

# Iraq Situation Report: October 23-24, 2014

**1** On October 24, ISF reportedly clashed with ISIS in Hajaj, south of Baiji. The clashes resulted in the deaths of 18 ISIS fighters and the destruction of five ISIS vehicles. A drone targeted bombing targeted ISIS members in al-Mazraa village, south of Baiji, while they were attempting to plant IEDs on a road. On October 24, two SVBIEDs attacked the Baiji oil refinery and clashes ensued between ISIS and ISF inside the refinery. On October 23, CENTCOM announced that a coalition airstrike destroyed an "ISIS fighting position," and on October 24 announced that a coalition airstrike targeted an ISIS training camp south of the Baiji oil refinery.



**2** On October 24, the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) attacked Iraqi Army (IA) and Iraqi Police (IP) personnel at three checkpoints in Ramadi in western Iraq. The attack took place in the Hoz area, 20th street area, and Iskan area. Three IA members were killed and two IA and four IP members were wounded in addition to damage to ISF vehicles.



**3** On October 24, ISIS forces coming from Salah ad-Din attacked a major checkpoint in Udhaim on the Baghdad-Kirkuk highway. The clashes took place in the Hawi area and resulted in highway closure for about 6 hours. The highway was later reopened.



**4** On October 23, ISIS forces took control of the Furat sub-district, west of Hit district. ISIS forces infiltrated the area from the area of Tarabsha and Izwiya village north of Hit. ISIS took control of the Izwiya village after 1000 fighters from the Albu Nimr with their weapons repositioned to Barwana in Haditha. Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police forces reportedly launched an operation to retake Furat, but this has not yet materialized. ISIS also shelled al-Baghdadi, a village west of Hit adjacent to the al-Asad airbase with mortars.



**5** On October 24, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Albu Issa tribal fighters repelled an ISIS attack on Amiriyat al-Fallujah. The clashes reportedly resulted in the killing of 20 ISIS fighters and the destruction of three armored ISIS VBIEDs which were targeting the entrances to the town. The attack came from three axes, Albu Hawa, al-Annaz and al-Hasa. Anbar Operations Command (AOC) also imposed a curfew in the town as clashes continue.



**6** On October 24, The Iraqi Ministry of Defense stated that Iraqi Security Forces cleared Jurf al-Sakhar. Iraqi Army forces and Popular Mobilization Units which include Iraqi Shi'a militias reportedly entered Jurf al-Sakhar's city center and raised Iraqi flags on major government buildings. Sources stated that more than 4,000 Iraqi Shi'a militia members were involved in the operation in addition to the 31st Brigade of the 8th Iraqi Army Division. The operation was reportedly named "Ashura" and was commanded by member of the Badr Organization and new Minister of the Interior, Mohammed al-Ghaban, and head of the Badr Organization, Hadi al-Ameri. Clashes are ongoing to clear areas north of Jurf al-Sakhar, including Fadhiliyah.



**7** On October 24, French and coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS positions in southwestern Kirkuk in Hawijah. The targets included weapons arsenals, VBIED factories, and a senior ISIS leader in. French air strikes targeted 12 ISIS locations.



