

# Iraq Situation Report: April 2-3, 2015

**1** On April 1, anonymous sources stated that unidentified gunmen used light weapons to kill two ISIS members in Jimsa village in Qayarah sub-district, south of Mosul. ISIS members raided civilian homes nearby to locate the attackers.

**2** On April 2, a source from the Dhuluiyah police in Salah al-Din stated that an “unknown” force, consisting of about 13 cars carrying armed and masked individuals claiming to belong to the office of the Council of Ministers (CoM), entered Dhuluiyah through the southern bridge entrance. The source stated that the force surrounded Dhuluiyah police station and “kidnapped” a former officer in Saddam Hussein’s intelligence services, Safi Bahr Hazza, held at the station. The source added that police guards attempted to stop the individuals but they were threatened at gunpoint.

**3** On April 3, a source in Anbar Operations Command (AOC) stated that ISIS fighters clashed with Iraqi Army (IA) and the Golden Division in al-Houz neighborhood, southwestern Ramadi, and Albu Chlib, west of Ramadi, killing nine ISIS fighters and destroying four ISIS vehicles.

**4** On April 2, an anonymous “senior source” in the Golden Division stated that the Golden Division received orders to tighten security around Tikrit to prevent looting. “Popular Mobilization” commission deputy chairman Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis stated that the “Popular Mobilization” was not responsible for looting and could not protect everyone. On April 3, Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi stated that security forces needed to address such activities in Tikrit and arrest “every person” responsible to preserve property and lives. The governor and chairman of Salah ad-Din have left the city in protest.

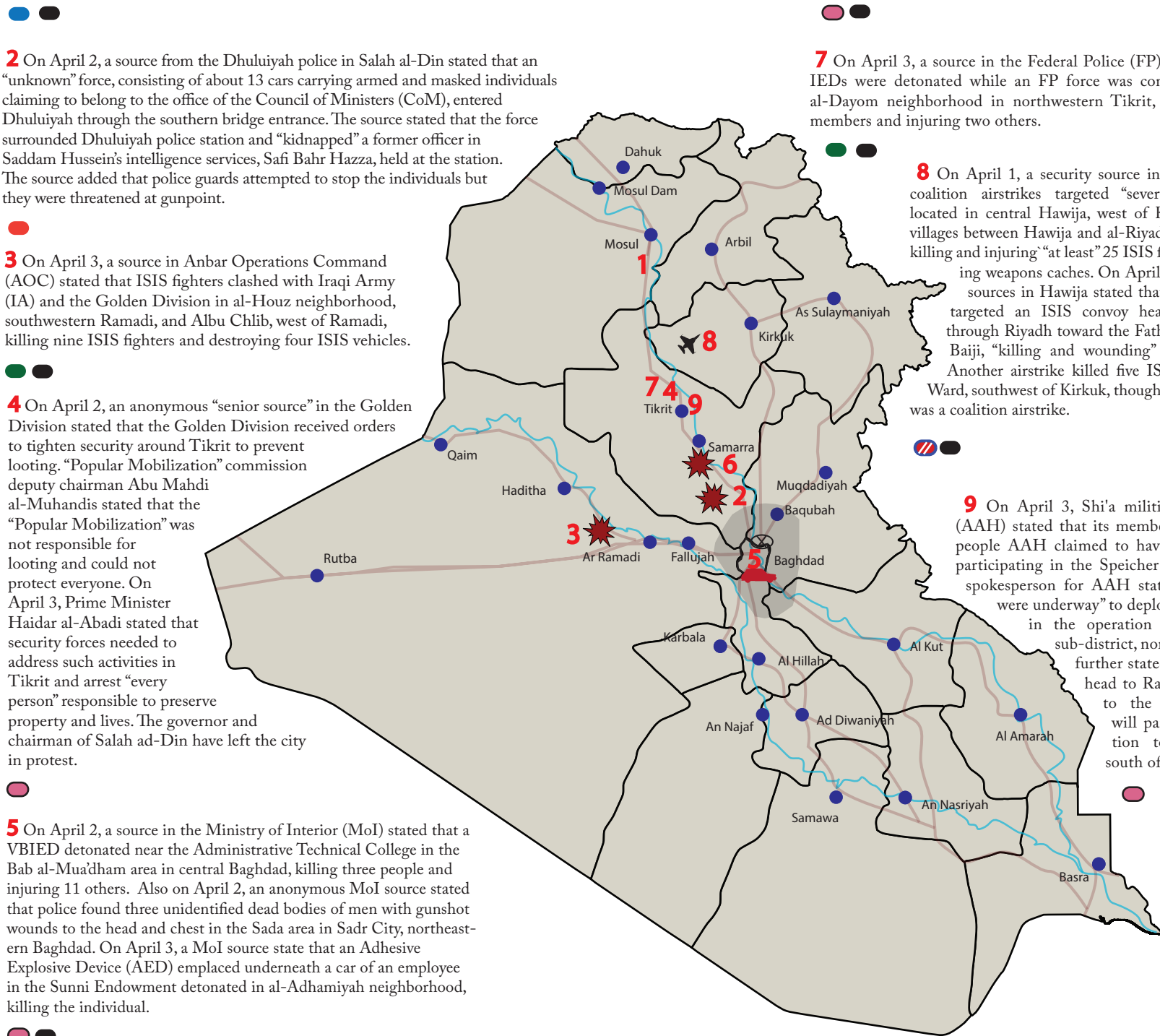
**5** On April 2, a source in the Ministry of Interior (MoI) stated that a VBIED detonated near the Administrative Technical College in the Bab al-Mua’dham area in central Baghdad, killing three people and injuring 11 others. Also on April 2, an anonymous MoI source stated that police found three unidentified dead bodies of men with gunshot wounds to the head and chest in the Sada area in Sadr City, northeastern Baghdad. On April 3, a MoI source stated that an Adhesive Explosive Device (AED) emplaced underneath a car of an employee in the Sunni Endowment detonated in al-Adhamiyah neighborhood, killing the individual.

