

Iraq Situation Report: July 5, 2014

1 ISIS released a video of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi leading Friday prayers in a mosque described as the Grand Mosque, located in central Mosul. This is his first known video appearance.

2 ISIS released images that illustrated the destruction of shrines and Shia mosques in the city of Mosul and in Tal Afar. Salafi Islamists believe that such shrines are representations of polytheism and should therefore be destroyed.

3 ISIS launched an attack on the Baiji refinery from two axes, initiating heavy clashes that lasted throughout the night. The ISF is still in control of the facility.

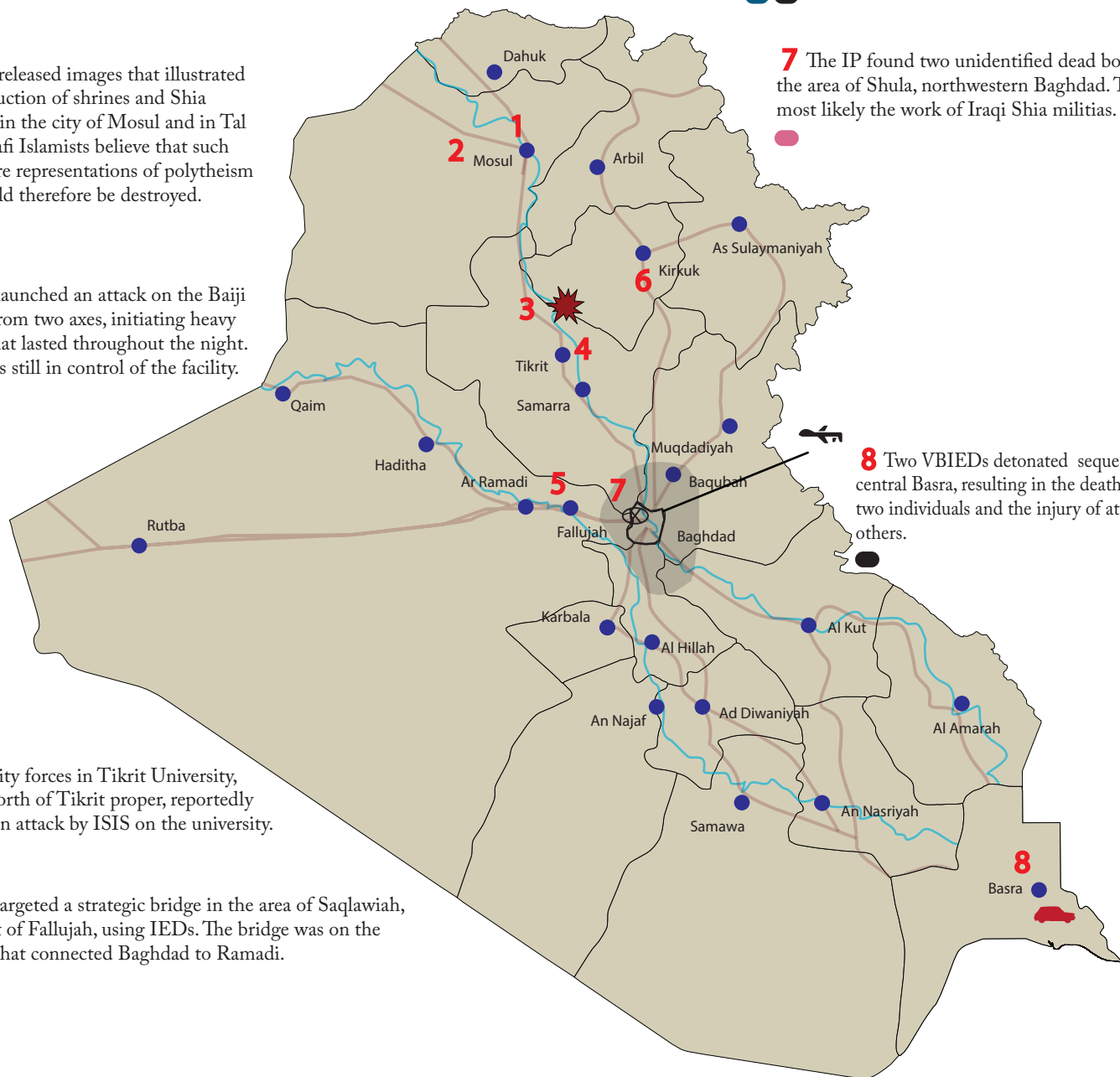
4 Security forces in Tikrit University, located north of Tikrit proper, reportedly repelled an attack by ISIS on the university.

5 ISIS targeted a strategic bridge in the area of Saqlawiah, northwest of Fallujah, using IEDs. The bridge was on the highway that connected Baghdad to Ramadi.

6 Anti-ISIS tribal elements targeted an ISIS leader near the area of Rashad, south of Kirkuk. The attack was successful in killing the ISIS figure.

7 The IP found two unidentified dead bodies in the area of Shula, northwestern Baghdad. This was most likely the work of Iraqi Shia militias.

8 Two VBIEDs detonated sequentially in central Basra, resulting in the death of at least two individuals and the injury of at least six others.



- Major Cities
- ★ Major Clash
- 🚗 VBIED
- ⊗ Execution
- 👤 Armed Drones
- ISF
- ISIS
- Anti-ISIS Tribes
- Shia militias



by ISW Iraq Team and Aaron Reese

ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi delivered a public sermon in his proclaimed role as Caliph Ibrahim, the leader of the Islamic State, presenting a major challenge to al-Qaeda senior leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. The public appearance of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in Mosul and the destruction of shrines and mosques in Mosul and Tal Afar indicate that ISIS control in northern Iraq is uncontested. Meanwhile, ISIS went on the offensive against the ISF in Tikrit and Baiji, indicating that their northern campaign has not culminated. Additionally, ISIS projected explosive attacks in other provinces. The bridge attack in Ramadi likely aimed to isolate the ISF in Anbar in order to facilitate the capture of Ramadi, Haditha, and Hit. The VBIEDs in Basra demonstrate the far reach of ISIS and their capability to attack the Shi'a heartland while the ISF and Shi'a militias concentrate forces elsewhere.