



Weekly Iraq .Xplored report

04 August 2018

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Iraq

garda.com



Confidential and proprietary © GardaWorld



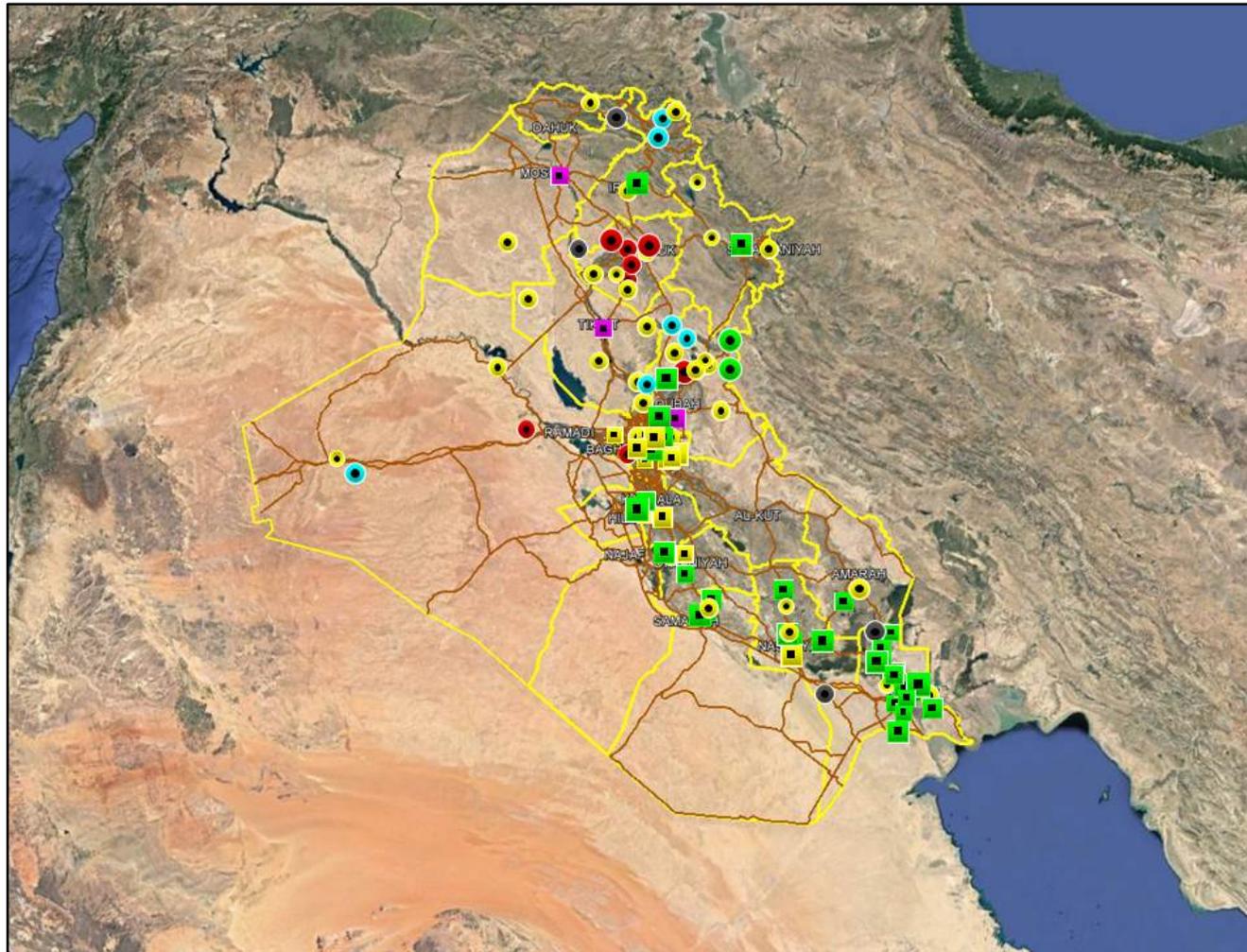
TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
ACTIVITY MAP	3
OUTLOOK	4
Short term outlook	4
Medium to long term outlook	4
SIGNIFICANT EVENTS	5
Iraqi PM Suspends Electricity Minister after Weeks of Protest	5
Iraq's Sadr sets new guidelines for forming government	5
THREAT MATRIX	5
OVERVIEW	6
Civil unrest	6
Political	6
Security	8
Economy	9
WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT	10
Countrywide Military/Security Situation	10
ACRONYM LIST	18
GARDAWORLD INFORMATION SERVICES	19
GARDAWORLD	19

This report is an abridged version of GardaWorld Weekly Iraq .Xplored August 04, 2018. To subscribe to the full versions of the daily/weekly Iraq .Xplored reports, or for enquires relating to other GardaWorld services, please contact daniel.matthews@garda.com

Disclaimer: The information and opinions expressed in this Report are the views of GardaWorld and constitute a judgment as at the date of the Report and are subject to change without notice. The information and opinions expressed in this Report have been formed in good faith on the basis of the best information and intelligence available at the time of writing, but no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to its accuracy, completeness or correctness. GardaWorld accepts no liability arising out of or in connection with the comments made or the information set out in this Report and the reader is advised that any decision taken to act or not to act in reliance on this Report is taken solely at the reader's own risk. In particular, the comments in this Report should not be construed as advice, legal or otherwise.

