

Iraq Situation Report: August 23-24 2014

1 On August 24, airstrikes reportedly targeted ISIS positions in the southern entrance to Jalula killing and injuring 20 ISIS members. Also, unconfirmed reports indicate the Peshmerga control five villages south of Jalula. Meanwhile, ISIS destroyed a historic bridge in northern Jalula that connected the sub-district to Qarah Tap sub-district to prevent Peshmerga units forward from receiving supplies. ISIS also used an IED to target a Peshmerga patrol in the Hussaini village, north of Jalula killing four and injuring four others. An IED targeted volunteers' vehicles in Ashbilya sub-district, 2 km north of Mandili, killing two individuals and injuring seven others.

2 On August 24, unidentified gunmen riding 4x4 vehicles opened fire using medium and heavy weapons on an IA security checkpoint located around Nuaimiya, south of Fallujah. The gunmen killed three IA members and injured five others. Also, IA Aviation targeted an ISIS gathering near the Fallujah Dam, three ISIS 4x4 vehicles, and a truck loaded with weapons. The attack destroyed the vehicles and killed seven ISIS members.

3 On August 23, three VBIEDs detonated in Kirkuk killing 20 individuals and injuring 65 others. One VBIED targeted a Peshmerga position in a building under construction located in southern Kirkuk. A second VBIED detonated shortly thereafter approximately 500 meters from the first target. Meanwhile, a reported VBIED or SVEST exploded at the entrance of a market in northern Kirkuk City.

4 On August 23, a VBIED detonated near the Technical Institute in Arbil, injuring four individuals.

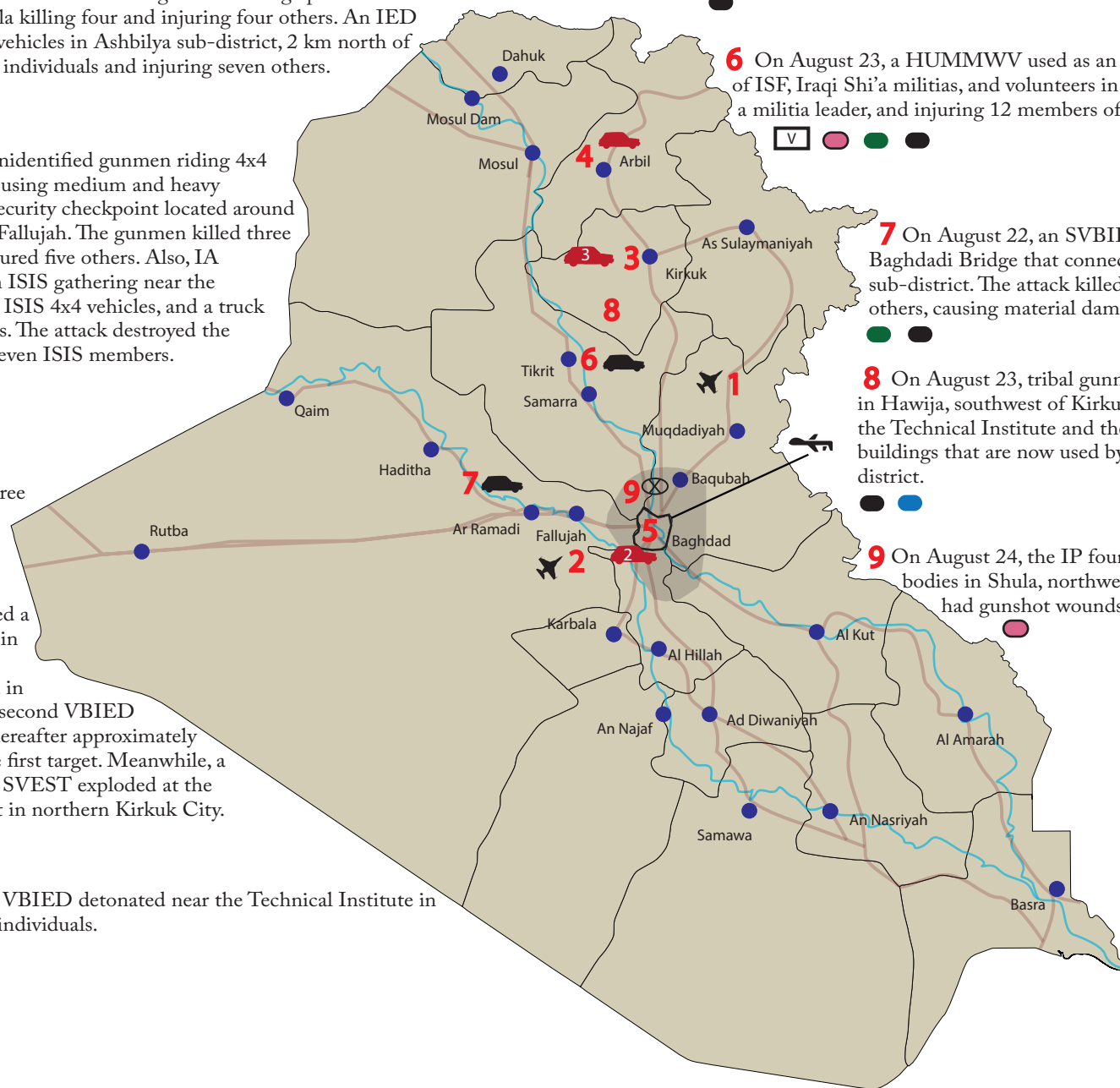
5 On August 23, a VBIED targeted the Iraq Intelligence Service building near the Masbah Intersection in Karrada, central Baghdad. The attack killed seven individuals and injured 32 others. On August 24, a VBIED detonated in the predominantly Shi'a neighborhood of Shula, northwestern Baghdad killing five individuals and injuring 14 others.

