

Iraq Situation Report: April 11-13, 2015

1 On April 11, an anonymous “informed” source in Ninewa stated that tribal fighters attacked ISIS checkpoints and a Sharia court in Qayarah sub-district, south of Mosul using light and medium weapons in retaliation for ISIS’s execution of 300 members of a tribe. The attack resulted in an unspecified number of casualties.

2 On April 12, a security source in Ninewa stated that ISIS launched an attack on the Peshmerga headquarters in the Gwer area, located southeast of Mosul, however Peshmerga forces assisted by coalition airstrikes repelled the attack, killing 12 ISIS fighters. On April 12, a security source stated that ISIS destroyed Badush Bridge, northwest of Mosul, in order to hinder the mobility of security forces advancing toward Mosul.

3 On April 10, ISIS reportedly capitalized on a sandstorm and launched an attack on the Albu Faraj area and the Albu Itha area, north and northeast of Ramadi. On April 11, a military source stated that three armored brigades and “Popular Mobilization” members arrived Sijariya and Jirayshi, near Ramadi, while coalition airstrikes took place. CENTCOM confirmed airstrikes in the vicinity on April 11-12, and additional reports of coalition airstrikes continued on April 12-13. On April 12, an Anbar provincial council member stated that three battalions of local Iraqi Police (IP), trained at Habaniya base, arrived at the Anbar Operations Command (AOC) headquarters northwest of Ramadi along with military supplies. Deputy Commander of the Golden Division in Anbar stated that IA Aviation targeted ISIS in Albu Faraj on April 12. On April 13, the Babil Operations Command and Babil government stated that two IA battalions and a Babil Emergency Battalion deployed to Anbar with the Scorpion force, a special MoI force.

4 On April 13, a source in the Anbar Operations Command (AOC) stated that ISIS have “completely surrounded” the headquarters of the 4th IA Battalion, in Saddamiyt al-Tharthar area, located northeast of Ramadi, and had cut off ground supply lines to the headquarters from Ramadi and Samarra. The source added that ISIS wants to capture the base in order to obtain military supplies.

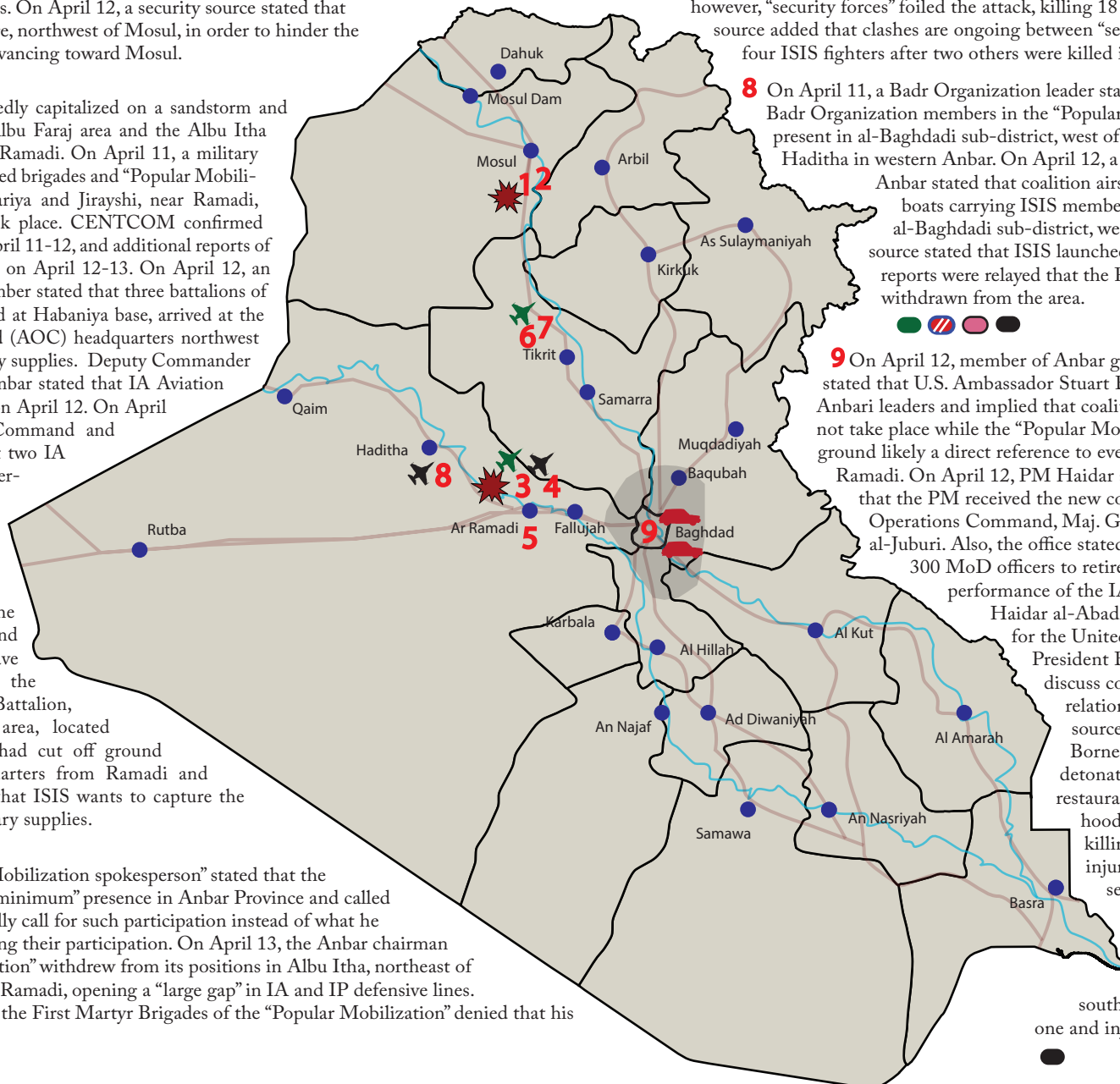
5 On April 12, a “Popular Mobilization spokesperson” stated that the “Popular Mobilization” has “minimum” presence in Anbar Province and called for Anbari leaders to publically call for such participation instead of what he described as secretly requesting their participation. On April 13, the Anbar chairman stated the “Popular Mobilization” withdrew from its positions in Albu Itha, northeast of Ramadi, and Sijariya, east of Ramadi, opening a “large gap” in IA and IP defensive lines. However, the commander of the First Martyr Brigades of the “Popular Mobilization” denied that his group had withdrawn.

