

# Iraq Situation Report: January 12, 2015

**1** On January 12, a spokesperson of the Nujaba Movement, an Iraqi Shi'a militia, stated that the IA with "direct support" from Nujaba clashed with ISIS members in Nebai, north of Baghdad killing 35 ISIS members and dismantled "dozens" of IEDs. He added that the forces "besieged" ISIS fighters in the areas of Bustan Najim, Kassarat, and Salablah, all of Nebai, and that the combined forces advanced "five kilometers" in these areas. The spokesperson explained that this advance will hamper ISIS's ability to send VBIEDs and suicide bombers to Baghdad using al-Roud Bridge, Sheikh Amir Bridge, and Sab al-Bour Bridge. Meanwhile, Commander of Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) General Abdul-Amir al-Shammari stated that IA, Federal Police (FP), and Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) which include Iraqi Shi'a militias launched a "wide" operation in Nebai and Kassarat.

**2** On January 12, an anonymous "medical" source from Fallujah Hospital stated that the hospital received 11 dead bodies and seven wounded, after two mortars fell on their homes in different parts of the city.

**3** On January 12, an anonymous security source in Salah al-Din province stated that ISIS has executed "tens" of civilians, including a member of the local Provincial Council in Shirqat district, north of Baiji. The source added that ISIS charged the civilians with supporting Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and "belonging" to the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs).

**4** On January 12, a security source from Anbar stated that coalition airstrikes targeted a convoy of ISIS fighters that was heading from Zankurah area, west of Ramadi, to the Abu Tiban area, between Ramadi and Hit, killing fifteen ISIS fighters.

**5** On January 11, director of the South Kirkuk Operations Room, Wasta Rasul, stated that coalition airstrikes attacked an ISIS convoy in Hawija sub-district, southwest of Kirkuk, killing and injuring "dozens" of ISIS members.

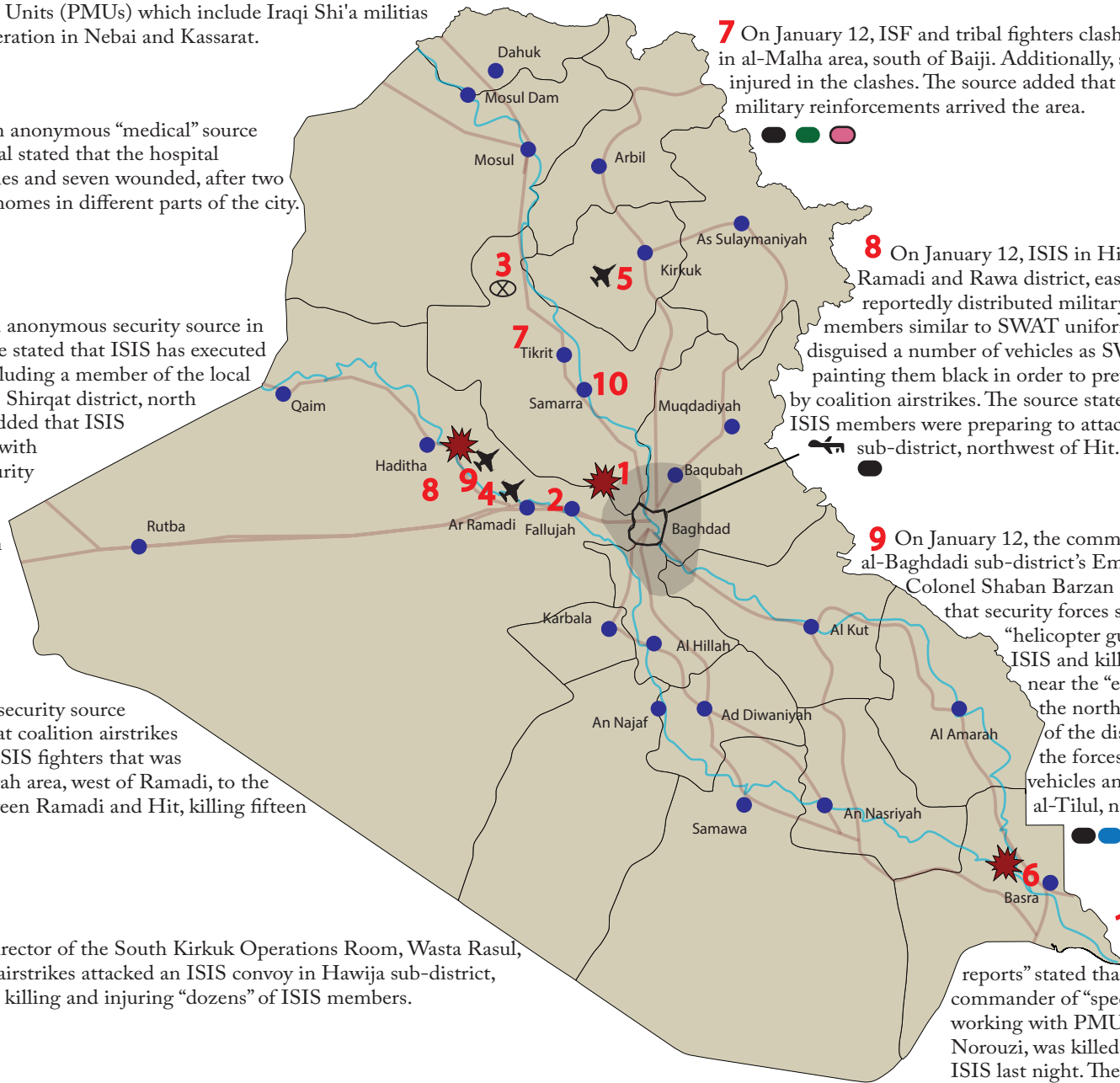
**6** On January 12, local officials from Basra stated that a force from Basra Operations Command and from an explosives disposal team (EOD) foiled an attempt to target Um Qasir port and Sailo, south of Basra City. The forces seized four rockets that were placed 500 meters from the port and dismantled two IEDs at pier number 11. Meanwhile, Member of Basra Provincial Council from the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Amin Wahib, stated that the rockets were old rockets from previous wars and that they were not effective.

