

# Iraq Situation Report: June 18 - 19, 2015

**1** Between June 18 and 19, the DoD reported three airstrikes “near Sinjar” and five airstrikes “near Tal Afar.” On June 19, the Peshmerga repelled an ISIS attack against Peshmerga positions in Sinjar district, west of Mosul, killing 25 ISIS fighters.



**2** On June 17, IA Aviation airstrikes targeted an ISIS gathering in the Ajil oil fields, east of Tikrit, killing 20 ISIS members. On June 19, the Diyala security committee chairman stated that Dijla Operations Command (DOC) and “Popular Mobilization” forces killed four ISIS members in the Ajil oil fields.



**3** On June 18, the DoD reported four airstrikes “near Ramadi.” On June 19, the ISF killed 18 ISIS militants in al-Ta'mim neighborhood in southern Ramadi and in Albu Faraj, north of Ramadi. The ISF also shelled Albu Faraj and destroyed several vehicles and an IED factory.



**4** On June 19, ISIS attacked the ISF near Fallujah University, east of Fallujah, killing three soldiers and wounding four others. ISF reinforcements forced ISIS to withdraw back into Fallujah. The Anbar police chief also announced that the IP arrested 25 ISIS “sleeper cell” agents in Amiriyat al-Fallujah, south of Fallujah.



**5** On June 17, a Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) exploded in the Kadhimiya area of northwestern Baghdad, killing three people and wounding ten others. A conflicting report from the MoI indicated the explosion was an Adhesive Explosive Device (AED). On June 19, 59th and 22nd Brigade forces killed 25 ISIS members in al-Tarmiya and al-Houra areas, north of Baghdad. A 59th Brigade force also arrested a “terrorist” with three suicide belts in Hour al-Basha area, north of Baghdad.



**6** On June 17, an IA Aviation airstrike destroyed a HMMWV VBIED in Siniya sub-district, west of Baiji. On June 18, the FP cleared parts of Baiji and Albu Juwari, north of Baiji and reportedly raised an Iraqi flag over a former ISIS headquarters in the area. ISF and “Popular Mobilization” forces shelled Tel Abu Jarad, west of Baiji, killing 11 ISIS members. Ten ISF and “Popular Mobilization” members were killed in clashes in the Asri and Askari neighborhoods in Baiji. Two FP battalions and “hundreds of Popular Mobilization” members reportedly arrived as reinforcements. IA and FP members later killed 20 ISIS members in Baiji and destroyed a VBIED moving from Siniya toward Baiji. ISF and “Popular Mobilization” forces also reportedly entered Siniya. The DoD stated that an airstrike destroyed an ISIS pontoon bridge “near Baiji.” On June 19, the

Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militia Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) stated that progress in Baiji was slow due to the “ferocity” of the enemy and the nature of the terrain.. Between June 18 and 19, DoD reported three airstrikes “near Baiji.”