ACTIVITY MAP



OUTLOOK

Short term outlook

- Protest activity remains the central theme of reporting from southern Iraq, with demonstrations in relation to basic service provision and employment in their fifth week. Extra care is advised when travelling to locations affected by large-scale demonstrations in August. The Iraqi Security Forces remain on alert as the protests continue. Demonstrations can be expected to continue in the next few weeks as demand for water and electricity increases during the hot summer months.
- The fall-out of the May 12 parliamentary elections remains the focus of political reporting. The manual recount of votes is expected to take around two more weeks to complete, with the government formation process to start officially after the results are confirmed by the Federal Supreme Court. Political negotiations over the government composition are likely to be complicated by the current protest activity in southern Iraq, with the PM Haider al-Abadi's security leadership and popularity tested by violent demonstrations.
- Controversial results of the parliamentary elections and the ongoing disputes resulting from the Kurdish independence referendum mean that the general threat from political instability in northern Iraq could manifest itself to varying degrees of unrest and violence at the local level. On July 01, a suicide VBIED targeted a warehouse housing ballot boxes in Kirkuk; one security element was killed and 20 others were injured. On July 18, multiple explosive devices detonated in the city centre reportedly injuring at least a dozen civilians. Increased security is expected to be seen in Irbil, following the attack on the Governor's Office on July 23.

Medium to long term outlook

- A protracted period of coalition building is expected follow the elections. The official government formation process will be initiated once the Federal Court confirms the parliamentary election results. A period of transition will follow in which bureaucracy will increase as incumbents and policy changes.
- The election results and government composition will have a significant impact on the security environment in northern Iraq. In the absence of a concerted effort to engage the disenfranchised Sunni population of the country, these areas will remain at risk of sectarian violence from radical Sunni elements, especially in Nineveh, Salah al-Din and western Kirkuk.
- Islamic State activity will continue to dominate security reporting with focus on the potential resurgence of an insurgent campaign in northern and western Iraq. Despite ongoing ISF efforts to clear remaining IS pockets, the group retains a degree of freedom of movement in the desert regions of Anbar, near the Syrian border, and along the Hamrin Mountains.
- Low-level incidents related to criminality, personal disputes and tribal tensions are likely to continue in Basra and the southern region. Long-term tensions are also expected to be driven by the return of militia factions expecting material and social rewards for their contribution in the campaign against IS.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Iraqi PM Suspends Electricity Minister after Weeks of Protest

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has suspended the Minister of Electricity, his office has said, following weeks of protests against corruption and chronic power outages. A statement from Abadi's office today said the PM suspended Qassem al-Fahdawi, whose departure had been demanded by protesters, "because of the deterioration in the electricity sector". The statement also said that Abadi had ordered an internal government investigation into Fahdawi's role in the deterioration of utility services.

Iraq's Sadr sets new guidelines for forming government

Iraqi Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who's Sa'eroun (Marching) Alliance garnered the largest number of seats in parliament during the May 12 vote, has announced 40 guidelines for forming a new government. Sadr stressed that the new government must "crush sectarianism and steer clear of the ghost of political quotas", according to a statement published on his website. He added that those taking part in the new government must ensure Iraq's independence and stand in the way of any foreign interference in the state's affairs.

THREAT MATRIX

Region	Political	Terrorism	Militancy	Crime	K&R
KRG*	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Low
North**	Moderate	High-Extreme	High	High	High
Baghdad	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Anbar	Moderate	High	High	High	High
South***	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Threat Scale	Minimal	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
--------------	---------	-----	----------	------	---------

* **KRG** – Dohuk, Erbil & Sulaymaniyah

** **North** – Nineveh, Salah ad-Din & Diyala

*** **South** – Babil, Wasit, Karbala, Najaf, Diwaniyah, Dhi Qar, Muthanna, Maysan & Basra

OVERVIEW

Civil unrest

Iraqi PM Suspends Electricity Minister after Weeks of Protest

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has suspended the Minister of Electricity, his office has said, following weeks of protests against corruption and chronic power outages. A statement from Abadi's office today said the PM suspended Qassem al-Fahdawi, whose departure had been demanded by protesters, "because of the deterioration in the electricity sector". The statement also said that Abadi had ordered an internal government investigation into Fahdawi's role in the deterioration of utility services.

Iraqi PM May Suspend Two More Ministers amid Unrest

Iraqi PM Haider al-Abadi may suspend another couple of his ministers amid the deteriorated situation in the country and ongoing protests against the poor public services and unemployment, a local press report has stated. According to a report by the Al Mada newspaper, citing a reliable source, the ministers of Municipalities and Public Works, and Health might face the same fate of the minister of electricity who was suspended earlier on July 29 over lack of efficient power supply to the public. The Arabic newspaper expected the Iraqi premier to continue to take such actions in order to show the public that he has the power to fight against corruption.