**7** On January 12, ISF and tribal fighters clashed with ISIS fighters in al-Malha area, south of Baiji. Additionally, six IP members were injured in the clashes. The source added that ISIS retreated after military reinforcements arrived the area.

**8** On January 12, ISIS in Hit district, west of Ramadi and Rawa district, east of Qaim district, reportedly distributed military uniforms to its members similar to SWAT uniforms, and had disguised a number of vehicles as SWAT vehicles by painting them black in order to prevent their targeting by coalition airstrikes. The source stated that the disguised ISIS members were preparing to attack al-Baghdadi sub-district, northwest of Hit.

**9** On January 12, the commander of al-Baghdadi sub-district's Emergency Battalion, Colonel Shaban Barzan al-Obeidi, stated that security forces supported by "helicopter gunships" clashed with ISIS and killed 26 ISIS members, near the "entrances" of Hit in the northern and western part of the district. He added that the forces destroyed nine vehicles and a weapons cache in al-Tilul, north of Hit.

**10** On January 12, "Iranian press reports" stated that an Iranian commander of "special operations" working with PMUs in Samarra, Mehdi Norouzi, was killed during fighting with ISIS last night. The reports added that Norouzi was a member of the Iranian Basij forces in his hometown of Kermanshah and that he previously fought in Syria in defense of Saida Zainab and Saida Ruqaya shrines.



- Major Cities
- ⊗ Execution
- ★ Major Clash
- ✈ Airstrikes
- ✈ Armed Drones
- Iraqi Shi'a militias
- ISF
- ISIS
- Unknown Gunmen
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- Coalition



Content: Sinan Adnan & ISW Iraq Team  
Graphics: Brian Fisher

The report of the allegedly foiled attack on Um Qasir port is noteworthy, although recent history suggests that such attacks are unlikely to effectively hinder the flow of goods or oil at the port. On August 17, 2013 a VBIED detonated targeting a pier near a vessel loaded with sugar injuring two civilians. At the time, it appeared to be a terrorist attack. Following investigation by the Council of Representatives (CoR), however, it appeared that the attack was the work of a corrupt company aiming to cover corruption and gain financial incentive rather than the work of a terrorist organization. The motives behind today's incident cannot be verified at this time but it is important to note that this could be a manifestation of conflict among various parties such as merchants and political parties who have high stakes in Um Qasir port. Meanwhile, the report about the death of an Iranian Basij member is yet another example of the increasing normalization of Iran's role and influence in Iraq.