

# Iraq Situation Report: December 13-14, 2014

**1** On December 14, spokesperson of the Iraqi Kurdish political party the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), Said Mamozeni, stated that the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) began “digging a trench” around the city of Mosul and Bashiqa area to the north of the city in order to hamper any effort to clear the city by anti-ISIS forces. Mamozeni added that ISIS is forcing every family in the city that has two males to enlist one of them in the organization. He added that ISIS is fining or arresting males who refuse to join.

**5** On December 13, coalition and Iraqi airstrikes hit ISIS positions in the Hawijah and Riyadh areas in south and west of Kirkuk city in northern Iraq. On December 14, three coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS positions in the Maktab Khalid area, Mullah Abdullah, and al-Mari farm south and west of Kirkuk city. According to local sources, ISIS uses the Mari farm as a “base and prison.” Over a week, ISIS also reportedly demolished houses of ISF personnel in the Hawijah area.

**2** On December 14, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) began to mass extra troops in the vicinity of Tikrit in northern Iraq, reportedly in preparations to clear the city of ISIS. The reinforcements reportedly include “tens of armored vehicles” and have been concentrated to the south and north of the city.

**6** On December 13, ISIS took control of the Wafa sub-district, southwest of Ramadi in Anbar province. Local official, Athal al-Fahdawi, stated that ISIS was able to take control of it after three days of clashes and after anti-ISIS forces including tribes and ISF were out of ammunition.

**3** On December 14, Salah ad-Din’s Police Chief, Hamed al-Namis, announced that a new police directorate for al-Alam area in eastern Salah ad-Din has been opened in an “alternate” location in Baiji district in northern Salah ad-Din province. Namis stated that the new office has already recruited 400 members who are receiving arms to fight against ISIS.

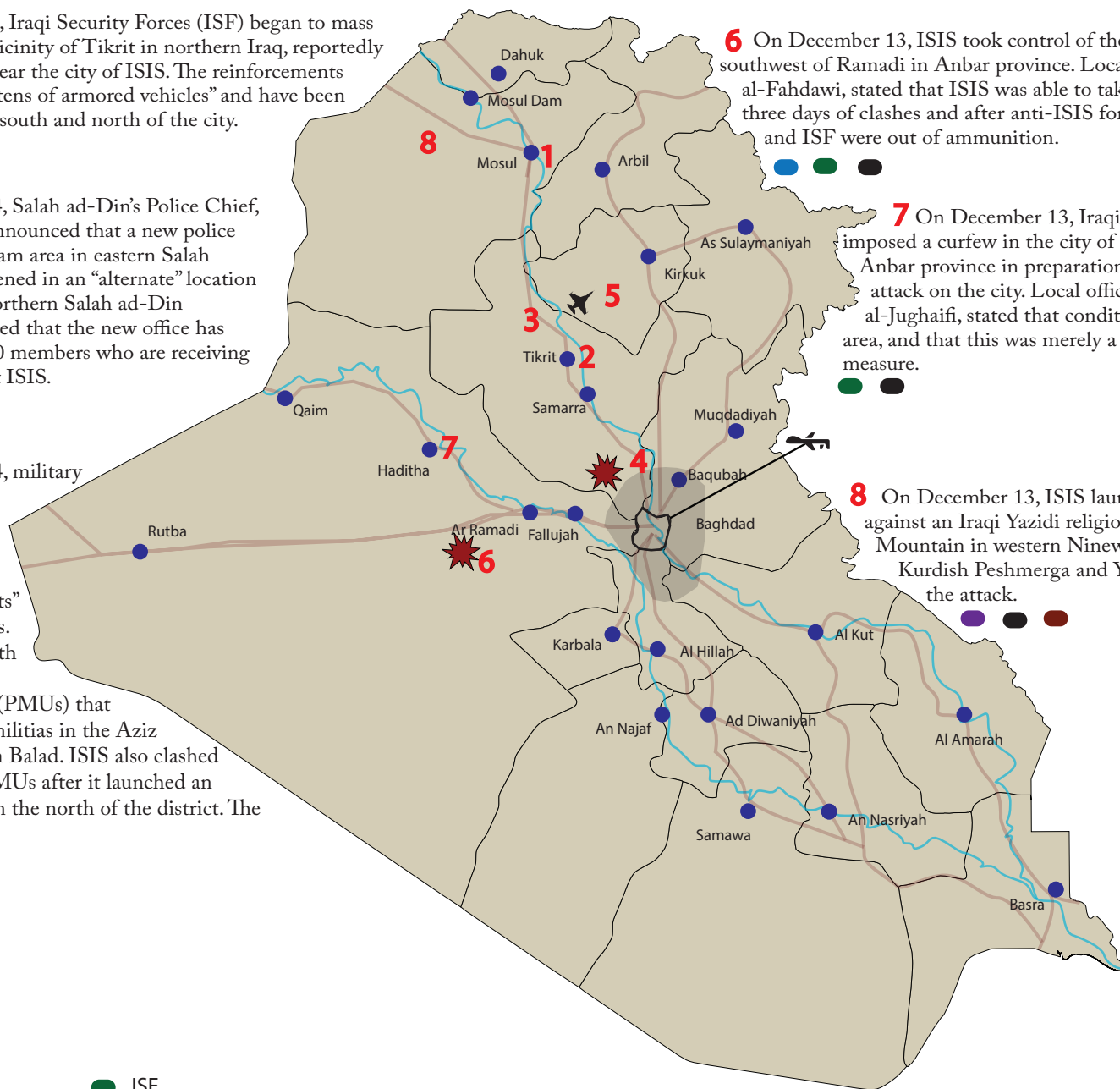
**7** On December 13, Iraqi Police (IP) imposed a curfew in the city of Haditha in western Anbar province in preparation for a possible ISIS attack on the city. Local official, Hakim al-Jughaifi, stated that conditions are calm in the area, and that this was merely a precautionary measure.

