

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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**1 ISF advance on western Mosul.** Counter Terrorism Services (CTS) forces recaptured six neighborhoods in western Mosul between April 4 and 20. Meanwhile, Ministry of Interior (MoI) forces pressed towards al-Nouri Mosque in Mosul's Old City amid an ISIS chemical weapons attack. The 9th Armored Division and Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) also cleared ISIS-held terrain towards northwestern Mosul from Badush. ISIS continued to launch attacks in Tel Afar targeting PMU.

**14 Kurdish forces repel ISIS attacks against Sinjar.** Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)-backed Yazidi militia, Sinjar Protection Units (YBS) repelled an ISIS attack and encircled ISIS-held Tawra village west of Sinjar on March 21. Peshmerga later repelled a four-man ISIS SVEST attack east of Sinjar on March 28.

**13 Iraqi airstrikes and ISF target ISIS in Anbar Province.**

Iraqi warplanes struck an ISIS weapons depot and explosives factory in al-Karablah near al-Qaim on March 22. Iraqi Airstrikes also hit ISIS positions in Akashat north of al-Rutba. Separately, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) destroyed an ISIS military camp after searching villages southwest of al-Rutba.

**12 ISIS detonates SVBIED west of Fallujah.** An ISIS attacker detonated a Suicide Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Device (SVBIED) at a joint Iraqi Army and Federal Police checkpoint at the western entrance of Fallujah on April 3.

**11 Iraqi Shi'a militia releases Qatari royal.** An Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militia released a kidnapped Qatari royal on April 6 after a member of the Qatari royal family transferred \$2 million to a middleman. The militia kidnapped the Qatari royal along with 25 other members of a hunting entourage in Muthanna Province in December 2015. A Qatari Foreign Ministry official stated negotiations were ongoing to secure the release of the other kidnapped persons.

**10 AAH members likely attack Communist Party headquarters in Diwaniyah.** Unidentified assailants attacked Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) headquarters in al-Diwaniyah province using hand grenades on April 11, resulting in no casualties. The attack follows a student protest against the Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) leader Qais al-Khazali at Diwaniyah University that was possibly led by the ICP leader Raed Fahmi's son. Fahmi denied ICP involvement in the protest, and AAH denounced the attack on the ICP headquarters and called for restraint.

**9 Security forces intercept two SVEST attackers IVO Baghdad.** A 22nd Iraqi Army (IA) Brigade force intercepted an ISIS attacker wearing a SVEST in Tarmiyah district, north of Baghdad, on April 2. A Tribal Awakening fighter stopped an ISIS attacker wearing an SVEST in Asriyah village, Iskandariyah in northern Babil Province on April 3 that reportedly targeted a funeral.

**2 Unidentified gunmen attack ISIS checkpoint in western Mosul.** Four unidentified gunmen reportedly attacked an ISIS checkpoint in ISIS-controlled al-Islahal-Zira'i in western Mosul on March 29. The gunmen reportedly killed five ISIS militants and seized weapons before fleeing.

**3 Popular Mobilization builds airstrip west of Mosul to support IAA.** The PMU stated on March 30 that they began constructing an airstrip at Tel Abta, west of Mosul to support Iraqi Army Aviation (IAA), as well as a field hospital. Tel Abta did not previously have any infrastructure for an airstrip.