Iraq Forms Committee to Investigate Corruption amid Ongoing Unrest

The Iraqi Prime Minister has ordered the formation of a committee to investigate corruption amid widespread demonstrations calling for better public services and governance. Haider Al Abadi said last night that Baghdad is in the process of releasing a list of corrupt officials who will face the judiciary. "We will hold anyone accountable who delays the implementation of the measures aimed at improving services, the creation of jobs and encouragement of investment," Mr Al Abadi said during a press conference in Baghdad, adding that the government has intensified its efforts to combat corruption. "We will not tolerate any shortcoming from any official no matter how senior they are," he added. Latest reporting indicates that Abadi has passed a list of 50 suspect corrupt senior officials to the Commission of Integrity, for them to investigate claims of mismanagement and corruption. Details of those involved were not released but it is thought to include ministers and secretaries of ministries.

Political

Iraq's Sadr sets new guidelines for forming government

Iraqi Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who's Sa'eroun (Marching) Alliance garnered the largest number of seats in parliament during the May 12 vote, has announced 40 guidelines for forming a new government. Sadr stressed that the new government must "crush sectarianism and steer clear of the ghost of political quotas", according to a statement published on his website. He added that those taking part in the new government must ensure Iraq's independence and stand in the way of any foreign interference in the state's affairs. The May 12 parliamentary election brought an electoral coalition (Saeroun) founded by influential Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr to the lead. It was closely followed by the Fatah (Conquest) coalition, which represents the Shia paramilitary factions known as Popular Mobilisation Forces (PMF). The Nasr (Victory) coalition, led by Iraqi PM Haider al-Abadi, came third. The winning blocs have been locked in consultations to form the largest parliamentary bloc that will be assigned the task of forming the coming government according to the constitution. Abadi met the premier of the autonomous Kurdistan Region Government (KRG), Nechirvan Barzani, in Baghdad on 30 July to discuss political issues and efforts to form the next government.

Sa'eroun Party on Verge of a Majority Bloc

Muqtada al-Sadr's Sa'eroun party has reportedly reached an understanding with a handful of political parties regarding the formation of a majority bloc in parliament which would then be tasked with drawing up a new government, a Sa'eroun spokesman said Tuesday. "The alliance has come to an understanding on the

formation of a majority bloc in parliament and has taken significant steps towards the drafting of a government program," Sa'eron spokesman Qahtan al-Jubouri said in a statement. Jubouri said consultations, were still underway between various parties and political blocs, although he did not specify which ones, with a view to advancing formation of the country's next government. According to al-Jubouri, the latest developments follow calls by prominent Shia cleric Ali al-Sistani for the "swift formation" of a new government once results of Iraq's disputed 12 May, parliamentary polls are recounted. This is however in contradiction to the Sa'eron party's announcement on the 22 July when they stated that all talks were suspended due to ongoing protests. Electoral officials have yet to finish recounting ballots in a handful of provinces, including Diyala and Baghdad. It remains unclear, however, whether the vote recount will dramatically affect initial poll results. In July, electoral officials began manually recounting official election results. According to those results, al-Sadr's Sa'eron coalition came in first in the polls, winning 54 seats, followed by a Hashed al-Shaabi-led coalition (47 seats) and Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's Victory Bloc (42 seats)

Officials of Iraq's election body sacked for alleged fraud

An Iraqi panel of judges mandated to oversee the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) has recommended the dismissal of five senior electoral officials for alleged involvement in fraud and corruption. The dismissals came in implementation of an earlier recommendation by the cabinet based on an investigative committee's report. The mandated judges decided to dismiss directors of the IHEC's offices in Salah al Din, Kirkuk and Anbar as well as directors of its offices in Jordan and Turkey, according to a statement by IHEC's spokesman Laith Jabr Hamza on 28 July.

Manual recount of Iraqi votes 'identical' with electronic count

The result of a partial manual recount of parliamentary votes, which included more than 200 polling stations in Baghdad, has shown no surprise, a source at the official election body told the privately-owned Al-Ghad Press website on July 30. "The manual recount of votes in Al-Karkh in Baghdad is still on... an estimation of 260 polling stations have been completed until 1pm [1000 GMT] and the results were all identical [with the electronic count]," a source at the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) told the website.

Iraqi, Kurdish premiers discuss 'outstanding issues'

Iraqi Kurdistan Region Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani held talks with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi during a rare visit to Baghdad on July 30. The two officials discussed outstanding issues between Erbil and Baghdad. The statement added that the two leaders emphasised that cooperation and joint work between the Peshmerga and the Iraqi forces should be maintained. The Kurdistan Region's Presidency Chief of Staff, Fouad Hussein, also attended the meeting, the report said.

Iraqi PM to work on reform programmes with political blocs

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has stressed the need to work with political blocs to draft a unified reform programme to address Iraqis' complaints over poor public services. Addressing a press conference following his weekly cabinet meeting, Abadi said: "The demonstrations constitute a motive for the government to take action and make achievements at the services sector". The press conference was aired by the government-controlled Iraqia News TV on 31 July. "We are serious in addressing protesters' needs," the prime minister said. He noted that there should be joint efforts among political blocs to design reform programmes over the coming period. Abadi, however, warned against "the exploitation of the protests by foreign bodies... to vandalise institutions and clash with the security authorities". He added that the government would also publish lists of officials who have been referred to the Commission of Integrity over corruption charges. The prime minister urged both the legislative and judicial authorities to cooperate with the executive bodies to fight corruption. He stressed that the government would also launch investigations into any corruption allegations. He has previously stressed that the government would not backtrack on its reform drive and combating corruption. Abadi also noted that the Cabinet has voted for the implementation of a petrochemicals project in Basra.



