

1 ISF launch major operation to recapture Sharqat District. The Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS), 15th Iraqi Army (IA) Division, Federal Police (FP), and tribal fighters launched a major operation on June 17, overseen by Defense Minister Khalid al-Obeidi, to recapture Sharqat District from Baiji. The Iranian proxy militia Kata'ib al-Imam Ali and another Popular Mobilization group, Liwa Ali al-Akbar, operate in the area and are also reportedly participating.

9 ISF recapture Ramadi suburbs. The CTS recaptured the village of Zankura, north of Ramadi, on June 15, and advanced into the neighboring village of Albu Risha, northwest of Ramadi. The ISF had recaptured these areas on March 8, after recapturing Ramadi city itself on January 9, and subsequently lost control to ISIS. The Iraqi Defense Ministry announced a large operation involving the CTS, 16th IA Division, and Anbar police aimed at clearing the Zankurah area north of Ramadi, likely near the Jazeera Desert area, on June 20.

8 ISF close to fully recapturing Fallujah. The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have nearly cleared all of Fallujah. Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi announced the city's liberation following the recapture of the Fallujah Dam, south of Fallujah, and the government complex in the center of the city on June 17. However, clearing operations continue in the city's northern neighborhoods. Meanwhile, elements of the Badr Organization's 5th Brigade also entered the city alongside the Federal Police in contradiction to previous statements from the Popular Mobilization's leadership that they would not enter the city. The Badr Organization stated on June 20 that it had forces in Fallujah at the Iraqi government's request.

7 ISF repel tanker SVBIED during ISIS attack in Nukhaib. An ISIS attacker attempted to target an army barracks in Nukhaib, southwest of Karbala, with a tanker SVBIED on June 16. IA members destroyed the SVBIED before it reached its target, but one soldier was killed and six others wounded.

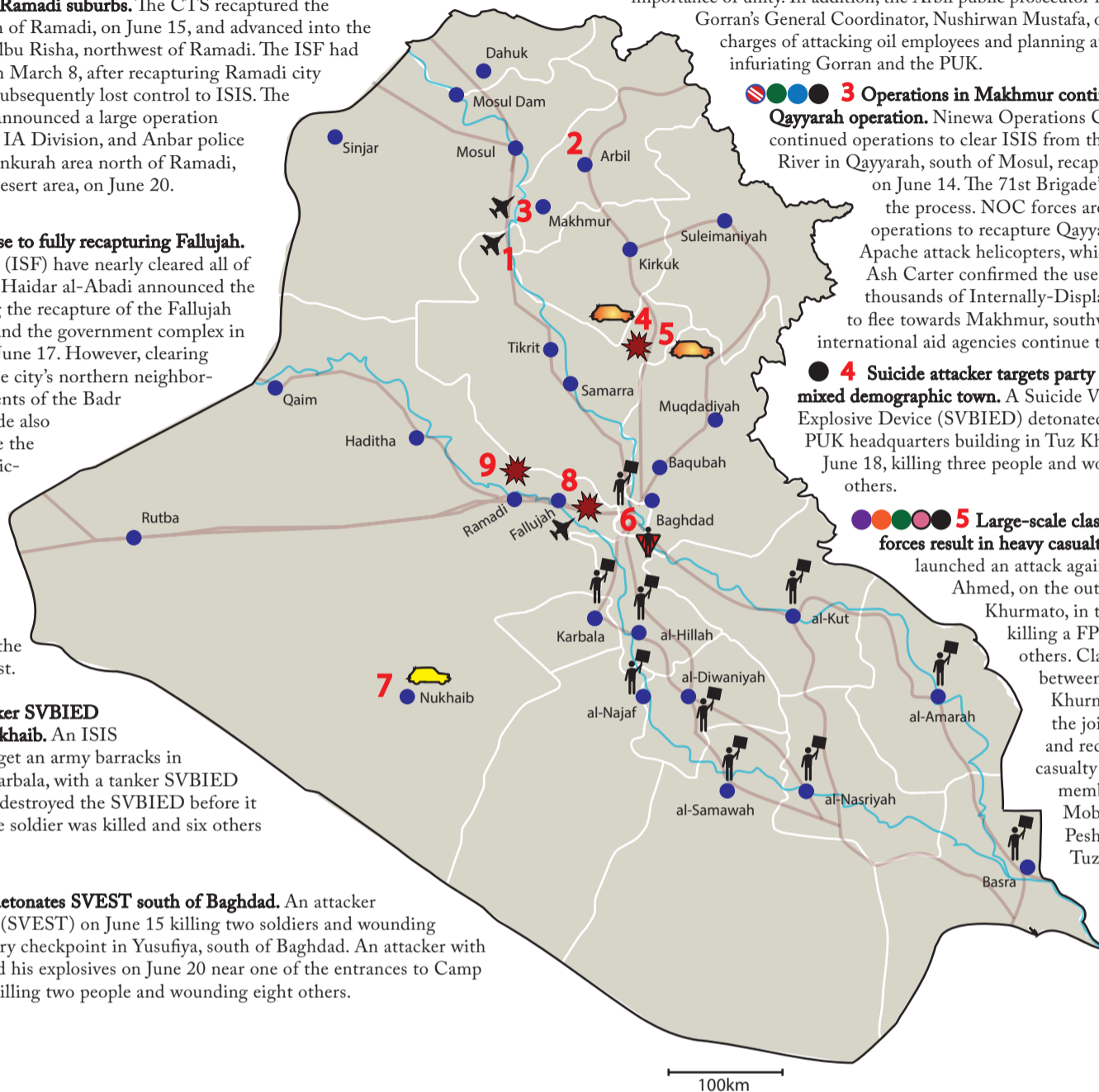
6 ISIS attacker detonates SVEST south of Baghdad. An attacker detonated a Suicide Vest (SVEST) on June 15 killing two soldiers and wounding three others near a military checkpoint in Yusufiya, south of Baghdad. An attacker with an SVEST also detonated his explosives on June 20 near one of the entrances to Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, killing two people and wounding eight others.

