

Iraq Situation Report: August 26, 2014

1 The Peshmerga reportedly took control of a regulatory dam located south of the Mosul Dam, and clashed with ISIS in Wana sub-district, eight miles southwest of the Mosul Dam. The Peshmerga is preparing to launch an assault on the sub-district. Additionally, an AED reportedly exploded, targeting an ISIS vehicle in the Nabi Younis area of central Mosul. The attack killed five ISIS members. A VBIED reportedly exploded near an ISIS headquarters in Mosul. These reports remain unconfirmed.



2 On August 25, ISIS attacked the Baiji oil refinery using a tank, a fuel tanker VBIED, and vehicles outfitted with anti-aircraft cannons that were reportedly destroyed by the ISF at the refinery supported by IA Aviation.



3 ISIS executed twelve former members of the IP and Sahwa in Hawija, southwest of Kirkuk. According to eyewitnesses, ISIS accused these men of giving information about ISIS positions to the government.



4 Leaflets with the MoD symbol were air dropped into Mosul urging citizens to cooperate with the government to counter ISIS. The leaflets also stated that "special elements" of the ISF entered Mosul and started to attack ISIS in "select locations."



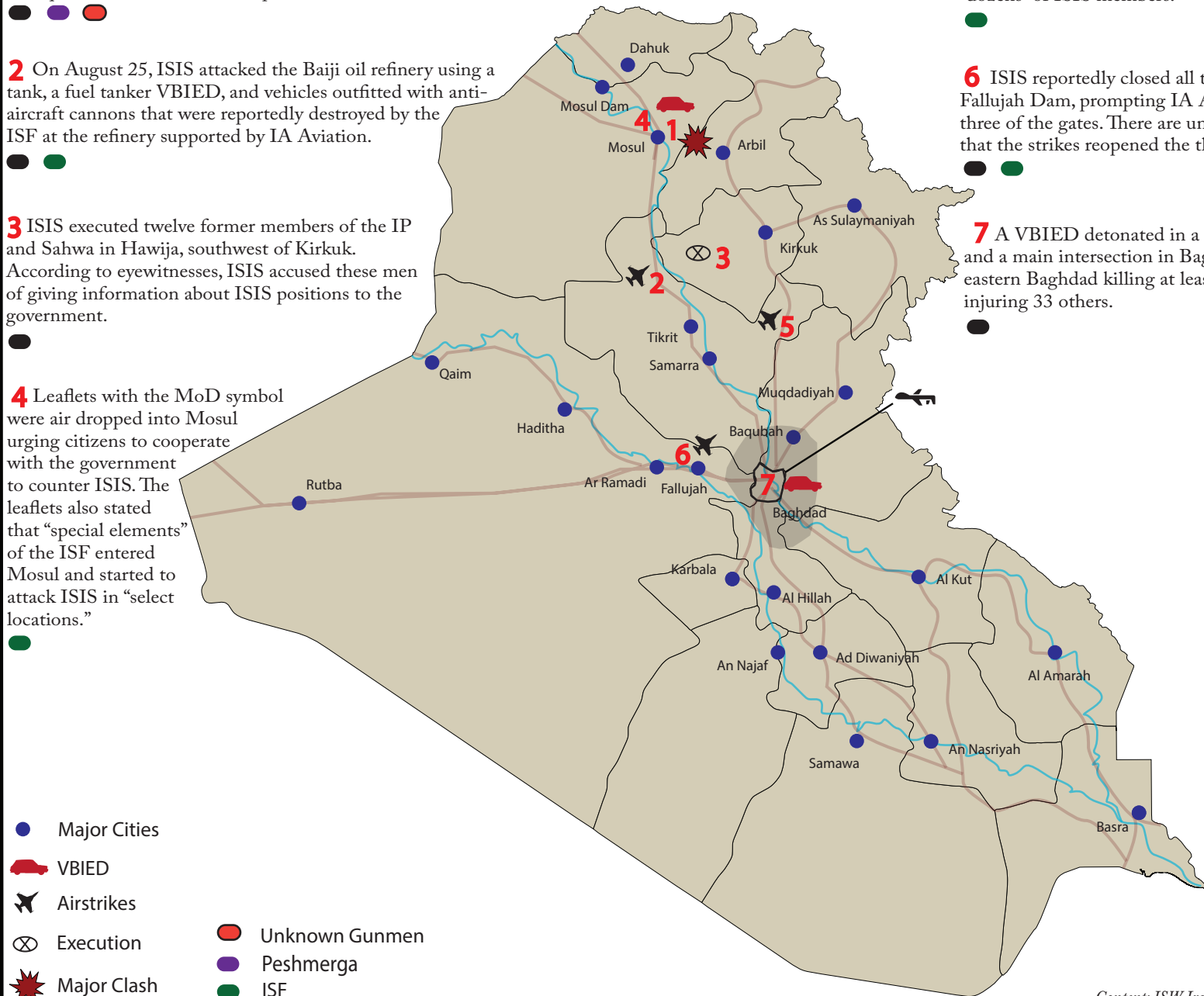
5 The MoD posted a video of an IA Aviation helicopter evacuating dozens of mostly women and children from Amerli. Also, IA Aviation carried out nine attacks on ISIS around Amerli burning nine vehicles and three fuel tankers in addition to killing "dozens" of ISIS members.



6 ISIS reportedly closed all ten gates of the Fallujah Dam, prompting IA Aviation to target three of the gates. There are unconfirmed reports that the strikes reopened the three gates.



7 A VBIED detonated in a commercial center and a main intersection in Baghdad al-Jadida, eastern Baghdad killing at least ten individuals and injuring 33 others.



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

The Iraqi Security Forces supported by volunteers and Iranian-backed militias continue their counteroffensive campaign to relieve ISIS's siege of the isolated Shi'a Turkmen town of Amerli. This organized counteroffensive is the most robust the ISF and the militias have organized, but it has not yet achieved significant effects and it remains to be seen whether it is successful and sustainable. ISIS has been besieging Amerli since June. Elsewhere today ISIS reasserted its intent to control some of the infrastructure it has long held or sought. ISIS still controls the Fallujah Dam, using it to achieve operational objectives. In April, ISIS closed the dam, flooding areas west of Baghdad, preventing water from reaching southern provinces, and forcing ISF stationed in these areas to disperse. Despite its strategic importance, the ISF was not able to mount a successful ground operation to retake it. The decision to bombard the dam in order to mitigate the effects of its closure, if true, further illustrates how ISIS is setting the terms of battle for the ISF. This is evident elsewhere in Iraq. In mid-June, ISIS and other anti-government Sunni groups conducted attacks against the Baiji oil refinery while ISF maintained a defensive posture. Since then, the refinery has remained a contested area, but ISIS persists in its effort to attack it. Though ISF successfully repelled yesterday's attack, ISIS's efforts and equipment prove their capabilities and intent to destabilize and seize this key terrain. Reporting about attacks against ISIS in Mosul is unconfirmed, but if true, attacks were likely carried out by other anti-government armed groups in Mosul. In central Iraq, ISIS detonated a VBIED in a commercial center and main intersection, targeting civilians, despite ISIS's claim that it targeted a gathering of Asai'b Ahl al-Haq, the lethal Iranian-backed Shi'a militia.