Turkman replaces Kurd mayor in volatile Iraqi town

The restive and disputed town of Tuz Khurmatu in Iraq's Salah-al-Din governorate has appointed a Turkoman as new mayor, NGO-funded Kirkuk Now website reported on August 01. Hassan Zain-al-Abidin, a Shia Turkoman, replaced Shalal Abdul (a Kurd), who was dismissed from his post by the Tuz Khurmatu council in January, accusing him of "violations", including being absent from his post. The Salah-al-Din governor approved Zain al-Abidin's appointment on July 31, ending a longstanding dispute over the post. Abdul and tens of thousands of Kurds left the multi-ethnic town of Tuz Khurmatu in mid-October when Iraqi federal forces took over most of the disputed areas from the Kurdish Peshmerga forces following the controversial Kurdish independence referendum. Abdul has regularly claimed that his dismissal was politically motivated and took the case to court. He made corruption allegations against Zain al-Abidin who dismissed them, saying the court had cleared him of any wrongdoing. Since the takeover of the multi-ethnic, disputed areas by Iraq's federal government in Baghdad, scores of Kurdish officials have lost their posts, including the governor of the province of Kirkuk.

Security

Kirkuk official warns against IS plan to target infrastructure

The head of the Oil and Gas Committee in the Kirkuk Governorate Council, Ahmed Askari, has warned that Islamic State is becoming more active in Kirkuk province due to a shortage in military intelligence services. In an interview with the Change Movement (Gorran)'s KNN TV website on July 30, Askari said that the forces present in Kirkuk are not sufficient to protect the province and its installations against the group, as evidenced by the group's recent attacks against several power stations in the province. He said that where possible the group had tried to dismantle parts of electricity-generating installations, trading them for financial gains, but where this was not possible it blew them up. He said that IS is clearly targeting the infrastructure, including electricity and water services. However, he said "it is likely their next target will be the oil and gas sector". Asked what the best way would be to stop the group from implementing reported plans to target all the power installations around the city of Kirkuk, Askari said that a military presence on its own is not enough but it needs to be complemented by a robust intelligence service, something the forces in Kirkuk are currently "heavily lacking". He said the force currently present in Kirkuk is not enough in terms of number and chain of command, as they receive orders from different sources.

UN Releases casualty figures for July 2018

A total of 79 Iraqi civilians were killed and another 99 injured in acts of terrorism, violence and armed conflict in Iraq in July 2018, according to casualty figures recorded by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The figures include ordinary citizens and others considered civilian at the time of death or injury, such as police in non-combat functions, civil defence, personal security teams, facilities protection police and fire department personnel. Of the overall figures recorded by UNAMI for the month of July, the number of civilians killed (not including police) was 71, while the number of injured (not including police) was 82. Baghdad was the worst affected Governorate, with 63 civilian casualties (30 killed, 33 injured), followed by Kirkuk (08 killed, 34 injured) and Ninewa (13 killed and 05 injured). According to information obtained by UNAMI from the Health Directorate in Anbar, the Governorate suffered a total of 16 civilian casualties (7 killed, 9 injured).

NATO expands mission in Iraq

NATO will provide 200 personnel to train Iraq's security forces to prevent Islamic State from regaining a foothold in the region, a top U.S. commander said. Joint Force Command Naples will lead the training mission, approved at NATO's July summit, and will deploy sometime after this summer to set up the expanded training program, JFC officials said. "We have people who understand how to maintain the infantry branch, maintain the armour corps, how to teach strategy and tactics, how to disarm bombs," Admiral James Foggo, head of JFC Naples, said on July 31 in a Defence Department news report. "We're going to find things where there may be gaps or seams where the Iraqi armed forces might need help with". Having more trainers in country to bolster security forces' combat skills will help avoid a repeat of 2014, when IS fighters quickly overran large swaths of Iraq and Syria, NATO officials have said.