6 On August 23, a HUMMMWV used as an SVBIED targeted a gathering of ISF, Iraqi Shi'a militias, and volunteers in Ouja, south of Tikrit, killing a militia leader, and injuring 12 members of the joint force.

7 On August 22, an SVBIED targeted an IP patrol on the Baghdadi Bridge that connects Hit District to Baghdadi sub-district. The attack killed two civilians and injured six others, causing material damage to the bridge.

8 On August 23, tribal gunmen reportedly targeted ISIS in Hawija, southwest of Kirkuk City. The gunmen attacked the Technical Institute and the Sunni Endowment buildings that are now used by ISIS as headquarters in the district.

9 On August 24, the IP found three unidentified dead bodies in Shula, northwestern Baghdad. The bodies had gunshot wounds to the head and chest.



Content: ISW Iraq Team and Lauren Squires
Graphics: Nichole Dicharry

ISIS conducted five VBIED attacks on Saturday, just one short of the signature VBIED wave that characterized its spectacular attacks before the fall of Mosul. ISIS has typically used VBIED campaigns to target government buildings, security force checkpoints, infrastructure such as bridges, and Shi'a civilians. In the past two days there has been a VBIED resurgence against these targets throughout Iraq, in addition to other targets in the Kurdish region. ISIS likely has altered its tactics, techniques, and procedures in response to U.S. air strikes and is not massing openly as it had done as recently as several weeks ago. However, airstrikes have not destroyed ISIS's ability to operate as a conventional force. Instead, the group has likely adjusted its TTPs in the near term. ISIS remains capable of hybrid warfare, shifting between terrorist and conventional tactics. Meanwhile, the Hamrin Ridge remains highly contested between ISIS, Peshmerga, and militia-backed Iraqi forces. Attacks in Jalula will likely continue unabated because ISIS has likely entrenched itself in several sub-districts by establishing defensive positions and emplacing IEDs on major roads that the Peshmerga would use to retake the town.