

Iraq Situation Report: February 20-23, 2015

1 On February 21-22, Director of Qazaniyah sub-district Mazen Akram stated that an attacker detonated an SVBIED near the Customs building for the 3rd Region's border guards, injuring four people and destroying several cars. Qazaniyah is located southeast of Muqadiyah district and five miles from the Iran-Iraq border. The Qazaniyah local government announced increased security measures and requested security reinforcements.

2 On February 21, tribal leader of the Albu Nimr tribe Sheikh Naim Gaood Nimrawi stated that ISIS executed 30 individuals who were kidnapped from houses surrounding the residential complex in al-Baghdadi sub-district, west of Hit district. The tribal leader added that the bodies were burned in a trench located between al-Baghdadi and Hit.

3 On February 22, an anonymous source in the Ministry of Interior (MoI) stated that an SVBIED detonated in the industrial area of al-Baya neighborhood, in southwestern Baghdad, killing three and injuring 10 others.

4 On February 23, an anonymous source in the MoI stated that "unidentified gunmen" attacked a police and Sahwa (Awakening) checkpoint near Arab Jubur area in al-Dora neighborhood, southwestern Baghdad, killing two Sahwa fighters and one police officer and injuring four others.

5 On February 23, an anonymous source in the MoI stated that two IEDs targeted a "Popular Mobilization" convoy in al-Nasr wal-Salam village, west of Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, killing one "Popular Mobilization" fighter and injuring nine others.

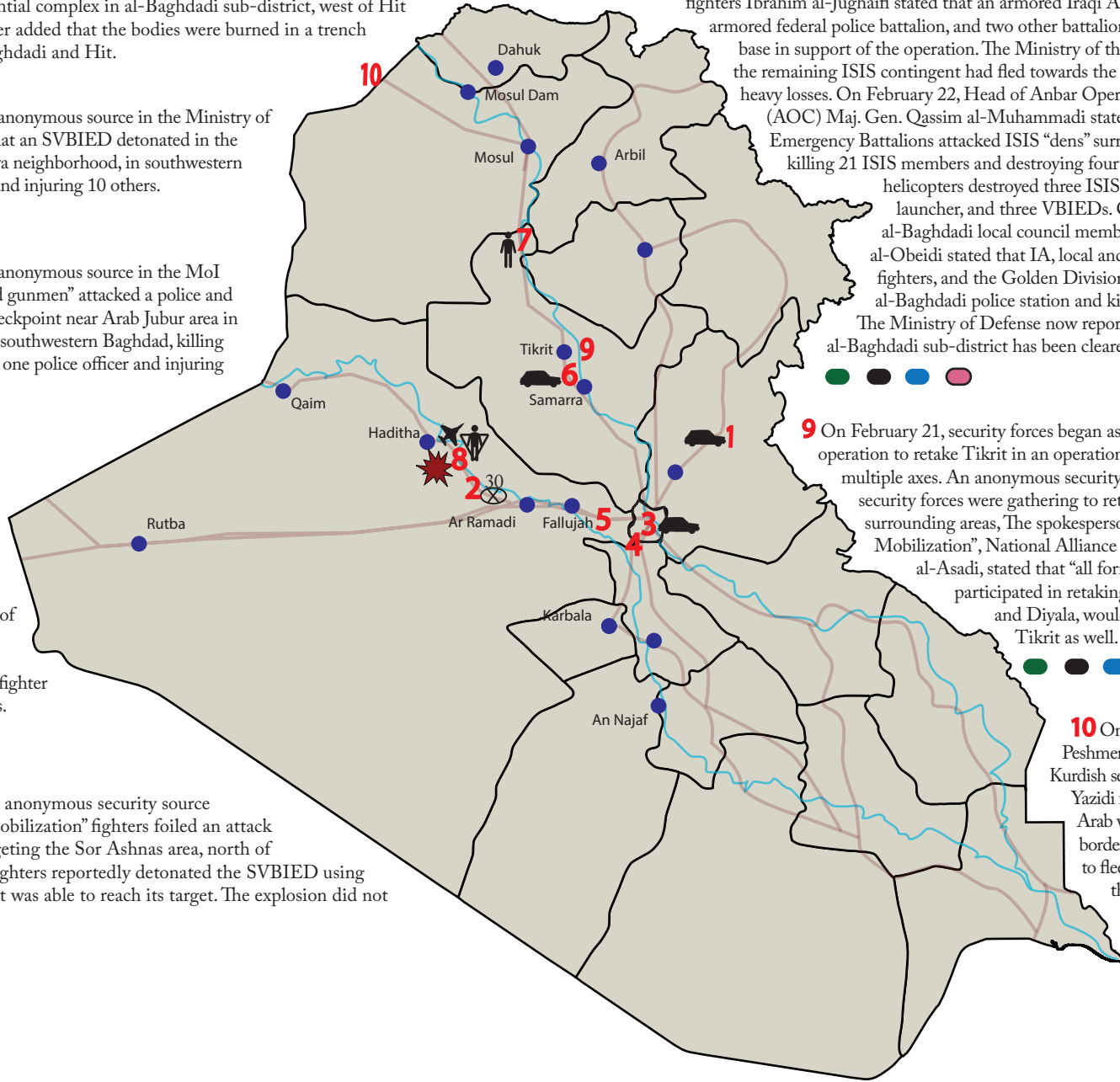
6 On February 21, an anonymous security source stated that "Popular Mobilization" fighters foiled an attack using an SVBIED targeting the Sor Ashnas area, north of Samarra district. The fighters reportedly detonated the SVBIED using small arms fire before it was able to reach its target. The explosion did not result in any casualties.

