

1 Mosul operation gains momentum after pause, pushes towards river. Operations in eastern Mosul resumed on December 29 after a week long pause that allowed forces to mobilize and regroup. Federal Police forces entered operations in southeastern Mosul alongside the Iraqi Army while the U.S. and Coalition embedded their advisors at lower-levels in the ISF. Better coordination across the ISF and the reinforcements allowed the ISF to retake a significant number of neighborhoods in the southeast and prepare for operations into central and western Mosul.

11 ISIS attacks police station in Samarra. The Ministry of Interior reported that ISIS attempted to attack the Mutawakil police station in Samarra with several attackers wearing SVESTs on January 2. Sources stated that one SVEST attacker detonated at a checkpoint on the Baghdad-Samarra road while others attacked the police station. Samarra Operations Command announced that the attack was launched by an ISIS sleeper cell. The situation was contained by the Sadrist Trend-affiliated Saraya al-Salaam militia, tribal fighters, and Federal Police. ISIS claimed the attack involved three SVEST attackers and killed over one hundred people.

10 Reports of start of anti-ISIS operations in western Anbar. An Anbar Security Committee member stated on January 5 that Jazeera and Badia Operations Command (JBOC) forces, local police, and Popular Mobilization and tribal fighters backed by Coalition airstrikes began clearing operations from Haditha towards Rawa, Anah, and al-Qaim. A JBOC official stated that the first objective was to recapture areas just west of Haditha, on the southern Euphrates River bank. Neither the Joint Operations Command nor the Iraqi Government, however, has announced any operation in western Anbar.

9 ISIS remains active around Ramadi. A parked VBIED detonated in Khalidiyah, east of Ramadi, targeting a convoy of the Khalidiyah mayor on December 22. The explosion wounded five people, but the mayor was unharmed. On January 3, a SVEST attacker detonated at a checkpoint in 7 Kilo, west of Ramadi, killing a soldier.

8 ISIS launches complex attack at Najaf checkpoint. Three ISIS attackers wearing SVESTs and riding in a reported SVBED tried to enter a checkpoint in southern Najaf Province on January 1. Security forces clashed with the militants, who detonated their vests, killing seven people, including police officers, and injuring 15 others. ISIS claimed the attack caused 100 casualties.

2 ISIS SVBIEDs penetrate security forces in recaptured eastern Mosul suburb. Three Suicide Vehicle-Borne IEDs (SVBIEDs) detonated in Gogjali, east of Mosul, after they penetrated the area from Hayy al-Quds in eastern Mosul on December 22. The attack killed at least 23 people and injured at least 40 others, including security forces and tribal fighters. Coalition airstrikes destroyed additional SVBIEDs trying to target the area.

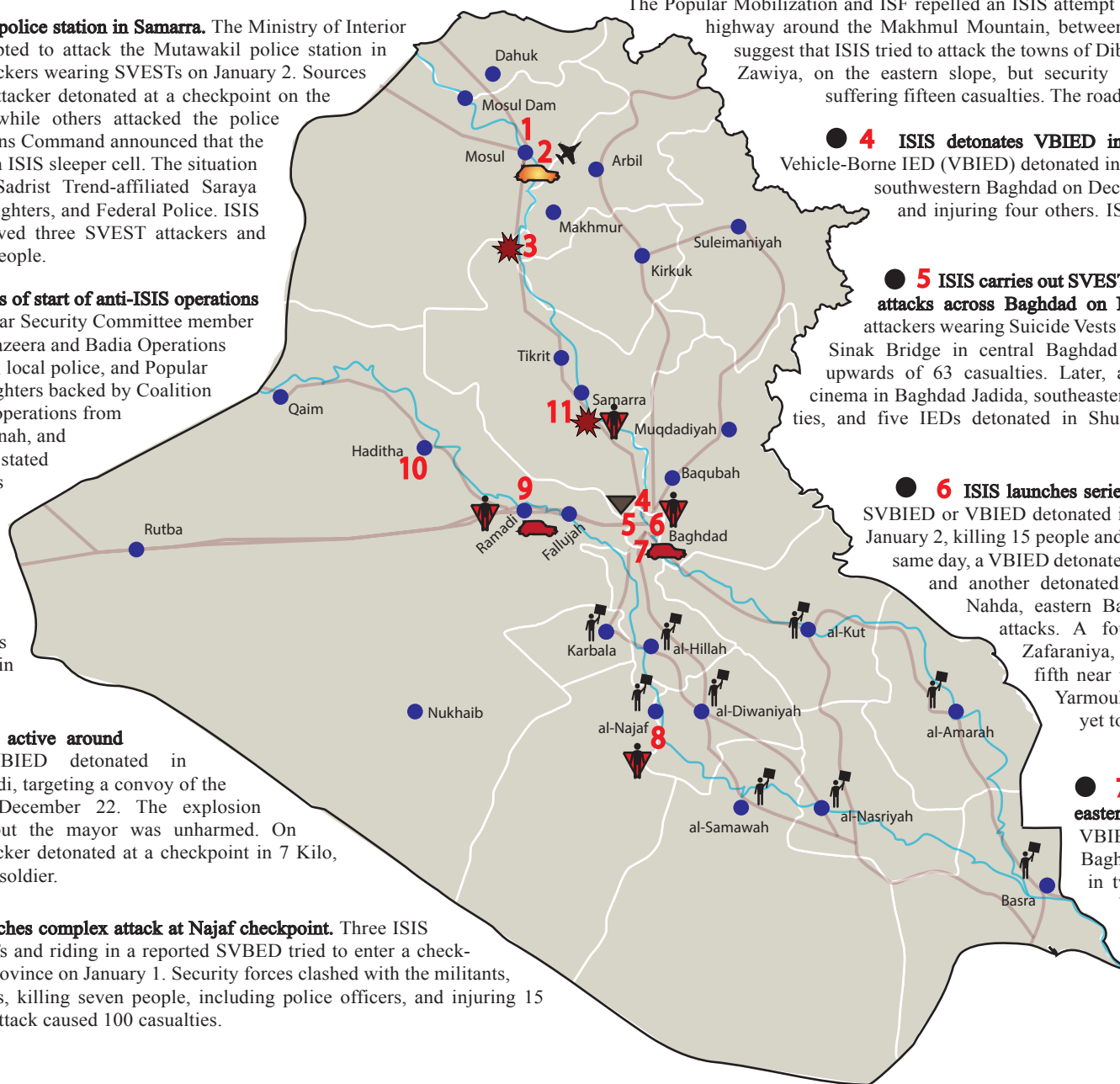
3 Popular Mobilization, ISF repel ISIS attempt to sever northern highway north of Baiji. The Popular Mobilization and ISF repelled an ISIS attempt to sever the Mosul-Baghdad highway around the Makhmur Mountain, between Baiji and Shirqat. Reports suggest that ISIS tried to attack the towns of Dibis, on the western slope, and Zawiya, on the eastern slope, but security forces repelled the attacks, suffering fifteen casualties. The road was reopened later that day.

