

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

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Iraqi Shi'a militias in the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) recaptured most of the populated areas of the Ninewa desert areas, concluding operations in western Ninewa Province on June 10. The PMU also recaptured al-Baaj, a former safe haven for ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, on June 4. The PMU will likely refit and turn their attention towards clearing the rest of the Iraq-Syria border in Ninewa Province towards al-Qa'im in western Anbar Province. The PMU push could threaten the U.S.'s ability to operate along the Iraq-Syria border area by positioning Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militias proximate to U.S. areas of interest along the Euphrates River Valley. The PMU may also position significant assets towards the ISIS-held Hawija Pocket to pressure the ISF to recapture Hawija with the PMU. The PMU's recent statements about preparing for Hawija Operations, likely under the Badr Organization-controlled "East Dijla Operations Command," suggest that they will allocate forces towards Hawija in the near future.

The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) continue to fight to clear ISIS from western Mosul and the Old City amid fierce ISIS resistance. Political challenges surrounding the composition of forces continues to stall the Tal Afar operation, as Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militias continue to desire a role in clearing the city, which Turkey and the U.S. oppose. The ISF will likely clear Tal Afar after recapturing Mosul once the completion of Mosul operations frees up manpower for additional clearing operations. Meanwhile, the 9th Iraqi Army Armored Division continued clearing operations west of Mosul, recapturing most of the ISIS-held towns near Mount Badush and the Badush Dam and Prison areas in March 2017 and making slow progress towards Tal Afar from the east.

The map reflects adjustments to the Hawija Pocket control assessment in the March 2017 iteration of the map based on a reevaluation of previous operations; no forward progress against ISIS has been made in that area since March 2017.