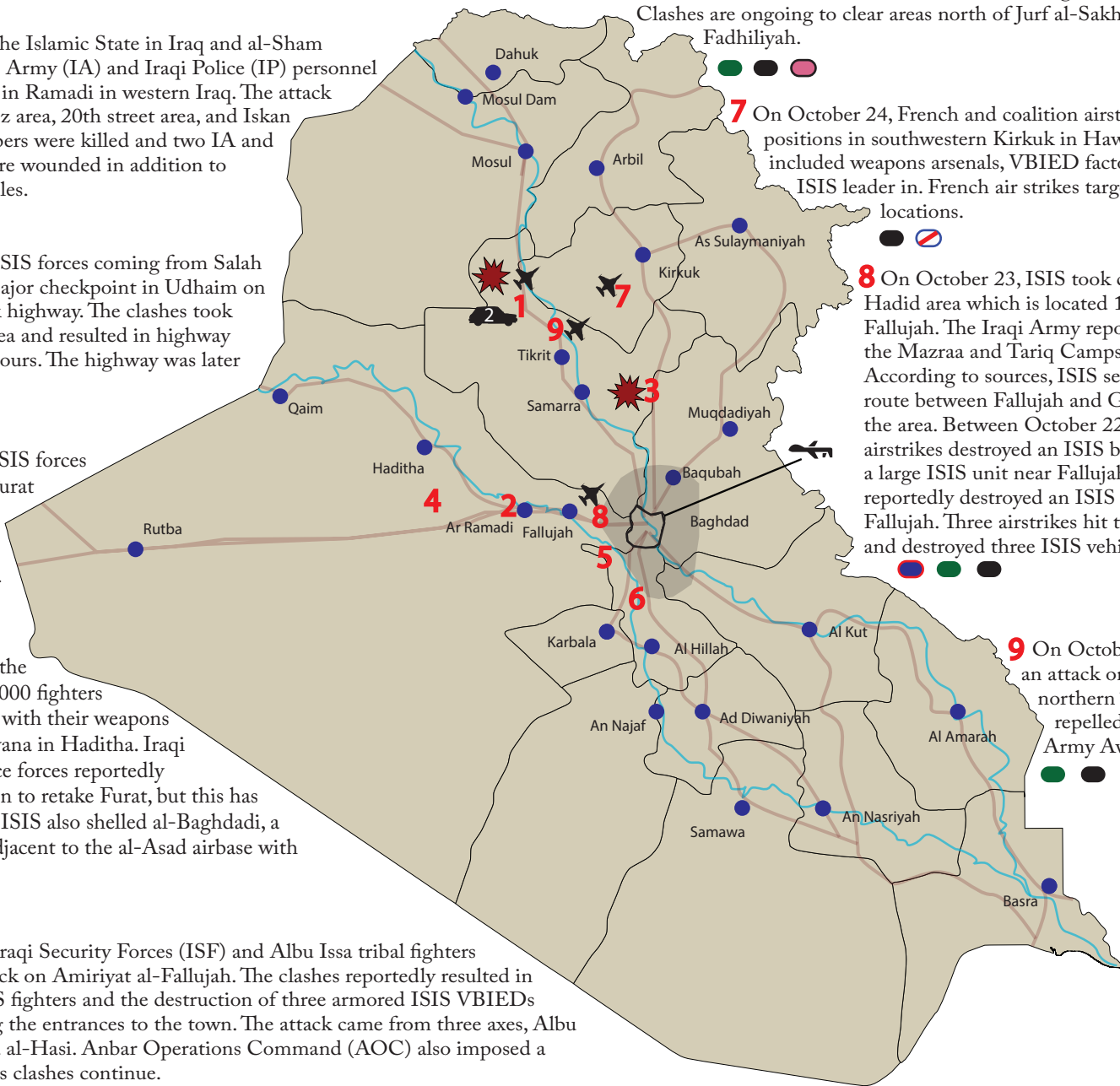
**8** On October 23, ISIS took control of Albu Hadid area which is located 17 km east of Fallujah. The Iraqi Army reportedly withdrew to the Mazraa and Tariq Camps to regroup. According to sources, ISIS seeks 'to open a supply route between Fallujah and Garma' by controlling the area. Between October 22 and 24, three airstrikes destroyed an ISIS building and targeted a large ISIS unit near Fallujah, and one strike reportedly destroyed an ISIS training facility near Fallujah. Three airstrikes hit two ISIS positions and destroyed three ISIS vehicles near Fallujah.



**9** On October 24, ISIS launched an attack on Tikrit University in northern Tikrit but were repelled by ISF and Iraqi Army Aviation.



- Major Cities
- Major Clash
- Airstrikes
- SVBIED
- Armed Drones
- USA
- ISF
- ISIS
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- France
- Iraqi Shi'a militias



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The clearing of Jurf al-Sakhar in northern Babil by the ISF and Shi'a militias is a significant event in the course of the anti-ISIS campaign. The area had been an ISIS stronghold in late 2013 and has been contested since early this year. The difficult terrain in this area southwest of Baghdad has presented ISIS with the opportunity to withstand multiple clearing attempts. Clearing Jurf al-Sakhar may allow the ISF to increase pressure on ISIS to the north near Amiriyat al-Fallujah, where ISIS still maintains rural control. ISIS has recently been attacking ISF forces in Amiriyat al-Fallujah directly. The ISF operation in Jurf al-Sakhar also signals the increased leadership role the Iraqi Shi'a militias are undertaking in ISF offensive operations. The clearing precedes the occasion of the Ashura pilgrimage which will include thousands of Shi'a pilgrims walking to Karbala through northern Babil. Therefore, it may result in better security for the route to Karbala from southern Iraq, where ISIS detonated four VBIEDS earlier this week. Meanwhile, ISIS established control of positions along the Euphrates west of Hit near al-Asad airbase and east of Fallujah. ISIS continues to attack into Ramadi. ISIS movement east of Fallujah signifies an enduring threat to Baghdad along the western approach. Along the Tigris, ISIS may be shifting forces east of Samarra to reestablish control of Udhaim, which falls along the Baghdad-Kirkuk highway. This may be a response to recent clashes with the ISF and the Peshmerga against ISIS along the Hamrin ridge, or possibly a response to ISF activity north of Tikrit.