Economy

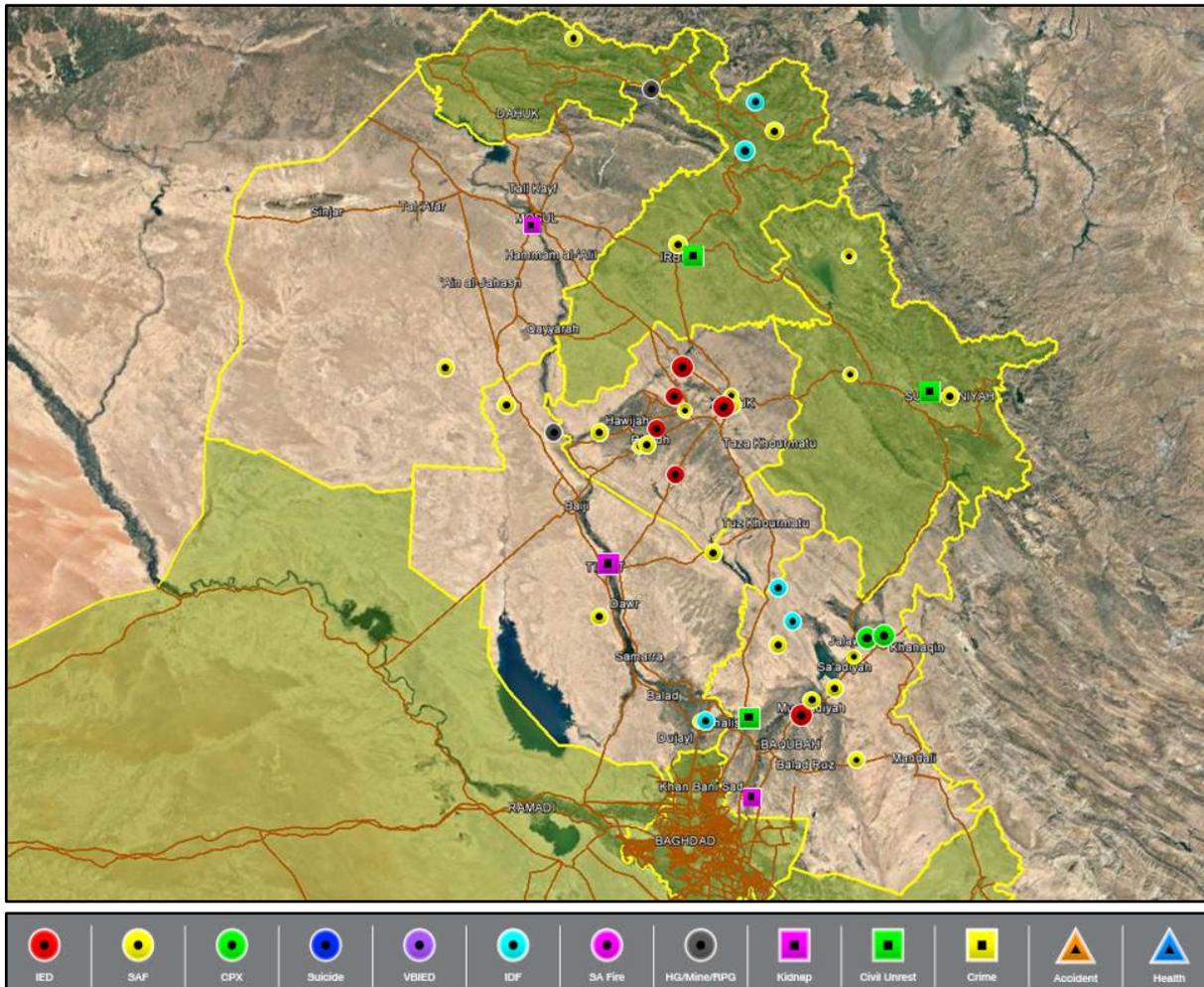
Iraq to take over development of Mansuriyah gas field, Nasiriyah oilfield

Iraq will develop its Mansuriyah gas field near the Iranian border using state-run firms after the “delay and failure” of international companies to resume work at the field, the oil ministry said on July 31. In a statement, Iraq’s Oil Minister Jabar al-Luaibi said he had ordered state-run companies of the oil ministry to develop the field. In 2011, Iraq signed a deal with a group led by Turkey’s state-owned TPAO and including South Korea’s Kogas and the Kuwait Energy Company to develop the field in its volatile Diyala province. In September 2017, Luaibi asked TPAO to resume work after it halted operations in 2014 due to security concerns after Islamic State militants overran large parts of Iraq. Ministry officials said TPAO failed to resume development work despite repeated requests from the government. Iraqi security officials say small groups of militants, which hide in mountainous areas of the province, are still capable of launching hit-and-run attacks against security forces and power installations in the area. “We need to start gas production from Mansuriyah to feed the power stations and cope with electricity shortages,” said an oil ministry official who is a part of a team overseeing Iraq’s gas production. Iraq is planning to produce up to 100 million cubic feet a day (mcf/d) in a year, which should gradually rise to 325 mcf/d in “coming years”, he said. Oil Ministry spokesman Asim Jihad said having state firms develop Mansuriyah will help to produce gas needed for a nearby power station and cut fuel imports which burden Iraq’s budget. Oil Minister Luaibi has also ordered the state-run Dhi Qar Oil Co. and the state-run Iraq Drilling Co. to develop the Nasiriyah oilfield in the south of the country, an oil ministry statement said. Iraq has budgeted \$140 million to raise production from Nasiriyah, which has more than 4 billion barrels in reserves, from the current 90,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 200,000 bpd in a year’s time, said the statement. Iraq has failed to lure investors for the project, which includes building a refinery to process crude from the region. Gas recovered from the refinery would be used to supply power stations or for export.

WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Countrywide Military/Security Situation

Northern Provinces



Turkish warplanes launched further strikes on positions believed to be held by members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) this week. According to local reports, Turkish planes carried out strikes in the areas of Chyadil, Lelikan, Nawmergan, Kunala, and Buzena in the Bradost region, northeast of Erbil.