7 On February 22, an anonymous security source in Salah al-Din province stated that ISIS kidnapped 23 individuals accused of cooperating with "security forces" from al-Sedira village, southeast of Sharqat sub-district, in northern Salah al-Din.

8 On February 20, local police and tribal fighters reportedly broke the siege of the al-Baghdadi residential complex, delivering aid and clearing a path from the complex to the Ain al-Asad Airbase, southwest of al-Baghdadi. Spokesperson for Iraqi Sunni tribal fighters Ibrahim al-Jughaiifi stated that an armored Iraqi Army (IA) brigade, an armored federal police battalion, and two other battalions arrived at al-Asad base in support of the operation. The Ministry of the Interior stated that the remaining ISIS contingent had fled towards the Euphrates and suffered heavy losses. On February 22, Head of Anbar Operations Command (AOC) Maj. Gen. Qassim al-Muhammadi stated that IA, police, and Emergency Battalions attacked ISIS "dens" surrounding al-Baghdadi, killing 21 ISIS members and destroying four vehicles. IA Aviation helicopters destroyed three ISIS "sites," one rocket launcher, and three VBIEDs. On February 23, al-Baghdadi local council member Abd al-Jabbar al-Obeidi stated that IA, local and federal police, tribal fighters, and the Golden Division recaptured the al-Baghdadi police station and killed 20 ISIS members. The Ministry of Defense now reports that "most" of al-Baghdadi sub-district has been cleared.

9 On February 21, security forces began assembling for an operation to retake Tikrit in an operation to be launched from multiple axes. An anonymous security source stated that security forces were gathering to retake Tikrit city and surrounding areas. The spokesperson for the "Popular Mobilization", National Alliance CoR member Ahmed al-Asadi, stated that "all formations" that participated in retaking Jurf al-Sakhar, Jalula, and Diyala, would participate in retaking Tikrit as well.

10 On February 22, Peshmerga, YPG, Asayesh Kurdish security forces, and Sinjar Yazidi fighters cleared nine Arab villages on the Syrian border, forcing ISIS members to flee into Syria. According to the director of Sinune sub-district, north of Sinjar district, the Kurdish forces suffered no casualties.



- Major Cities
- ✶ Major Clash
- ✈ Armed Drones
- ✈ SVEST
- ✈ Airstrikes
- ✈ SVBIED
- ✈ Kidnapping
- Iraqi Shi'a militias
- ⊗ Execution
- ISF
- ISIS
- Peshmerga
- Unknown Gunmen
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- YPG



Content: ISW Iraq Team
Graphics: John Sauerhoff

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Security forces have reportedly cleared "most" of al-Baghdadi sub-district and are preparing operations in Salah ad-Din to recapture Tikrit. In al-Baghdadi, the siege of the residential complex at the center of the sub-district was broken and the police station was recaptured although there remain attempts by ISIS to target security forces in the area. Tikrit will pose a greater challenge, requiring the coordination of security forces, tribal fighters, and Iraqi Shi'a militias in an operation that also aims to clear a number of smaller towns surrounding Tikrit. The clearing of Tikrit may be an indicator of security force performance for a possible upcoming operation to re-take Mosul. Tikrit is likely to be a source of heavy resistance, along with booby-traps that will make any capture of the area painstakingly slow work. Finally, the concentration of security forces in al-Baghdadi and Tikrit may also expose other parts of Iraq to attacks by ISIS.