

Iraq Situation Report: February 5-6, 2015

1 On February 6, ISIS launched an attack on the Government Complex in central Ramadi, but ISF and Iraqi Sunni anti-ISIS tribes foiled the attack. Meanwhile, forces from the command of the Rapid Reaction Division clashed with ISIS in the Houz neighborhood of southern Ramadi, reportedly killing 24 ISIS members. Also, security forces imposed a curfew on vehicles and motorcycles in the city “to protect the Friday prayer worshippers.”



2 On February 5, Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi ordered Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) to lift the night curfew in Baghdad completely. PM Abadi also ordered the unblocking of major streets in Baghdad. Furthermore, PM Abadi directed BOC to “demilitarize” Kadhmiya, Adhamiya, Mansour, and Saydiya neighborhoods of Baghdad.



3 On February 5, a security source in Kirkuk stated that a force from the Command of the Emergency Police Battalions carried out a security operation in Oroba neighborhood in western Kirkuk, in which 37 suspected militants who did not possess “security license to live in Kirkuk” were arrested.



4 On February 5, a “local” source from al-Qaim district, western Anbar, stated that ISIS destroyed “all” buildings at the al-Qaim border crossing with Syria after rigging them with IEDs.



5 On February 6, a “local source” from Qaim district in western Anbar stated that coalition airstrikes targeted the headquarters of the Islamic Police of ISIS in the area. The source added that the building was previously a headquarters for the local government and that it was empty at the time of targeting. The source claimed that the strikes injured three civilians passing nearby.



6 On February 4, an anonymous source from the IP in Anbar stated that an attacker “drove” a “train cart” Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (SVBIED) from Ana district and attempted to target security forces at the entrance of Haditha. The source stated that security forces opened fire on the train. The resulting explosion wounded two civilians and three children.



7 On February 4, ISIS members attacked “gatherings” of forces from the First Battalion of the Salah al-Din police and forces from the Baiji police directorate in the al-Hajaj and al-Malha areas, south of Baiji. The security forces repelled the attack, killing 20 ISIS members.



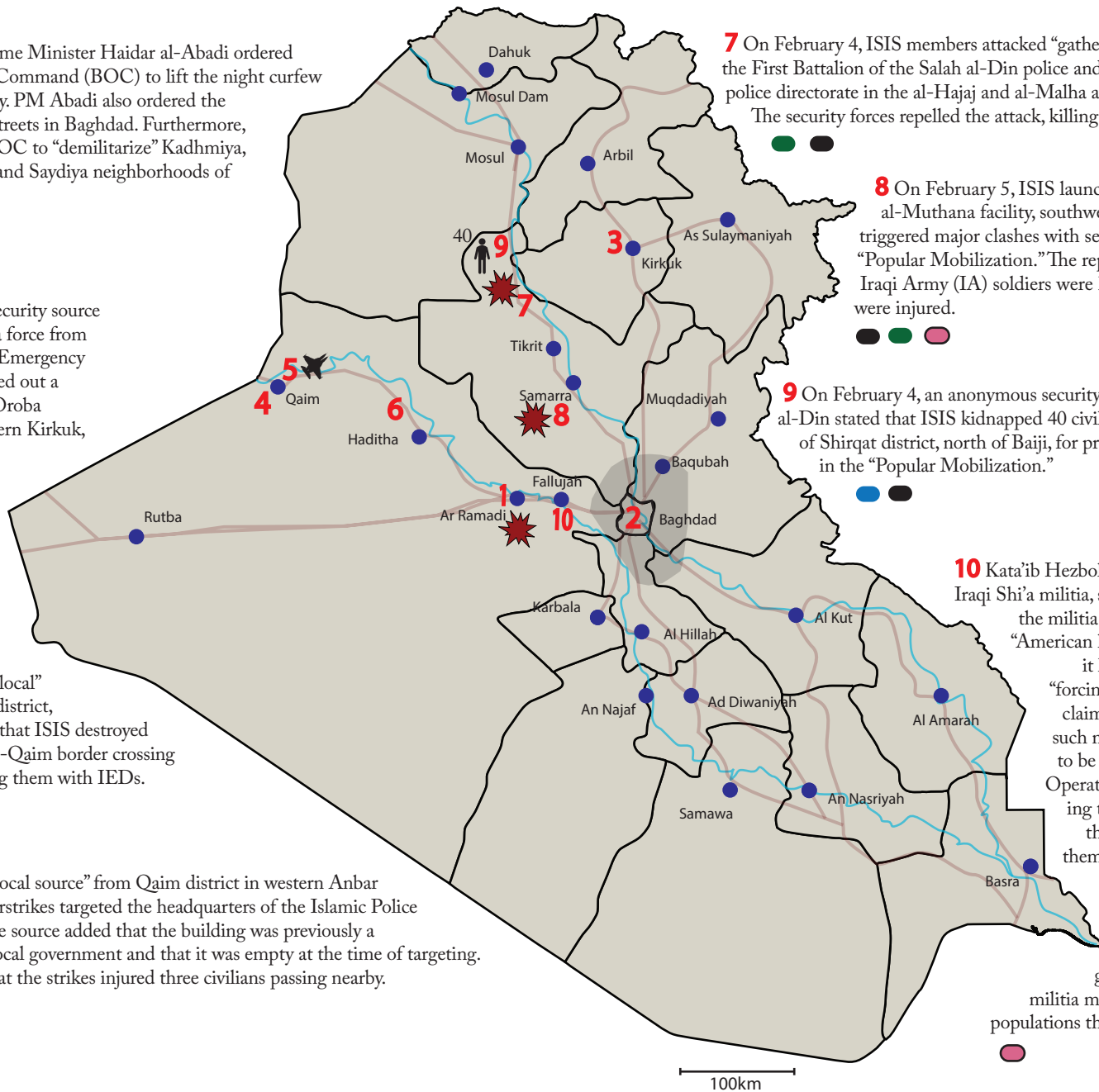
8 On February 5, ISIS launched an attack the al-Muthana facility, southwest of Samarra, which triggered major clashes with security forces and the “Popular Mobilization.” The report stated that 11 Iraqi Army (IA) soldiers were killed and 22 others were injured.