**4** On December 14, military reinforcements from Baghdad arrived in Balad district, north of Baghdad, to counter ISIS “pockets” in the area’s outskirts. ISIS also clashed with ISF and Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) that include Iraqi Shi’a militias in the Aziz Balad area in eastern Balad. ISIS also clashed with the ISF and PMUs after it launched an attack on Balad from the north of the district. The attack was repelled.

**8** On December 13, ISIS launched an attack against an Iraqi Yazidi religious site near Sinjar Mountain in western Ninewa province. Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga and Yazidi forces repelled the attack.



- Major Cities
- ★ Major Clash
- ✈ Airstrikes
- 🚁 Armed Drones
- ISF
- ISIS
- Yazidi Gunmen
- Iraqi Shi’a militias
- Peshmerga
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- Coalition



Content: Ahmed Ali  
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No significant attacks occurred on December 13 against pilgrims during the culmination of Arbaeen. ISIS has historically targeted Arbaeen while millions of mostly Shi’a pilgrims descend on the city of Karbala. The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) with the likely support of the Iraqi Shi’a militias within the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) applied heightened security measures that appear to have been effective in preventing ISIS operations against the pilgrims. This coalition was also successful in deflecting ISIS attacks during the Ashura visit in early November 2014. Meanwhile, ISIS attacks north of Baghdad continued and met with ISF counter-attacks while the ISF and PMUs prepare to launch an operation against ISIS positions in Tikrit. ISF and PMUs have attempted to clear Tikrit in the past with no success. Clearing Tikrit would give the ISF greater control over southern Salah ad Din and limit ISIS control to cities north of Baiji. ISIS is therefore defending along the Tigris and the Zaab rivers against multiple assaults at Mosul, Baiji, and Tikrit. Airstrikes against ISIS positions in Hawija and Kirkuk support the campaign against ISIS on the Tigris. ISIS may attempt a preemptive attack against ISF positions in Samarra and Baiji, both attacked earlier this week. Meanwhile, ISIS is attacking along the Euphrates, making gains west of Ramadi following gains near Hit earlier this week. ISIS may attempt to accelerate these gains at Haditha, isolating al-Asad airbase to the greatest extent.