

1 Peshmerga recaptures Bashiqa, northeast of Mosul. Peshmerga forces recaptured the ISIS-held town of Bashiqa, northeast of Mosul, on November 7 after encircling the town since October 23. ISIS used long-range artillery filled with chlorine and mustard gas, snipers, and IED-laden drones during clashes with Peshmerga.

2 ISF expands clearing operations in neighborhoods in eastern Mosul. The Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) and 9th Iraqi Army (IA) Division breached Mosul's eastern border on November 1 and advanced deeper into Mosul's eastern neighborhoods over the following week, contesting upwards of twelve neighborhoods. The ISF encountered suicide attacks, heavy artillery, and sniper fire as they advanced into the city.

9 ISF recaptures Hammam al-Alil, advances towards southern Mosul. The Federal Police and 15th Iraqi Army (IA) Division recaptured Hammam al-Alil, the last major ISIS-held town on the southern axis, on November 5. The forces continued to advance north, coming within 5 kilometers of the Mosul airport on Mosul's southern border on November 7.

3 Reports of humanitarian abuses by Sunni tribes on recently recaptured villages. Amnesty International stated on November 2 that members of the Sunni Sab'awi tribe have rounded up and beat civilians, primarily men and boys from areas recently recaptured from ISIS. The statement was based on local officials and eyewitnesses, who stated that the events took place in villages on the southeastern bank of the Tigris River under the Sab'awi control. Sunni tribes may view Sunnis from recaptured areas as complicit with ISIS and seek reprisals.

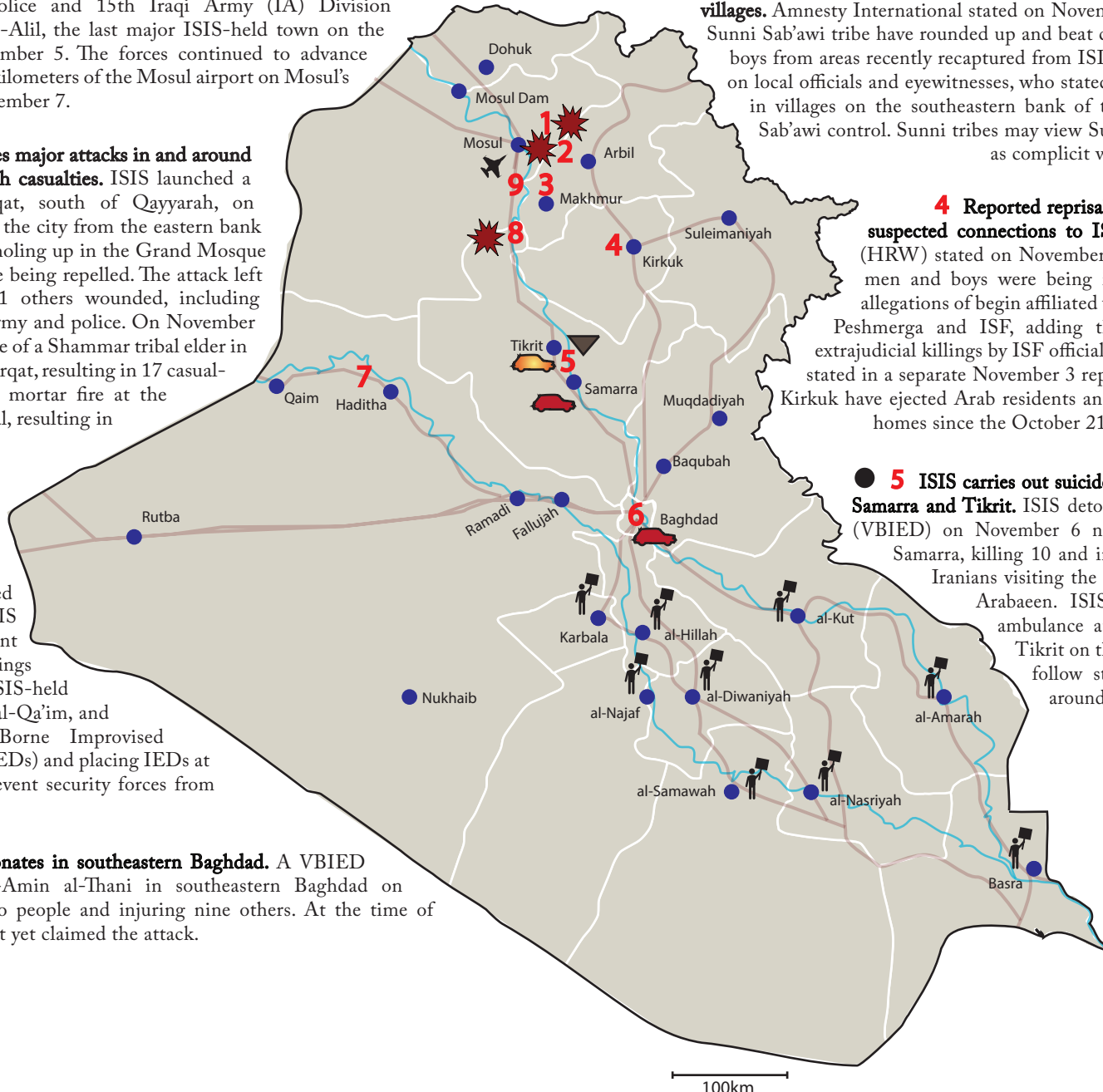
8 ISIS continues major attacks in and around Shirqat, resulting in high casualties. ISIS launched a major attack on Shirqat, south of Qayyarah, on November 4, infiltrating the city from the eastern bank of the Tigris River and holing up in the Grand Mosque in central Shirqat, before being repelled. The attack left 16 people dead and 11 others wounded, including members of the Iraqi Army and police. On November 6, ISIS attacked the home of a Shammar tribal elder in Talul al-Baaj, west of Shirqat, resulting in 17 casualties, and later launched mortar fire at the Shirqat General Hospital, resulting in several casualties as well.