The Kurdistan Region Security Council (KRSC) on August 02 released the confessions of three IS extremists involved in the latest attack in the Region's capital (See GardaWorld Weekly dated July 28, 2018). In an official statement, the KRSC published the confessions of three men who had previously declared allegiances to the extremist group and were responsible for the attack on Erbil's Governorate building in July. "Following the terrorist attack on Erbil governorate on July 23, the Assayish [Security] forces confronted and killed all three attacking terrorists. Investigations after the attack led to the arrest of the remaining terrorist cell," the statement said. The KRSC released the names of the five members of the "terrorist cell" who planned and perpetrated the "terrorist attack" on the Erbil Governorate building; Abdulrahman Raheem Qadir, Bilal Sleman Abdulrahman, and Rahel Mohammed Rostam were killed during the attack while security forces later arrested Mohammed Jabbar and Mohammed Sherzad.

Reporting from Nineveh was relatively muted over the week, however, eight suspected IS militants were arrested in a series of raids in Aden, Intisar, Mithaq, and Sumer neighbourhoods in eastern Mosul city. In addition, a single source report indicated that a number of gunmen affiliated with the al-Hashd al-Shaabi-PMF 30th Bde attempted to storm a police station in al-Habda neighbourhood in northern Mosul city while an investigation into a number of possible PMF members was on going over an alleged dispute in the region.

In Kirkuk, unidentified gunmen killed an 'intelligence figure', named as Abdul Zahra Jalil, who was reportedly working for the Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) Shia militia in the Dour al-Sikara neighbourhood in Kirkuk city. (NFDK). Separately, two senior IS militants, named as Abu Ayoub al-Ansari and Abu Hajar al-Ansari were reportedly killed and three others were wounded in an operation in the al-Naft Valley of Multaqa sub-district, west of Kirkuk. ISF also reportedly arrested three IS members near Hawijah town in Kirkuk governorate. Iraqi News stated that the militants were allegedly trying to enter the town to carry out an operation.

High voltage electricity transmission lines connecting Kirkuk to Diyala have again been targeted by IS during the reporting period for the eighth time in two months. According to a statement by the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity. "The ultra-high pressure voltage (400 kV) Kirkuk-Diyala electricity transmission line was blown up in an act sabotage in the Wadi Ousaj area near the Anjana checkpoint, leading to the line being cut on both sides," read the statement. According to the ministry, large parts of Nineveh, Kirkuk and some areas of Salah-al-Din lost electricity as a result of the attack. These incidents are the latest in a series of attacks on electrical generators and transmission lines that have taken place over the last few weeks. On July 31, the ministry reported that "terrorists" were also responsible for an attack on transmission lines connecting Kirkuk, Hawija, al-Dour and Erbil. The attack also led to blackouts across Nineveh. This came after Islamic State (IS) militants destroyed an electricity station in the Zirban village after planting a mine that detonated and set fire to all the equipment in the station. Later this week, ISF reported that a 'terrorist cell' had been dismantled in Kirkuk province that was responsible for a number of recent IED attacks. Six IS members were reportedly arrested according to the Kirkuk Directorate of Intelligence and Security and a number of weapons and materiel were also seized during the operation. Clearance operations were also conducted in Al-Shawi, north of al-Zab resulting in the arrest of a further two suspected IS members. Meanwhile, it was reported that Federal Police have increased patrols in Hawijah in order to counter the threat from IS' recent operations launching IED attacks on electricity supply infrastructure and key points.

