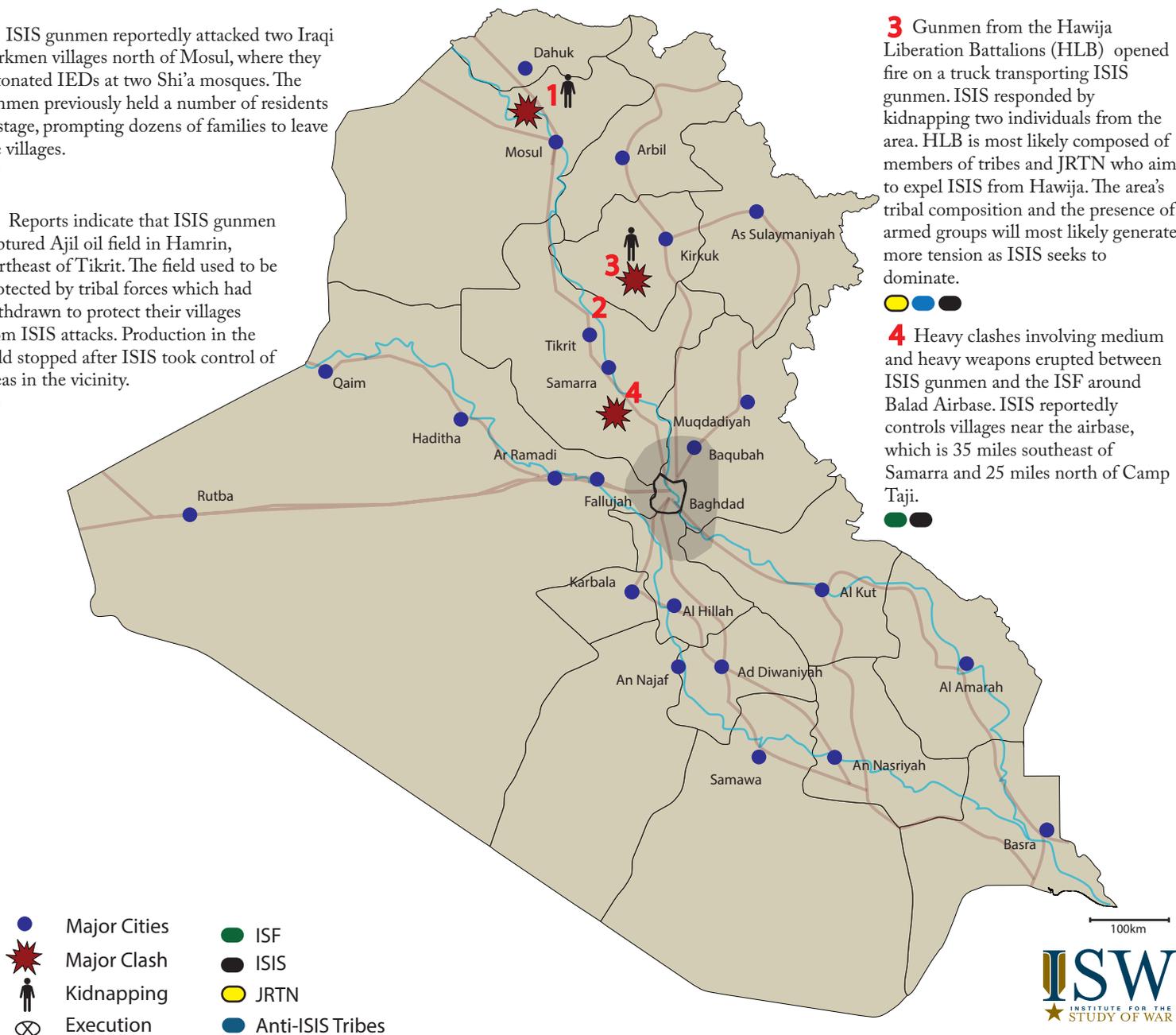
Iraq Situation Report: June 25, 2014

1 ISIS gunmen reportedly attacked two Iraqi Turkmen villages north of Mosul, where they detonated IEDs at two Shi'a mosques. The gunmen previously held a number of residents hostage, prompting dozens of families to leave the villages.

2 Reports indicate that ISIS gunmen captured Ajil oil field in Hamrin, northeast of Tikrit. The field used to be protected by tribal forces which had withdrawn to protect their villages from ISIS attacks. Production in the field stopped after ISIS took control of areas in the vicinity.

3 Gunmen from the Hawija Liberation Battalions (HLB) opened fire on a truck transporting ISIS gunmen. ISIS responded by kidnapping two individuals from the area. HLB is most likely composed of members of tribes and JRTN who aim to expel ISIS from Hawija. The area's tribal composition and the presence of armed groups will most likely generate more tension as ISIS seeks to dominate.

4 Heavy clashes involving medium and heavy weapons erupted between ISIS gunmen and the ISF around Balad Airbase. ISIS reportedly controls villages near the airbase, which is 35 miles southeast of Samarra and 25 miles north of Camp Taji.



by Heather L. Pickerell, Ahmed Ali, and ISW Iraq Team

ISIS' offensive has still not culminated as it pursues objectives closer to Baghdad. ISIS has attacked Balad Airbase with mortars and maneuvered forces around the facility. The base is located between two hardened areas where the ISF and Shi'a militias are present: Samarra, to the north, and Camp Taji, to the south. Although it is possible that the force attacking Balad moved through this corridor, ISIS more likely activated a contingent that was previously placed in the vicinity of Balad. ISIS' attack on Balad will likely impede the ability of IA Aviation to support isolated ISF contingents that do not have access to ground supply routes, at least in the short term. If its attack on the airbase is successful, ISIS could gain important military and aviation assets. It is important to watch for other pre-placed ISIS contingents being activated in other areas of Iraq. ISIS is consolidating gains in the north by attacking Shi'a Turkmen villages north of Mosul and seizing oil fields left unprotected by local tribes.