

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	1017
Land:	Irak
Kilde:	Institute for the Study of War
Titel:	Iraq Situation Report. February 17-28, 2017
Udgivet:	28. februar 2017
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	21. april 2017

1 ISF launches operation to retake western Mosul, seizing military base and airport. The ISF launched operations to retake western Mosul on February 19. The Federal Police and Emergency Response Division retook the airport while the Counter Terrorism Service recaptured the military base on February 24. The 9th Iraqi Army Armored Division alongside Hawza militia Firqat al-Abbas al-Qitaliyah recaptured several villages southwest of Mosul and is now moving north towards Badush on the Tigris River in order to isolate the city.

14 ISIS attacks near Baiji, detonate explosives. An Albu Nimr tribal leader stated that ISIS executed an Albu Nimr family member in Baiji on February 25 and called on the government to protect the Albu Nimr in Anbar and Salah al-Din. The Baiji police chief stated that police and Shi'a militias conducted searches in Baiji and killed three "suicide bombers" hiding in an under-construction house. The search occurred after an explosion in a house in Mazraa village, south of Baiji, killed a family of four in their home and a SVEST exploded nearby, possibly with no one wearing the SVEST.

13 Iraqi Air Force carries out strike in Syria against ISIS target. The Iraqi Air Force carried out a strike on February 24 in Albu Kamal in Syria, across from al-Qaim, targeting an ISIS cell accused of carrying out recent attacks in Baghdad. The strike was reportedly carried out in coordination with the Syrian regime while the U.S. stated it gave intel for the strike.

12 ISIS launches major attack near Iraq-Jordan border crossing. An ISIS drone dropped explosives on a Border Guards station near the Trebil border crossing with Jordan on February 22, resulting in material damage. On February 24, Popular Mobilization "Buraq Forces" and Border Guards repelled an attack near the 2nd Battalion Border Guards station near Walid and Trebil border crossings. ISIS attacked the 3rd Battalion Border Guards headquarters in the same area on the evening of February 24, killing 16 Border Guard members.

11 ISF thwart VBIED west of Ramadi. Anbar emergency police detonated a SVEST targeting a checkpoint in 7 Kilo, west of Ramadi, on February 28 without casualties.

10 SVEST attack foiled in Abu Ghraib. A police source stated that an attacker attempted to detonate a SVEST in a camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, on February 24. Security forces arrested the attacker and disarmed the SVEST.

9 ISF thwart SVBIED attack in Karbala. Karbala Provincial Council's security committee reported that security forces intercepted a SVBIED in western Karbala coming from the direction of Nukhaib, near the Saudi border, on February 22. The driver was reportedly chained to the steering wheel and "did not stop and confront security forces." Security forces killed the driver and dismantled the car.

2 Senior army officer assumes control of eastern Mosul security. Army Ground Force Commander Lt. Gen. Riyadh Jalal Tawfiq was appointed coordinator of all forces from the Ministry of Defense, Interior, intelligence and security services, and the Popular Mobilization in eastern Mosul on February 22. Tawfiq stated that he will be coordinating with the local government and that his new position does not make him a "military ruler." The change follows a criticism on February 21 that Ninewa Police Chief Wathaq al-Hamdani was "failing miserably" to handle security in eastern Mosul.

3 VBIED detonates in eastern Mosul without casualty. A security source stated that a Vehicle-Borne IED (VBIED) detonated in Hayy al-Baladiyat in eastern Mosul without causing casualties on February 21. ISIS has not yet claimed the attack.

4 Militant activity near Tikrit targets militias. Two IEDs detonated in al-Alam, northeast of Tikrit, on February 28, injuring eight militia members. The same day, the Popular Mobilization repelled an ISIS attack in Albu Khadu, southeast of Tikrit.

5 Sadrist militia, police foil ISIS attack south of Samarra. Governor of Salah al-Din Ahmed Abdullah al-Juburi stated that Sadrist-affiliated militia Saraya al-Salaam and local police foiled an attack on February 21 by ISIS militants wearing Suicide Vests (SVESTs) targeting a security checkpoint at the southern entrance of al-Ishaqi, south of Samarra. ISIS claimed that three attackers killed 45 and wounded 60 Iraqi soldiers after engaging in combat before using SVESTs.

6 Unidentified attackers topple electrical towers east of Muqdadiah. Muqdadiah local council chairman Adnan al-Tamimi stated that unidentified attackers sabotaged four electrical towers Wadi al-Husan, east of Muqdadiah, using IEDs on February 27.

7 Three SVBIEDs target security checkpoints in Khalis. Three Suicide Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Devices (SVBIED) targeted security checkpoints in al-Khalis district north of Baquba on February 23, resulting in three deaths and nine injuries. An Interior Ministry spokesperson stated that security forces arrested one SVBIED driver, killed another, and destroyed a third, the explosion of which resulted in the casualties.

8 Thousands of Sadrists conduct "silent protest" to demand reform to IHEC. Thousands of Sadrist demonstrators conducted a "silent protest" in Baghdad's Tahrir Square on February 17 to call for reforms to the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) and the electoral law, with many demonstrators symbolically taping their mouths and marching or sitting in silence. Sadrist supporters also conducted silent protests across southern Iraq.

- Major Cities 🚗 Coalition 🟡 Iraqi Shi'a Militias 🚗 VBIED 🚩 SVEST
- 💣 Major Clash 🟢 ISF 🔴 Unknown Gunmen 🚗 SVBIED 🚩 Demonstration
- ✈️ Airstrikes ⬤ ISIS ⚠️ IED 🚗 Failed S/VBIED

ISIS could be facing difficulty coordinating successful attacks in Iraq as losses in Mosul are forcing it to transform from a governing to guerrilla style terrorist organization. ISIS did not carry out the wave of complex attacks predicted to occur in response to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) launching operations to retake western Mosul on February 19. The deviation from the expectation may be a result of ISIS losing coordination between cells across Iraq as it takes time to regroup or as the ISF puts pressure on lines of communication in northern Iraq. The ISF may also be improving in its ability to preempt or thwart attacks. ISIS launched a major attack against checkpoints near the Syrian-Jordan-Iraqi border from February 22 to 24 and targeted checkpoints in Diyala Province on February 23. However, these attacks alone do not match the intensity of ISIS's previous responses, in which ISIS either carried out major attacks in generally quiet areas, such as Kirkuk City or Sinjar, or ramped up the frequency or scale of attacks in usual attack zones, such as Baghdad. ISIS may have planned for attacks in Samarra, Karbala, and Abu Ghraib to reach the response threshold, but these attacks were thwarted by the ISF over the course of February 21 to 24. The decline in ISIS's response is not likely a sign of permanent loss of ability to attack, but rather an indication that ISIS may take time to sufficiently regroup its command and logistical hubs as it deals with losses in Mosul and northern Iraq.