**6** On April 2, a security source stated that ISIS “sleeper cells” attacked “Popular Mobilization” members in al-Rumilat village, south of Balad, killing five “Popular Mobilization” members and wounding 12 others.

**7** On April 3, a source in the Federal Police (FP) stated that “several” IEDs were detonated while an FP force was conducting searches in al-Dayom neighborhood in northwestern Tikrit, killing seven police members and injuring two others.

**8** On April 1, a security source in Kirkuk stated that coalition airstrikes targeted “several” ISIS positions located in central Hawija, west of Kirkuk City, and in villages between Hawija and al-Riyadh, south of Hawija, killing and injuring “at least” 25 ISIS fighters and destroying weapons caches. On April 2, anonymous local sources in Hawija stated that coalition airstrikes targeted an ISIS convoy heading from Hawija through Riyadh toward the Fatha area, northeast of Baiji, “killing and wounding” 27 ISIS members. Another airstrike killed five ISIS members in Tel Ward, southwest of Kirkuk, though it was not clear if it was a coalition airstrike.

**9** On April 3, Shi’a militia Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) stated that its members had “arrested” two people AAH claimed to have “video evidence” of participating in the Speicher base killings. Also, a spokesperson for AAH stated that “preparations were underway” to deploy AAH to participate in the operation to recapture Garma sub-district, northeast of Fallujah. He further stated that AAH will then head to Ramadi. Also, according to the spokesperson, AAH will participate in an operation to recapture Shirqat, south of Mosul.



- Major Cities
- Unknown Gunmen
- VBIED
- ★ Major Clash
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- ✈ Coalition Airstrike
- ⊗ Execution
- ⊗ Kidnapping
- Iraqi Shi’a militias
- ISF
- Coalition
- ISIS

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The recent capture of Tikrit with U.S. air support and the absence of Iraqi Shi’a militias has undermined Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi’a militias’ reputation as indispensable allies to the ISF and the government. Iraq’s Shi’a militias are not likely to remain idle while their interests in Iraq are challenged, particularly as the anti-ISIS campaign progresses toward Mosul or toward Anbar. Despite their decreased role in Tikrit, militias can still pose a challenge to the Iraqi government. It is therefore important to watch for their next steps as they attempt to re-assert their dominant role. This will be particularly true if the militias do not reach an agreement with the government regarding the future role of the militias, straining the relationship. The militias strongly oppose the U.S. role in Iraq, a stance deriving both from Iranian government backing and from their goal to appear as capable, independent forces. AAH, a prominent Iraqi Shi’a militia and an Iranian ally, messaged through its spokesperson that it intends to move toward Anbar and northern Salah ad-Din in areas close to Ninewa. These areas, like Tikrit, have been targeted by U.S. and coalition airstrikes, and are not areas where the militias have typically operated. AAH or other militias may move independently toward Ninewa or Anbar in an attempt to force PM Abadi to halt coalition airstrikes. The militias could also use their military force to pressure the government by causing instability in the capital where they enjoy freedom of movement, or even by threatening U.S. personnel directly. The next steps of anti-ISIS operations will be a crucial test of the balance between the ISF and their Shi’a militia allies.