4 Reported reprisals against Sunni Arabs with suspected connections to ISIS. Human Rights Watch (HRW) stated on November 3 that "thousands" of Iraqi men and boys were being indefinitely detained under allegations of being affiliated with ISIS near Mosul by the Peshmerga and ISF, adding that there were reports of extrajudicial killings by ISF officials at checkpoints. HRW also stated in a separate November 3 report that Kurdish officials in Kirkuk have ejected Arab residents and demolished "hundreds" of homes since the October 21 ISIS attack in Kirkuk City.

7 ISIS reportedly preparing static defenses in western Anbar. A tribal militia in western Anbar stated on November 3 that ISIS destroyed two government administration buildings with explosives in the ISIS-held town of Aanah, east of al-Qa'im, and began wiring House-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (HBIEDs) and placing IEDs at Aanah's entrances to prevent security forces from advancing.

5 ISIS carries out suicide attacks, detonates IEDs in Samarra and Tikrit. ISIS detonated a Vehicle-Borne IED (VBIED) on November 6 near the Askari Mosque in Samarra, killing 10 and injuring 14 others, including Iranians visiting the shrine for the Shi'a holiday, Arabaen. ISIS also detonated a rigged ambulance at a checkpoint in southern Tikrit on the same day. The attacks also follow stationary IEDs detonations around Tikrit on November 4 and 6, respectively.

6 VBIED detonates in southeastern Baghdad. A VBIED detonated in Hayy al-Amin al-Thani in southeastern Baghdad on November 8, killing two people and injuring nine others. At the time of publication, ISIS had not yet claimed the attack.



- Major Cities
- Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)
- ISIS
- VBIED
- Airstrikes
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- Major Clash
- SVBIED
- Coalition
- Peshmerga
- Demonstration
- IED

By Emily Anagnostos, Staley Smith, and Michael Momayezi and the ISW Iraq Team
©2016 by the Institute for the Study of War

ISIS is attacking various locations and forces in Iraq in order to find and exploit a seam that can unravel the anti-ISIS Coalition. ISIS launched attacks in Tikrit and Samarra on November 6, targeting Shi'a civilians, including Iranians visiting for a Shi'a holiday. The attacks likely aim to provoke Shi'a militias to carry out reprisals on Sunni populations in order to marginalize Sunnis from the Iraqi Government. ISIS also detonated a Vehicle-Borne IED (VBIED) in Baghdad on November 8. ISIS may hope to unravel political seams that could undermine the legitimacy of the Abadi administration, like it did with the July 3 VBIED which led to the resignations of senior security officials. Some recent ISIS attacks have had success in exploiting these seams: ISIS's attack on Kirkuk City on October 21 resulted in Kurdish security officials demolishing the homes of Sunni Arabs in response to the attacks, according to November 3 Human Rights Watch report. Although ISIS has hit on the Kurdish-Arab seam in Kirkuk, it has not been able to fracture the anti-ISIS alliance between the Peshmerga and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), which continue to make significant gains in eastern Mosul and north and south of the city from November 2 to 8. ISIS will continue to try to exploit seams that can affect the progress of the anti-ISIS alliance in the short-term while hitting seams which keep Iraq's Sunni population sufficiently disillusioned and victimized by the Iraqi Government in the long-term. Therefore, if ISIS needs to go to ground after it loses Mosul, there are conditions set for a renewed Sunni insurgency, off of which ISIS can rebound.