

Iraq Situation Report: December 17-19, 2014

1 On December 18, security forces killed seven ISIS members in the Asri neighborhood of eastern Baiji, the same neighborhood ISIS gunmen appeared in as depicted in pictures published by ISIS social media. Also, unspecified aircraft carried out airstrikes in Asri neighborhood and in al-Muslakhat, al-Fatha, and near Makhul mountains north of Baiji. The strikes killed a total of 14 ISIS fighters and destroyed six vehicles. A local official stated that his men and the local police withdrew from Asri towards the south after battling ISIS for eight days. In addition, a security source from the province stated that ISIS demolished with IEDs “dozens” of homes of local police and tribal fighters in Asri. On December 19, an Iraqi military official stated that ISIS has pockets in the district and that forces from the Golden Division searched the area across the Fatah Mosque in Asri, where ISIS gunmen appeared. He added that ISIS remains in control of the Seneya sub-district, west of Baiji and that security forces are challenged by the desert nature of areas adjacent to Seneya. Meanwhile an IA mechanized brigade arrived at Camp Speicher to enforce Baiji and areas north of Tikrit.

2 Mayor of Haditha Abdul Hakim al-Jughaifi stated that ISIS fighters were massing around Haditha district in preparation for an attack from two axes, in al-Khasfah, south of Haditha, and al-Sakrah, west of Haditha, using tanks and armored vehicles. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) responded to the ISIS movement by increasing their presence in the area.

3 On December 18, An anonymous “official” military source stated that ISIS fighters surrounded the military headquarters of the 4th regiment of the 18th Iraqi Army (IA) Brigade in the “35 km area” west of Ramadi, preventing reinforcements and supplies from arriving to support the Iraqi Police (IP) personnel stationed there.

4 On December 18, Peshmerga forces heavily bombarded Tal Afar with artillery fire while coalition airstrikes bombarded the area and some of its sub-districts. The attacks left “dozens” of ISIS fighters killed while others fled. On December 18, Peshmerga forces cleared the Hardan, Hola, and Doki villages in addition to central Ayadhiya sub-district, north of Tal Afar district, west of Mosul. On December 19, a Peshmerga officer reported that Peshmerga and IA launched an assault on the “outskirts” of Tal Afar.

5 On December 19, Peshmerga forces with Yazidi fighters supported by coalition air cover launched an assault to clear ISIS from Sanoni sub-district, also known as al-Shimal, located four miles north of Mount Sinjar. The forces entered the area and are reported to be clearing it of IEDs left by ISIS. Also, on December 19, Peshmerga forces reached Mount Sinjar opening a road to Duhuk and a way out for Yazidis on the mountain. A Kurdish field leader stated that 20 ISIS members at the mountain surrendered themselves.

6 On December 18, an anonymous security source stated that coalition airstrikes targeted two tanks and seven vehicles of ISIS in the Jbab area of Qaim. Also, a source from Anbar Operations Command stated that a U.S. airstrike burned nine ISIS vehicles at Qaim’s entrance killing 40 ISIS members. The source added that the convoy was headed to Rawa district.

7 On December 18, a VBIED detonated on the side of the road in Mahmudiyat al-Rashid area, south of Baghdad killing an injuring unspecified number of individuals.

8 On December 18, a force from the Eighth IA Division destroyed four ISIS boats used for ISIS operation in the Khafaj Village adjacent to Habaniya Lake.

● ISF
● ISIS
● Peshmerga
● Yazidi Gunmen
● Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
● Iraqi Shi’a militias
● Coalition

● Major Cities
● VBIED
● Major Clash
● Airstrikes
● Armed Drones

● ISF
● ISIS
● Peshmerga
● Yazidi Gunmen
● Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
● Coalition



Content: Ahmed Ali and Sinan Adnan
Graphics: Nichole Dicharry

Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga and Iraqi Yazidi fighters continue to launch operations in northern Iraq. Their effort is focused on the areas near Sinjar Mountain which has been besieged by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) since August of this year. Reportedly, the Peshmerga and Yazidi fighters have been able to break the siege and allow the stranded Yazidi civilians passage to safety. There are also reports of further cooperation between the Peshmerga and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) likely from the Counter-terrorism Services (CTS) Golden Division, indicating the possibility of future cooperation between the two forces in other areas of northern Iraq. Tal Afar’s operations are also at an early stage which indicates Peshmerga and ISF desire to increase pressure on ISIS in the area. Meanwhile, Baiji’s conditions continue to evolve as ISIS has regained control of neighborhoods in the center of Baiji. It will be important to watch if these developments will result in repositioning of forces from northern Baghdad or Samarra to defend Baiji.