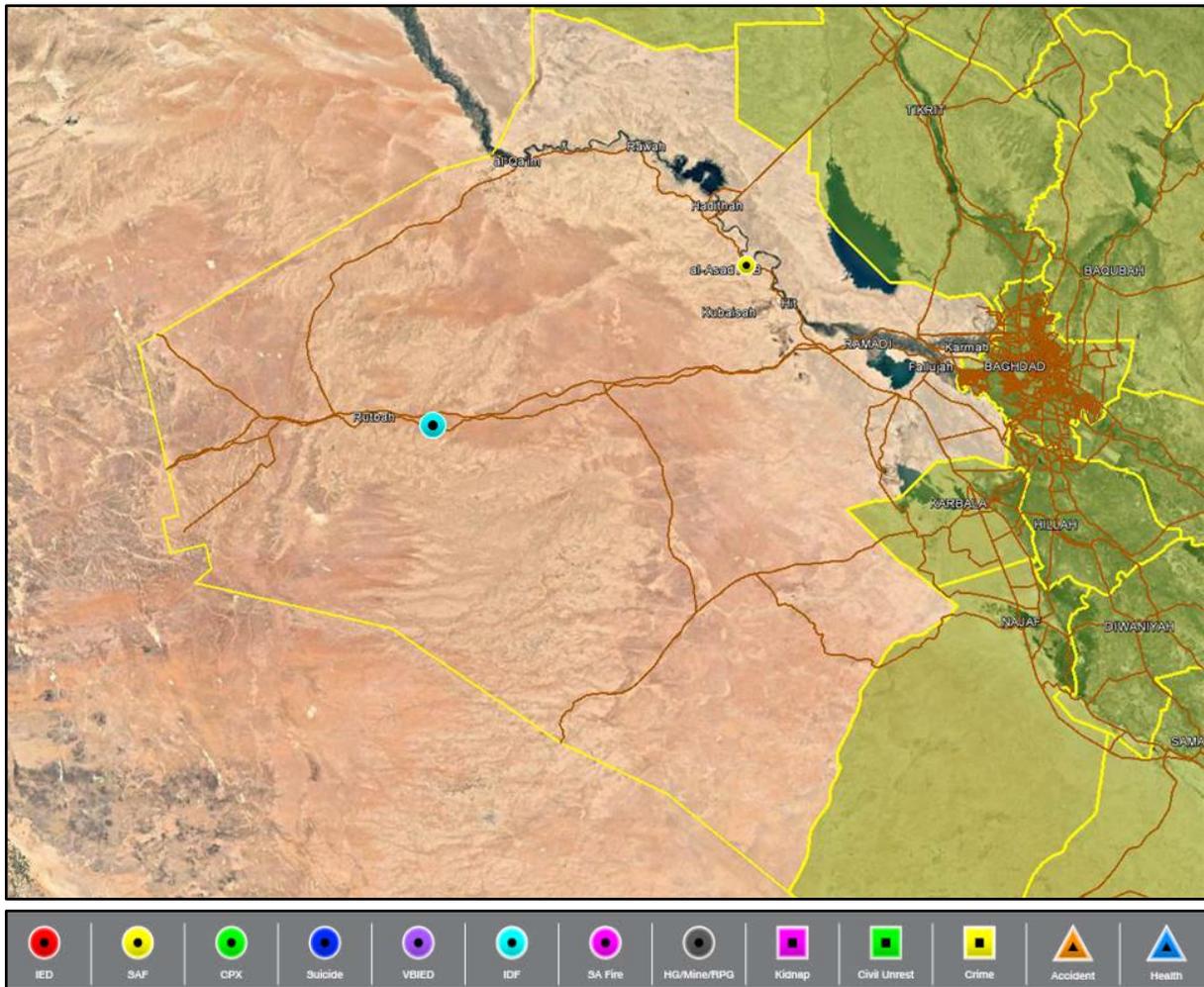
In Salah-al-Din province, clashes were reported in the Dujail district in southern Salah-al-Din between tribal fighters belonging to the Khazraj tribe and members of the Popular Mobilisation Units (PMU)-affiliated Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq. The fighting eventually stopped following the intervention of the Iraqi army, with reports suggesting that the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Services entered the district to get involved. Eventually, the Samarra Operations Command and a unit from the Salah-Al-Din Police Command arrived at Dujail with heavy reinforcements in a bid to gain control of the security situation in the area. The clashes were caused after shots were fired at a group of tribal leaders who were coming back from the funeral of a police colonel who was recently killed by Islamic State (IS) militants. The attack led to the deaths of three tribal sheikhs in the district. The tribe later accused members of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq of firing at the tribe, which led to further clashes between the two. The clashes caused the Baghdad-Tikrit road to close on Wednesday night. The incident prompted widespread anger amongst the main tribes in the province, with many calling for the PMU to withdraw completely from the province. The Governor of Salah-al-Din, Ahmed al Jabouri, was particularly critical of the PMU's presence in the province and accused them of carrying out kidnappings and killings in the province. He went on to call on the Iraqi Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi, to order the complete withdrawal of the PMU in order to ensure the safety and security of the province. These calls were later echoed by the Salah-al-Din Provincial Council, which called on the Prime Minister to withdraw the PMU from the province. "The situation of Saladin province is unstable," said Ahmed Abdulkarim, the Head of the Salah-al-Din Provincial Council. He went on to say that the council has made a formal request to Haider al-Abadi to evict all armed groups in the province "in order to protect public stability". Sheikh Muzahim al-Hiweet, a spokesman for the Arab Tribes of Salah-al-Din, also reaffirmed the Khazraj tribe's accusation that Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq was responsible for the death of the three tribal sheikhs. Following the

widespread anger across the province, the chairman of the PMU, Falih al-Fayadh, met with Ahmed al-Jabouri and agreed to begin the withdrawal of most of the PMU forces in the province. AlJabouri reaffirmed that security has been restored by the Iraqi Security Forces. He went on to say that the “Dujail district needs a strong state that preserves security; it does not need armed groups that operate according to their own agenda”. It is believed that tribal forces will maintain and preserve security in the province in the absence of the PMU.

Activity in Diyala this week was broadly in line with previous weeks with low-level fighting between ISF and insurgents in the east of the province and along the Diyala River Valley. In Diyala province, the deputy commander of Diyala operations, Lieutenant General Hassan Mohammed reported that joint security forces had launched a large-scale military operation to eliminate IS sleeper cells in the Hamrin basin, 90 kilometres northeast of Baquba. During the operation a helicopter destroyed a militant vehicle and killed two IS members while a suicide bomber was surrounded and killed in the Anjana / Sindig area. The Iraqi Air Force bombarded several IS positions in the region on July 29, resulting in the deaths of a total of 15 militants. ISF also clashed with IS militants as one suicide bomber managed to detonate himself against a group of ISF personnel. 1 ISF personnel was injured by the explosion. The High voltage electricity transmission lines connecting Kirkuk to Diyala were also reportedly damaged by “terrorists” for the eighth time in two months, according to a statement by the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity. “The ultra-high pressure voltage (400 kV) Kirkuk-Diyala electricity transmission line was blown up in an act sabotage in the Wadi Ousaj area near the Anjana checkpoint, leading to the line being cut on both sides,” read the statement. According to the ministry, large parts of Nineveh, Kirkuk and some areas of Salah-al-Din lost electricity as a result of the attack. This incident is the latest in a series of attacks on electrical generators and transmission lines that have taken place over the last few weeks. On July 31, the ministry reported that “terrorists” were also responsible for an attack on transmission lines connecting Kirkuk, Hawijah, al-Dour and Erbil. The attack also led to blackouts across Nineveh. This came after Islamic State (IS) militants destroyed an electricity station in the Zirban village after planting a mine that detonated and set fire to all the equipment in the station. With unrest brewing in the south and other parts of Iraq as a result of the lack of electricity, it appears as though IS militants are making a concerted attempt to target electricity supplies across the country in a bid to incite further unrest and anger against the government.