6 On April 13, a security source in Salah al-Din stated that reinforcements accompanied by armored vehicles arrived in Mazraa village, south of Baiji, to participate in recapturing Baiji. Security forces with “Popular Mobilization” and FP support began shelling Malha village in the south.

7 On April 11, a source in the Salah al-Din police stated that ISIS launched an attack on Baiji Oil Refinery, located north of Baiji; however Iraqi Air Force repelled that attack, killing 20 ISIS fighters and destroying two vehicles although a mortar round set an oil tank in the facility ablaze. On April 13, a security source stated that ISIS launched another attack on the refinery; however, “security forces” foiled the attack, killing 18 ISIS fighters. The source added that clashes are ongoing between “security forces” and four ISIS fighters after two others were killed in the clash.

8 On April 11, a Badr Organization leader stated that “hundreds” of Badr Organization members in the “Popular Mobilization” were present in al-Baghdadi sub-district, west of Hit district and in Haditha in western Anbar. On April 12, a security source in Anbar stated that coalition airstrikes destroyed four boats carrying ISIS members attempting to attack al-Baghdadi sub-district, west of Hit district. The source stated that ISIS launched the attack after reports were relayed that the Federal Police (FP) had withdrawn from the area.

9 On April 12, member of Anbar government, Karim Hilal stated that U.S. Ambassador Stuart E. Jones met with Anbari leaders and implied that coalition airstrikes would not take place while the “Popular Mobilization” were on the ground likely a direct reference to events unfolding in Ramadi. On April 12, PM Haidar al-Abadi’s office stated that the PM received the new commander of Ninewa Operations Command, Maj. Gen. Najim Abdullah al-Juburi. Also, the office stated that the PM referred 300 MoD officers to retirement to improve the performance of the IA. On April 13, PM Haidar al-Abadi and a delegation left for the United States to meet with President Barack Obama to discuss cooperation and bilateral relations. Meanwhile, a police source stated that a Vehicle Borne IED (VBIED) detonated near Abu Ihab restaurant in al-Amal neighborhood, southeastern Baghdad, killing four civilians and injuring 19 others. Another security source stated that a second VBIED detonated in 3rd Street of the Sinai area in al-Baya, southeastern Baghdad killing one and injuring 10 others.



- Major Cities
- ✈ Airstrikes
- ✈ Iraqi Airstrikes
- ★ Major Clash
- 🚗 VBIED
- 🚗 Coalition
- 👤 Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- 👤 Peshmerga
- 👤 ISF
- 👤 Iraqi Shi'a militias
- 👤 ISIS

100km

Content: Sinan Adnan, Jessica Lewis McFate, Patrick Martin, and Omar al-Dulimi
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Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi is on his way to visit Washington to meet President Obama likely to request more U.S. support for Iraq’s war against ISIS. A senior Iraqi official stated that the PM will request the U.S. to defer payments for more military supplies. PM Abadi will also likely work to clarify the role of what is collectively known as the “Popular Mobilization” and the role of the Iranian-backed militias in Iraq’s security environment. Iranian-backed Shi’a militias represent a particular challenge for Iraq’s sovereignty, and PM Abadi likely seeks to limit their influence, which is also a policy objective of the U.S. This makes recent events in Ramadi a particular challenge as the U.S. attempts to support ISF operations to clear ISIS while Shi’a militias are also entering the battlespace. ISF operations in Anbar would be the first major counter-offensive since June 2014 to be launched completely without Shi’a militias, which counters the reputation the Shi’a militias had been cultivating as the indispensable allies of the Iraqi government. The situation in Anbar province has become increasingly active over the last two days. ISIS responded to the launch of ISF operations east of Ramadi by mounting a successful counterattack north of the city on April 10, which continued over the weekend. Shi’a militias have been reported near Ramadi and also west of Hit, which is likely a demonstration of force rather than an actual mobilization. The battle for Anbar province will likely require more resources than any other operation against ISIS since June 2014. This is likely a consideration as PM Abadi visits the U.S. at this time. Meanwhile ISIS resumed attacks in northern Iraq against the Baiji oil refinery and Peshmerga positions in Gwer, indicating that ISIS may accelerate activities outside of Anbar while the ISF concentrates its main effort there.