

# Iraq Situation Report: April 21-22, 2015

**1** On April 21, a Peshmerga official stated that ISIS attacked Peshmerga forces in Ayadhiya sub-district, north of Tal Afar district. Peshmerga repelled the attack, killing “more than 10” ISIS members. DoD stated that two airstrikes targeted ISIS “near Tal Afar” destroying weapons and two buildings.



**2** On April 21, a security source in Kirkuk stated that ISIS executed 34 individuals, among them nine Zab court guards and employees, IP, Awakening, and members of the Zab local council. The source stated that the executions occurred in al-Shirqat district, north of Baiji, and Qayarah sub-district, south of Mosul, and that the individuals were kidnapped months ago.



**3** On April 22, A MoI source stated that a VBIED detonated in a market in Jamila, near Sadr City in eastern Baghdad, killing seven individuals and injuring 22 others.



**4** Col. Mahdi Abbas, commander of the 2nd Brigade of the Emergency Response Division stated on April 20 that a 2nd Brigade and local IP force cleared the maternity hospital in Warrar neighborhood in western Ramadi, killing 12 ISIS fighters. On April 21, Anbar council member Athal al-Fahdawi stated that IP, IA, and tribal forces cleared the Sharika and Sina'i areas in eastern Ramadi. Ground forces and coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS strongholds in Tamim, Iskan, and the 20th Street area in southern Ramadi. MoI spokesperson Saad Maan stated that an individual wearing an SVEST attempted to target the hospital, but FP foiled the attack. On April 22, Fahdawi stated that FP, IA, and SWAT reinforcements arrived to Ramadi, but that the forces were not enough to launch offensive operations toward ISIS-controlled areas. Anbar council member Farhan Mohammad alleged that ISIS has shelled security checkpoints and residential areas in Ramadi with shells containing chlorine gas, and that there were cases of suffocation among a number of residents.



**5** On April 21, local Kirkuk sources stated that coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS buildings and sites in Hawija district, southwest of Kirkuk, resulting in 38 ISIS members and “senior leaders” “killed or wounded.” Another report stated that 35 members and 3 leaders were killed. DoD stated that two airstrikes targeted ISIS “near” Hawija.



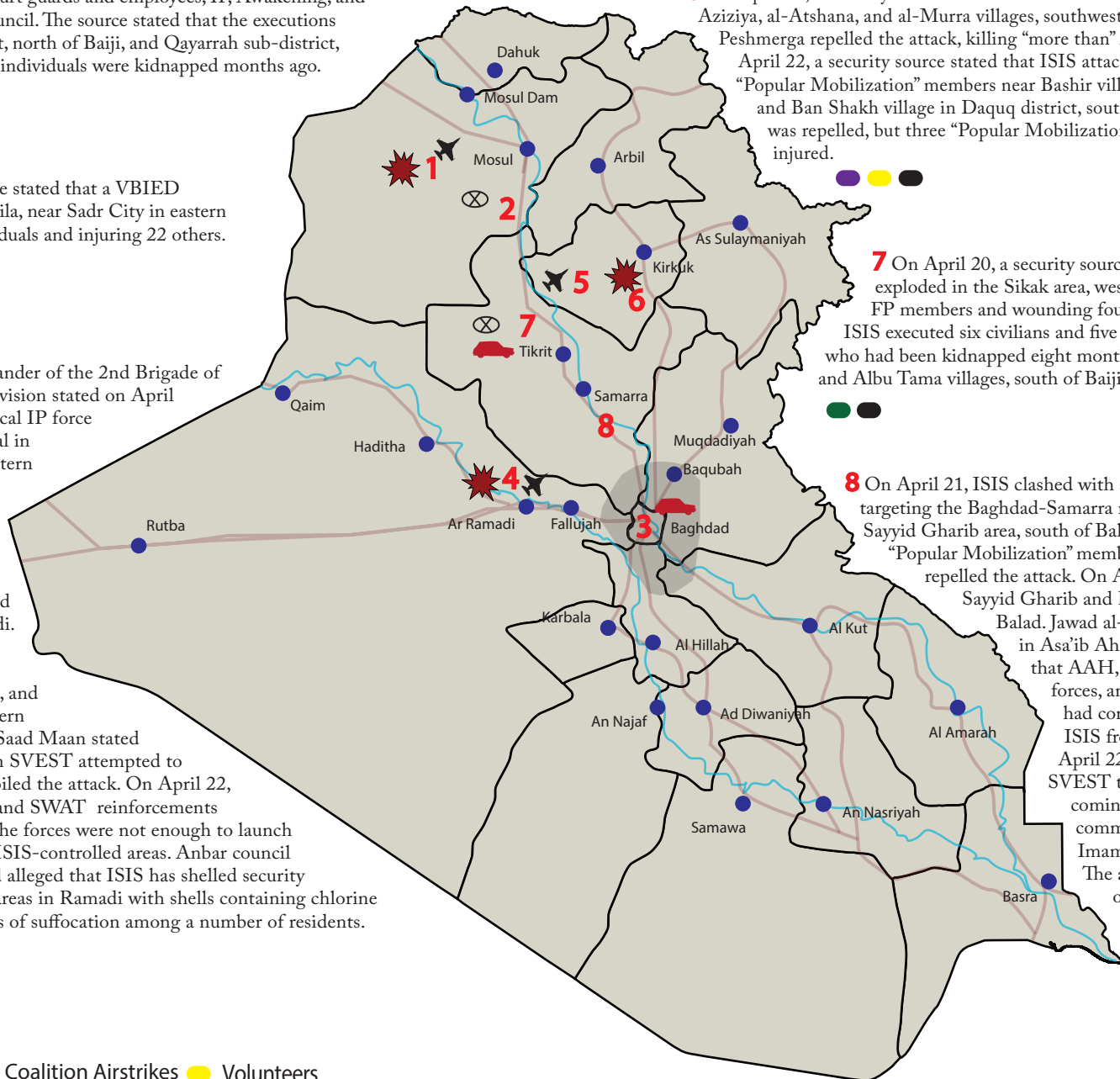
**6** On April 21, a security source stated that ISIS attacked Peshmerga in Aziziya, al-Atshana, and al-Murra villages, southwest of Daquq district. Peshmerga repelled the attack, killing “more than” 20 ISIS members. On April 22, a security source stated that ISIS attacked Peshmerga and “Popular Mobilization” members near Bashir village in Taza sub-district and Ban Shakh village in Daquq district, south of Kirkuk. The attack was repelled, but three “Popular Mobilization” members were injured.