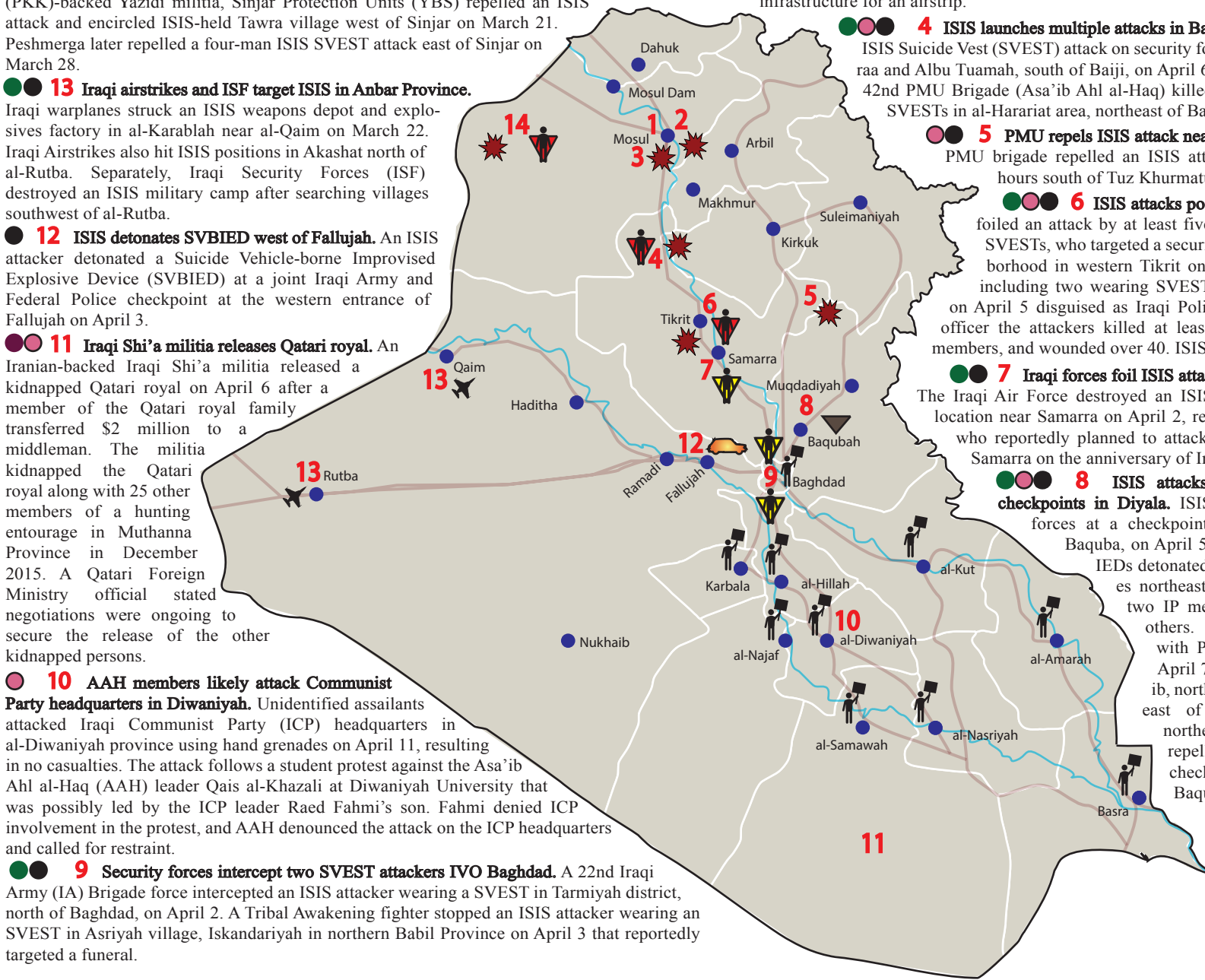
**4 ISIS launches multiple attacks in Baiji.** PMU claimed to repel an ISIS Suicide Vest (SVEST) attack on security forces and civilians in al-Mazraa and Albu Tuamah, south of Baiji, on April 6. The PMU also claimed the 42nd PMU Brigade (Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq) killed four ISIS fighters wearing SVESTs in al-Harariat area, northeast of Baiji.

**5 PMU repels ISIS attack near Tuz Khurmatu.** A Turkmen PMU brigade repelled an ISIS attack after clashing for three hours south of Tuz Khurmatu on March 24.

**6 ISIS attacks police in Tikrit.** Security forces foiled an attack by at least five ISIS fighters, two wearing SVESTs, who targeted a security patrol in al-Zuhour neighborhood in western Tikrit on April 2. A dozen attackers, including two wearing SVESTs, attacked al-Zuhour again on April 5 disguised as Iraqi Police (IP). According to an IP officer the attackers killed at least 31, 14 of whom were IP members, and wounded over 40. ISIS claimed the attack.

**7 Iraqi forces foil ISIS attack on pilgrims near Samarra.** The Iraqi Air Force destroyed an ISIS "camp" in an unspecified location near Samarra on April 2, reportedly killing 12 militants who reportedly planned to attack Shi'a pilgrims traveling to Samarra on the anniversary of Imam Hadi's death.

**8 ISIS attacks multiple checkpoints in Diyala.** ISIS gunmen attacked security forces at a checkpoint in Albu Khiyal, north of Baquba, on April 5 but were repelled. Multiple IEDs detonated on security forces in villages northeast of Baquba, killing at least two IP members and wounding three others. ISIS gunmen later clashed with PMU and security forces on April 7 at checkpoints in al-Dawalib, northeast of Baquba; al-Maqaleh, east of Baquba; and al-Saadiya, northeast of Muqdadiyah, but were repelled. ISIS attacked a security checkpoint in Bazaiz, east of Baquba on April 19.



100km

- Major Cities
- PKK
- Qatar
- Demonstration
- ISF
- ISIS
- Major Clash
- SVBIED
- Coalition
- Iraqi Shi'a Militias
- IED
- SVEST
- Peshmerga
- Unknown Gunmen
- Airstrikes
- Failed SVEST

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Graphics by Jessa Rose Dury-Agri  
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ISIS is waging a renewed offensive campaign in recaptured areas that could exploit vulnerabilities in the Iraqi Government's ability to respond amidst accelerating political competition before upcoming elections. ISIS attempted to fix, penetrate, or divert security forces with ground attacks against the ISF and PMU at Baiji, Tikrit, and in Diyala. ISIS also attempted to conduct isolated attacks in secure areas near Baghdad, Fallujah, and Samarra, a reflection of historic attack patterns of the 2012-2013 era. Prime Minister Abadi faces competing requirements to manage a renewed Kurdish bid for an independence referendum and Turkish President Erdogan's threat of future Turkish military activity in northern Iraq against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Abadi is simultaneously campaigning to position himself politically to win in Iraq's upcoming elections. Iran meanwhile continues to use its Iraqi proxies to produce cross-theater outcomes, undermining the legitimacy of the Iraqi state and demonstrating Iranian freedom of action in Iraq. The requirement for coalition military support in Iraq will endure after the recapture of Mosul, and could actually increase if political competition in Iraq undermines stability and creates new opportunities for ISIS and other Sunni insurgent actors.