

**1** **Qassim Suleimani reportedly visits Ninewa Province, meets with security leaders about Mosul operations.** An anonymous CoR member from Diyala stated that IRGC-Quds Force Commander Qassim Suleimani met with ISF and Popular Mobilization leaders in Ninewa Province on August 4 in order to “prepare for the Mosul battle.” His precise location or with whom he met were not released.

**2** **U.S. begins deployment of 560 soldiers to repair Qayyarah airbase.** The Pentagon announced on August 5 that 400 soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division’s 2nd Brigade Combat Team will deploy this summer to Qayyarah Airbase, south of Mosul. The 400 soldiers are a part of the 560 soldiers announced on July 11 by Defense Secretary Ash Carter, and will focus primarily on logistical support for the ISF to repair Qayyarah airbase for use in operations to retake Mosul.

**9** **ISF meets with Popular Mobilization to discuss Shirqat operations.** Salah al-Din Operations Command held a meeting at its headquarters on August 6 between officials from the ISF, including the assistant Army Chief of Staff and Commander of the 9th Armored Iraqi Army (IA) Division, and officials from the Popular Mobilization, including Secretary General of the Badr Organization Hadi al-Amiri and Deputy Chairman of the Popular Mobilization Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. The meeting discussed joint cooperation and the “distribution of tasks” for Shirqat operations.

**3** **ISIS attacks Defense Minister’s convoy near Qayyarah airbase.** ISIS conducted indirect fire on the convoy of Defense Minister Khalid al-Obeidi in Ijhala, east of the Qayyarah airbase, on August 8. Obeidi’s security forces exchanged fire with ISIS without casualty to Obeidi’s convoy. Obeidi arrived to northern Iraq earlier the same day to inspect operations in Makhmur and Qayyarah.

**8** **Joint forces recapture al-Waleed border crossing on Syrian-Iraqi border.** Units from the Border Guards, Federal Police, Iraqi Army, and tribal fighters with Coalition air support recaptured the Waleed border crossing on the southern Syrian-Iraqi border from ISIS on August 3. ISIS launched an attack from the Syrian side of the border against the Waleed border crossing on August 8, which tribal fighters repelled. ISIS had targeted the Syrian border crossing of Tanf on August 7. ISIS withdrew back into Syria as security forces reinforced the Iraqi border crossing.

**4** **ISF repel ISIS attack west of Makhmur.** Units from the 71st, 72nd, and 92nd Brigades of the 16th Iraqi Army (IA) Division, the 37th Brigade of the 9th Armored IA Division, Ninewa emergency police, and protection forces under Ninewa Operations Command with Coalition airstrikes repelled a major ISIS attack on both the western and eastern banks of the Tigris River, south of Qayyarah and west of Makhmur, on August 7. The attack killed 104 ISIS militants.

**5** **ISIS reportedly captures upwards of 3,000 residents fleeing from Hawija.** The Iraqi Observatory for Human Rights stated that 120 ISIS fighters captured “nearly 1,900” civilians on August 4 who tried to escape from ISIS-controlled Hawija District in southwestern Kirkuk. ISIS reportedly killed “dozens” and burned six civilians. UNHCR, however, reported that ISIS captured “up to 3,000” civilians, as they fled to Kirkuk City.

**7** **ISF thwarts reported “Great Battle of Baghdad” ISIS attack.** The War Media Cell stated on August 5 that the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) thwarted a major ISIS operation, “The Great Battle of Baghdad,” which intended to target various southern provinces and areas in Baghdad, including al-Mansoura, al-Kadhimiyyah, and areas near government buildings. ISIS reportedly planned attacks similar to the bombing of Karrada on July 3 using SVBIEDs and Suicide Vests (SVEST).

**6** **SVBIED detonates near Udhaim Dam in northern Diyala Province.** A security source stated that a Suicide Vehicle-Borne IED (SVBIED) detonated on August 4 at a Popular Mobilization checkpoint, near the Udhaim Dam, north of Baqubah, killing one member of the Popular Mobilization and injuring four others. ISIS has not claimed the attack.



● Major Cities	● ISF	● Iraqi Shi’a Militias	🚗 SVBIED
✈️ Airstrikes	● Peshmerga	● ISIS	🚗 Failed S/VBIED
🔥 Major Clash	🚩 Coalition	● Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes	🚗 Coalition Deployment
			👤 Demonstration

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The Popular Mobilization, including major Iranian-backed Shi’a militias, sought to formalize their participation in operations in northern Iraq. IRGC-Quds Force Commander Qassim Suleimani reportedly visited unnamed locations in Ninewa Province to discuss operations in Mosul with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and militia leaders on August 4. Suleimani’s presence in theater before the start of major operations in the past has preceded intense militia involvement in the operation. Suleimani’s visits to Fallujah at the start of the operation in late-May and Baiji in mid-October 2015 heralded a significant increase of militia participation in the operations. The pattern will likely remain true, and his visit to Ninewa Province on August 4 indicates that Popular Mobilization, including proxy militias, could play a serious role in upcoming operations in Shirqat and even Mosul. Senior militia leaders, including Badr Organization leader Hadi al-Amiri and Popular Mobilization Deputy Chairman Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, also met with senior ISF officials under Salah al-Din Operations Command on August 6 to discuss participation in Shirqat. The Popular Mobilization, however, will face resistance against their deployment to northern Iraq from Coalition, Kurdish, and Ninewa officials out of fear of sectarian reprisals on Ninewa’s majority Sunni population. The Coalition will also reject militias imposing on long-cultivated Coalition turf. The Coalition will shape the Mosul operation by leveraging air support to eliminate militia participation and by increasing its presence on the ground. The Pentagon announced on August 5 the beginning of the deployment of the 560 soldiers announced on July 11 in order to provide logistical support to Qayyarah airbase, which was recaptured on July 9. The base will serve as a logistics hub for operations into Mosul. Coalition basing in both Qayyarah and Makhmur may limit the militias’ expansion towards Mosul, though they are likely to participate in Shirqat.