

Iraq Situation Report: September 20-22, 2014

1 ISIS reportedly besieged 400 IA members who were in need of food and water supplies in Saqlawiyah, west of Fallujah for five days. On September 21, the MoD stated that it had lost contact with the IA contingents in Saqlawiyah and Sichar and “warned” “terrorists” against attacking them. On September 22, the MoD stated that the forces were rescued after an operation was launched to break the siege. Meanwhile, families of trapped IA soldiers gathered near Abu Ghraib of western Baghdad demanding the rescue of their sons. The commander of Anbar Operations Command and a survivor stated that the headquarters of the IA was attacked by ISIS using VBIEDs and SVESTs. PM Abadi ordered that the commanders of the IA regiments in Saqlawiyah and Sichar be restrained pending an investigation.

2 On September 21, ISIS militants engaged in heavy clashes with ISF members in several areas northwest of Ramadi in Tawi, Albu Aitha, the area around the train station, Jazeerat Albu Ali al-Jassim, and near Jazeera al-Burisha, causing an unknown number of casualties.

3 On September 21, ISIS militants looted and burnt the homes of several leaders of the Albu Issa and Albu Issan tribes in Amiriyat al-Fallujah, southeast of Fallujah, after they declared their support for ISF operations in Anbar province on September 20.

4 On September 22, A VBIED detonated in Ur neighborhood of northeastern Baghdad, killing five people and wounding 14 others.

5 On September 21, the MoD issued a statement announcing that a joint force from the 14th and 17th IA Divisions launched an operation in the Karaghul area of Yusufiyah, south of Baghdad, and cleared ISIS fighters from the area.

6 On September 22, an anonymous source from Fallujah hospital stated that ISF shelling on Fallujah reportedly resulted in the death of 27 individuals and injured 20 others in addition to destroying a water treatment plant in Saqlawiyah, west of Fallujah.

7 On September 21, ISIS reportedly launched an attack from four axes on Dujail district, south of Tikrit, which initiated heavy clashes with tribal gunmen from the area who repelled the attack. Three of the tribal elements were injured while “dozens” of ISIS were injured as well. On September 22, ISIS launched another attack from the direction of Yathrib area near Balad airbase. The attack was reportedly repelled but ISIS destroyed 10 homes that belonged to ISF members in areas under its control on the outskirts of the district.

8 On September 21, ISIS fired rockets on and around the village of Albu Hassan, west of Tuz Khurmatu in eastern Salah ad-Din province, resulting in the injury of six Badr Organization members. Also, two IEDs were detonated on the homes of senior PUK members and two other IEDs detonated near former Iraqi Kurdish officers.

9 On September 21, ISIS fighters attacked the village of Albu Badran, between Tuz Khurmatu and Daquq south of Kirkuk, with the intention of arresting two Sahwa (Awakening) members. The residents refused to surrender the members which initiated clashes resulting in the death of five civilians and two ISIS members. ISIS gunmen detonated IEDs against the homes of the Sahwa members before they left.

10 On September 20, ISIS destroyed the customs office in Qaim on the Iraqi Syrian borders and positioned its members on the roof of the Syrian customs office.

11 On September 22, Jordanian troops reinforced their positions on the Iraq-Jordanian border.

12 On September 21, an eyewitness from Riyadh sub-district, southwestern Kirkuk stated that ISIS gunmen changed their TTPs in order to minimize the possibility of being targeted by fighter jets. He stated that the gunmen are using motorcycles and bicycles instead of pickup trucks and Humvees. In addition, other eyewitnesses reported that ISIS evacuated its members from the IA headquarters they occupied after June 10 in the Hawija area. Other eyewitnesses reported that ISIS started to thin out concentrations of its fighters in Hawija. On September 20, locals from the Hawija area reported that ISIS lifted the ban on smoking to reportedly gain the population’s “sympathy.”



- Major Cities
- SVEST
- VBIED
- Jordan
- ISF
- ISIS
- Iraqi Shi'a militias
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- ★ Major Clash
- ➔ Armed Drones



Content: Ahmed Ali and ISW Iraq Team
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The Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) continues its campaign to solidify its control in Anbar. The attacks over the weekend also demonstrate ISIS’s capabilities to launch multiple attacks, including in Syria against Ayn al-Arab and in Iraq to include retaliatory attacks in the Tuz Khurmatu areas where ISIS has been pushed out of the nearby areas of Amerli and Suleiman Beg. ISIS also attacked Saqlawiyah, which has been a contested area since they took control of Fallujah in January of this year. Despite the attack, Saqlawiyah remains contested. ISIS control of the area will sever a supply route between Saqlawiyah and an ISF position in Habbaniyah that supplied Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and anti-ISIS tribal elements. ISIS will also be able to restrict a supply route between Habbaniyah and Ramadi and thus increase its pressure on Ramadi from the eastern flank. The attack demonstrates the continuing logistical difficulties the ISF face as they are confronted by ISIS operations. It will be important to watch if ISIS’s Anbar operations will result in U.S. airstrikes in Ramadi and Fallujah in order to blunt ISIS’s push.