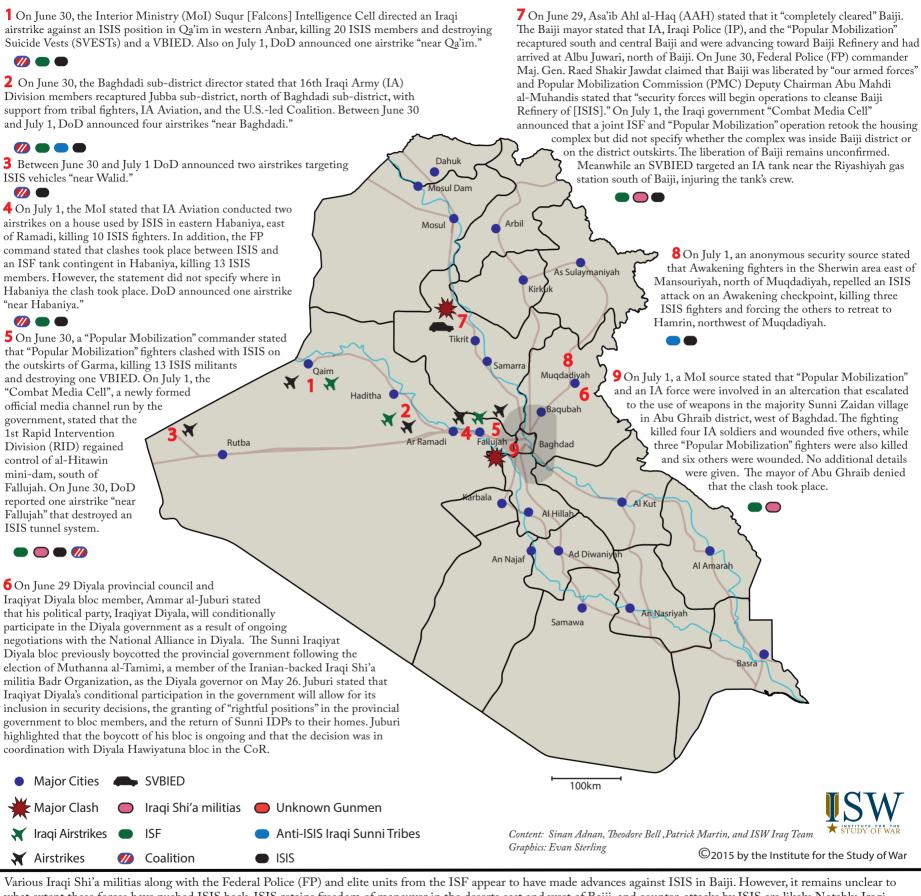
Iraq Situation Report: June 30 - July 01, 2015



Various Iraqi Shi'a militias along with the Federal Police (FP) and elite units from the ISF appear to have made advances against ISIS in Baiji. However, it remains unclear to what extent these forces have pushed ISIS back. ISIS retains freedom of maneuver in the deserts east and west of Baiji, and counter-attacks by ISIS are likely. Notably, Iraqi forces have not announced the liberation of Seneya, an ISIS stronghold connected to the desert west of Baiji, and the area remains a potential support zone for future attacks. In Diyala province, ISIS gunmen launched a small but significant attack in the agricultural area of Mansouriya, north of Muqdadiyah, an area that has suffered little to no ISIS activity since January 2015, when it was recaptured in a militia-led operation. It is also important to watch for future attacks by ISIS in this area, in particular to observe whether an offensive would divert ISF and militia resources from other fronts such as Salah ad-Din and Anbar back to Diyala, the primary support zone of the Badr Organization, which is currently leading operations in southwestern Salah ad-Din. Meanwhile, Iraqi Sunni leaders in Diyala appear to be negotiating with the pan-Shi'a National Alliance to return to the local government. This development follows their recent boycott of the provincial council in a gesture of their disapproval at the appointment of a senior Badr Organization official as the governor. If the participants in the ongoing negotiations are not representative of all Iraqi Sunnis in the council, these talks could lead to the fracture of the Sunni bloc in Diyala and further degrade Sunni political influence in the province. Ultimately, however, Sunni demands to fill effective positions in the local government will likely remain unanswered given the Badr Organization's consolidation of power over the local government and security institutions of Diyala Province.