2 Kurdish political crisis worsens amid stalled negotiations. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Gorran, the two largest opposition groups in the Kurdish parliament, met on June 14. The parties discussed a framework for electing new leaders in the future and called for continued dialogue with all parties, including the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), to address Iraqi Kurdistan's problems. Meanwhile, Iraqi Kurdish Security Council chairman Masrour Barzani called for dividing Iraq into separate Sunni, Shi'a, and Kurdish entities, but members of the PUK and Gorran rejected the notion and stressed the importance of unity. In addition, the Erbil public prosecutor issued an arrest warrant for Gorran's General Coordinator, Nushirwan Mustafa, on June 16 on trumped-up charges of attacking oil employees and planning attacks on consulates, infuriating Gorran and the PUK.

3 Operations in Makhmur continue in preparation for Qayyarah operation. Ninewa Operations Command (NOC) forces continued operations to clear ISIS from the left bank of the Tigris River in Qayyarah, south of Mosul, recapturing the village of al-Nasr on June 14. The 71st Brigade's commander was killed in the process. NOC forces are conducting shaping operations to recapture Qayyarah with support from U.S. Apache attack helicopters, which U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter confirmed the use of on June 13. Meanwhile, thousands of Internally-Displaced Persons (IDPs) continue to flee towards Makhmur, southwest of Erbil, where international aid agencies continue to expand IDP facilities.

4 Suicide attacker targets party headquarters office in mixed demographic town. A Suicide Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Device (SVBIED) detonated at the entrance to a PUK headquarters building in Tuz Khurmato, east of Tikrit, on June 18, killing three people and wounding at least ten others.

5 Large-scale clashes between ISIS and joint forces result in heavy casualties in Tuz Khurmato. ISIS launched an attack against a FP checkpoint in Bir Ahmed, on the outskirts Amerli, south of Tuz Khurmato, in the late evening of June 16, killing a FP officer and wounding five others. Clashes continued on June 17 between Zargah, southwest of Tuz Khurmato and Bir Ahmed before the joint forces repelled the attacks and recaptured the area. The final casualty count included eight FP members, 12 Turkmen Popular Mobilization fighters, and two Peshmerga killed, as well as the Tuz Khurmato police chief, and 43 people wounded, including 36 Peshmerga who were injured by an SVBIED that detonated near a Peshmerga position.



- Major Cities
- Coalition
- Peshmerga
- Volunteers
- SVEST
- Major Clash
- ISF
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- Failed S/VBIED
- Airstrikes
- ISIS
- Iraqi Shi'a Militias
- SVBIED
- Demonstration

Content: Patrick Martin and ISW Iraq Team
Graphics: Gillian Linden
©2016 by the Institute for the Study of War

The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) made significant gains in recapturing Fallujah from ISIS, but areas recaptured in the future face the risk of instability. As of June 20, the ISF have cleared most of the neighborhoods in Fallujah, excluding some of its northern neighborhoods. Nevertheless, the proliferation of Iraqi Shi'a militias in Fallujah's northern suburbs could pose a serious problem to the area's stability. Reports of abuses against Sunni civilians north of Fallujah by Popular Mobilization and Federal Police were serious enough that security forces encouraged Sunni civilians to flee south towards Amiriyat al-Fallujah. Members of the Badr Organization's 5th Brigade, whose commander is also a senior commander in the Federal Police (FP), entered the city alongside the FP and Emergency Response Division (ERD), forces linked to the Badr Organization-controlled Interior Ministry (MoI), during the course of the operation. The presence of Iraqi Shi'a militias both inside and around Fallujah increases the possibility of sectarian violence against the Sunni Arab residents of Fallujah, which has long served as a support zone for extremist Sunni groups against the locally unpopular Shi'a-dominated national government. Meanwhile, the Iraqi government will likely rely on local Sunni Arab tribes with knowledge of the area's human networks to provide fighters for recaptured areas' security and identifying ISIS collaborators. This collaboration could result in the government empowering certain Sunni tribal power brokers over others with whom they are rivals, which may lead to inter- and intra-tribal violence and settling of old scores as Internally-Displaced Persons (IDPs) return to their homes in the Fallujah area.

Fallujah's stability is critical to the success of future operations against ISIS in Ninewa and western Anbar. Furthermore, the Iraqi government must demonstrate its ability to provide for its citizens to regain the trust and support of the Sunni-Arab populations currently living in ISIS territory; if violence against Fallujah's Sunni Arabs continues, conditions for IDPs in camps remain poor, Fallujah's heavily damaged interior and suburbs are not rebuilt, and reconstruction money is stolen, then Sunni Arabs in ISIS-held areas of Iraq may not welcome the ISF when their areas are recaptured. The ISF must recapture and hold Fallujah and all other predominantly-Sunni Arab areas in an inclusive manner devoid of ethnic, sectarian, and tribal violence, which will require a force that excludes Iraqi Shi'a militias and includes Sunni Arab fighters. Territorial victories will otherwise be accompanied by long-term instability, allowing ISIS or other extremist groups an opportunity for resurgence. The Iraqi Government and the U.S.-led anti-ISIS Coalition will need to keep these lessons in mind as the ISF commence the difficult push from northern Salah al-Din Province into Ninewa towards Mosul.