4 ISIS detonates VBIED in southwestern Baghdad. A Vehicle-Borne IED (VBIED) detonated in the Fourth Police District in southwestern Baghdad on December 21, killing one person and injuring four others. ISIS claimed the attack killed and injured eighty people.

5 ISIS carries out SVEST, VBIED, and clustered IED attacks across Baghdad on New Year's Eve. Two ISIS attackers wearing Suicide Vests (SVESTs) detonated near the Sinak Bridge in central Baghdad on December 31, causing upwards of 63 casualties. Later, a VBIED detonated near a cinema in Baghdad Jadida, southeastern Baghdad, without casualties, and five IEDs detonated in Shuala, northwestern Baghdad, causing 7 casualties.

6 ISIS launches series of VBIEDs in Baghdad. A SVBIED or VBIED detonated in Sector 55 of Sadr City on January 2, killing 15 people and injuring 28 others. Later the same day, a VBIED detonated near a hospital in Sadr City and another detonated near a second hospital in Nahda, eastern Baghdad. ISIS claimed these attacks. A fourth VBIED detonated in Zafaraniya, southeastern Baghdad, and a fifth near the Um al-Tabul Mosque in Yarmouk, western Baghdad. ISIS has yet to claim the last two VBIEDs.

7 ISIS detonates VBIED in eastern Baghdad. ISIS detonated a VBIED in al-Obeidi, eastern Baghdad, on January 5, resulting in twelve casualties. A second VBIED targeted a checkpoint in Bab al-Udhaim, northern Baghdad, but ISIS has not issued a claim yet.



- Major Cities
- Coalition
- Iraqi Shi'a Militias
- ▲ SVEST
- ▲ Demonstration
- ★ Major Clash
- ISF
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- ▲ VBIED
- ▲ Airstrikes
- ISIS
- ▲ IED
- ▲ SVBIED

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ISIS launched waves of counteroffensives and spectacular attacks across Iraq after operations in eastern Mosul resumed on December 29. The attacks were widespread and hit highly secured areas, including Baghdad and the shrine cities of Najaf and Samarra. ISIS also attempted to sever the main highway running from Mosul to Baghdad by attacking locations north of Baiji. The attack pattern is similar to ISIS's attacks in the week after the Mosul operation launched on October 17, when ISIS struck targets in Kirkuk, Sinjar, Rutba, and Samarra, and in the week after the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) breached Mosul's city limits on November 1, when ISIS launched major attacks in Tikrit, al-Alam, Samarra, and Shirqat. The most recent attacks from December 29 to January 5 underscore that ISIS will react to major phase changes in Mosul by launching wide-spread attacks with the intent to spread the ISF thin, force it to reallocate units away from northern operations, and undermine political legitimacy in Baghdad. The attacks demonstrate that, despite its losses in Mosul, ISIS is capable of reopening old fronts, such as in Sinjar which it lost in November 2015; penetrating deep behind the frontlines, such as Kirkuk City; and retaining access into highly secured areas, such as Baghdad and Samarra. Continued minor attacks in the Euphrates River Valley also suggest that ISIS may be reviving networks in historical support zones. The ISF and Coalition can reasonably expect that ISIS will launch a similar wave of attacks across Iraq when the ISF reaches and crosses the Tigris River in Mosul.