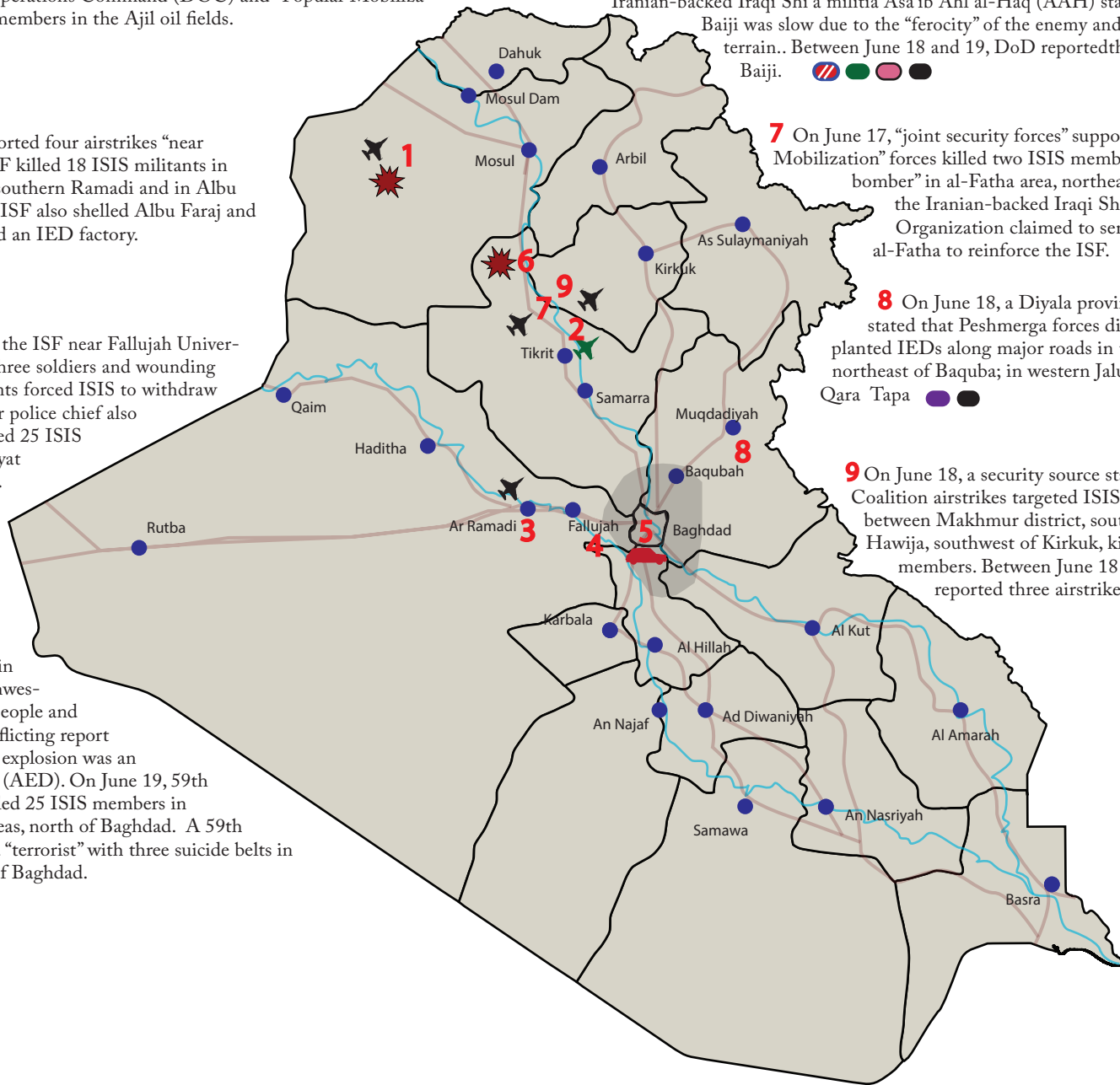
**7** On June 17, “joint security forces” supported by “Popular Mobilization” forces killed two ISIS members and a “suicide bomber” in al-Fatha area, northeast of Baiji. On June 18, the Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militia the Badr Organization claimed to send a “large force” to al-Fatha to reinforce the ISF.



**8** On June 18, a Diyala provincial government source stated that Peshmerga forces discovered recently-planted IEDs along major roads in the Hamrin Basin, northeast of Baquba; in western Jalula sub-district, sand near Qara Tapa



**9** On June 18, a security source stated that U.S.-led Coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS gathering sites between Makhmur district, southwest of Arbil, and Hawija, southwest of Kirkuk, killing “dozens” of ISIS members. Between June 18 and 19, the DoD reported three airstrikes “near Hawija.”



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

100km

Content: Theodore, Bell, Patrick Martin, and ISW Iraq Team  
Graphics: Evan Sterling



©2015 by the Institute for the Study of War

ISIS or other anti-government armed groups such as the Ba'athist leaning JRTN may attempt to foment ethnic violence between Arabs and Kurds as well as sectarian violence between Sunni and Shi'a. ISIS or JRTN is reestablishing its operationally significant, historical safe-haven near the Hamrin Lake in Diyala Province, as newly discovered IEDs in the area demonstrate. Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militias, the Peshmerga controlled by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), and the ISF had cleared this area in November 2014 in order to increase security in Diyala province. These operations helped to secure the Iran-Iraq border, a major priority for Iran, and the cities and towns along the so-called “Green Line” which Kurds and Arabs have contested. The Iraqi Shi'a militias shifted their main effort, however, when they expanded their operations to western Salah ad-Din in the spring of 2015 and eastern Anbar following the fall of Ramadi in May 2015. These efforts include the major operations to clear Baiji city and the oil refinery. The lethal militias' shifting footprint has nevertheless created security vacuums in areas that they had retaken in 2014 such as the Hamrin Ridge. It is important to watch whether ISIS deliberately attempts to refocus the military efforts of the militias away from areas in the Sunni heartland toward areas that hold more significance for the militias. Attacks by ISIS or former Ba'athist elements along the Green Line can foment ethnic tensions, especially because they exacerbate the political controversy over the return or settlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).