**7** On April 20, a security source stated that a VBIED exploded in the Sikak area, west of Baiji, killing two FP members and wounding four others. On April 21, ISIS executed six civilians and five IP members in Baiji who had been kidnapped eight months ago from Mazraa and Albu Tama villages, south of Baiji.



**8** On April 21, ISIS clashed with security forces while targeting the Baghdad-Samarra road near Rifaat and Sayyid Gharib area, south of Balad, injuring four “Popular Mobilization” members. Security forces repelled the attack. On April 22, ISIS attacked Sayyid Gharib and Kassarat areas, south of Balad. Jawad al-Tlibawi, a senior figure in Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), stated that AAH, Emergency Response forces, and the Golden Division had completed plans to clear ISIS from Sayyid Gharib. On April 22, an attacker with an SVEST targeted pilgrims coming back from commemorating the birth of Imam al-Hadi in Samarra. The attack took place north of Balad, killing at least seven individuals and injuring 12 others.



- Major Cities
- ✈ Coalition Airstrikes
- Volunteers
- 🚗 VBIED
- 👤 Iraqi Shi'a militias
- Peshmerga
- ⊗ Execution
- ISF
- ISIS
- 🌟 Major Clash
- 🚁 Coalition
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes

Content: Sinan Adnan, Patrick Martin, and Omar al-Dulimi  
 Graphics: Evan Sterling

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ISIS is likely reconstituting itself in some areas where it had been pushed out in late 2014. The area of Sayyid Gharib was a major conflict zone following the fall of Mosul, but a decisive operation in December 2014 by militias and ISF secured the areas around Balad including Sayyid Gharib. The attack targeting the pilgrims today was expected, as ISIS has historically targeted Shi'a pilgrims during such times although such attacks usually take place relatively far from the pilgrimage site due to increased security measures around the site. Further east, there has been an increase in kinetic activities near Qarah Tapa in eastern Diyala. Areas where ISIS had control are likely to witness ongoing low level violence, but such violence would likely increase if forces tasked with holding these areas are insufficient or if they are deployed elsewhere in support of forward operations. Pointing to this issue, a Diyala official recently called for the redeployment of Diyala security assets back to the province to provide security. Also, many of the areas cleared in operations that took place in 2014 remain depopulated. Although such closed-off areas are unlikely to foster an insurgency, this depopulation will likely have enduring effects on Iraq's security. This is particularly the case because this depopulation enforces the perception by displaced communities that the government does not care for them. Such perceptions contributed to the rise of ISIS and other groups, and will likely have similar effects if left unaddressed. In Baghdad, many mosques are providing shelter for Anbari refugees but the Baghdad community is not universally supportive of refugees; some suspicions remain. On April 21, 2015, Hakim al-Zamili, the head of the Defense and Security Committee in the Council of Representatives (CoR) and a senior figure in the Sadrist Trend, stated that ISIS is sending fighters disguised as refugees to enter Baghdad. Such statements contribute to a pre-existing negative perception toward Anbari IDPs.