9 On February 4, an anonymous security source in Salah al-Din stated that ISIS kidnapped 40 civilians in the main area of Shirqat district, north of Baiji, for promoting recruitment in the “Popular Mobilization.”



10 Kata'ib Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militia, stated that “artillery” of the militia launched strikes on an “American helicopter, shortly after it landed in Fallujah” and “forcing it to flee.” This is one claim in a series of many by such militias in what appears to be part of an Information Operation aimed at discrediting the role of the U.S. and the coalition by accusing them of supporting ISIS by providing logistical support to the organization. These claims are gaining traction among militia members and likely local populations that support the militias.



100km

- Major Cities
- ✈ Airstrikes
- ⊗ Execution
- Unknown Gunmen
- Iraqi Shi'a militias
- ★ Major Clash
- 🚗 SVBIED
- ISF
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- Peshmerga
- 🚁 Armed Drones
- 👤 Kidnapping
- ISIS
- 🚩 Coalition



Content: Sinan Adnan and ISW Iraq Team
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Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi is taking measures to empower the Baghdad-based Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to assert control over the security of the capital. It is unclear at this time how the ISF will implement the demilitarization of the Kadhmiya, Adhamiya, Mansour, and Saydiya neighborhoods as requested. Militias enjoy freedom of movement in all of these neighborhoods, but Kadhmiya in particular has a greater militia presence than the others. This is mainly due to the presence of the Imam al-Kadhim shrine in the area. Competition between the militias in Kadhmiya came to a head in June of 2013 as Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) and the Sadrists clashed, clearly signaling their overt presence in the area. Such presence has likely increased following the fall of Mosul. Saydiya, in southern Baghdad, would be second after Kadhmiya in presence of militias; it saw a notable increase in militia presence and activities throughout 2013. It is unclear if ISF “demilitarization” will limit the movement of the militias. It will be important to watch for the implementation of this decision and how the militias react to an implementation that limits their movements and ultimately decreases their influence. The overt presence of the militias in mainly Iraqi Shi'a areas of Baghdad like Sadr City, Hurriyah, Shula, and Kadhmiya was the result of increased ISIS attacks in the capital perceived by many Baghdadis to be the result of poor ISF performance. ISIS will likely attempt to increase its attacks on civilians in Baghdad to portray the ISF and the government as unable to protect civilians. Moving west, the contest for Ramadi remains ongoing as ISIS continue to be able to project attacks from within the city toward the Government Complex, a focal point in the city held by the ISF and Iraqi Sunni anti-ISIS tribes.