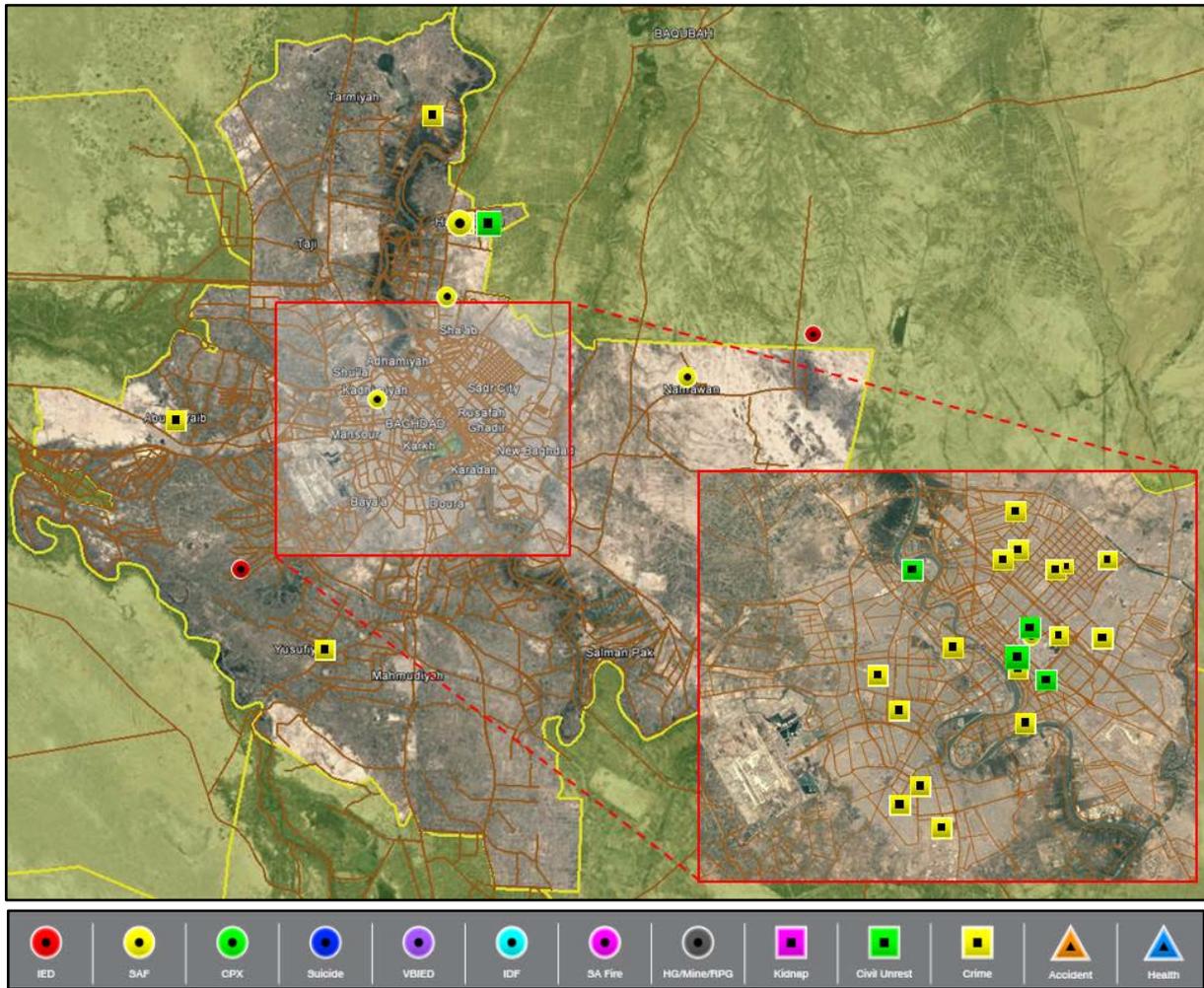


Anbar Province



There were no high-profile incidents reported in Anbar during the week. Clearance operations and airstrikes continue to target militants across the desert areas of the province. ISF have reportedly commenced a large-scale security operation, supported by Iraqi army aviation, in the desert areas of Rutbah district that extend to the Jordanian border, in a step aimed at securing the international highway (Route Mobile). Unconfirmed reports also stated that armed men attacked a PMU convoy taking personnel on leave in the area west of Rutbah, killing one PMU member and wounding eight.

Capital Region (Including Baghdad City)



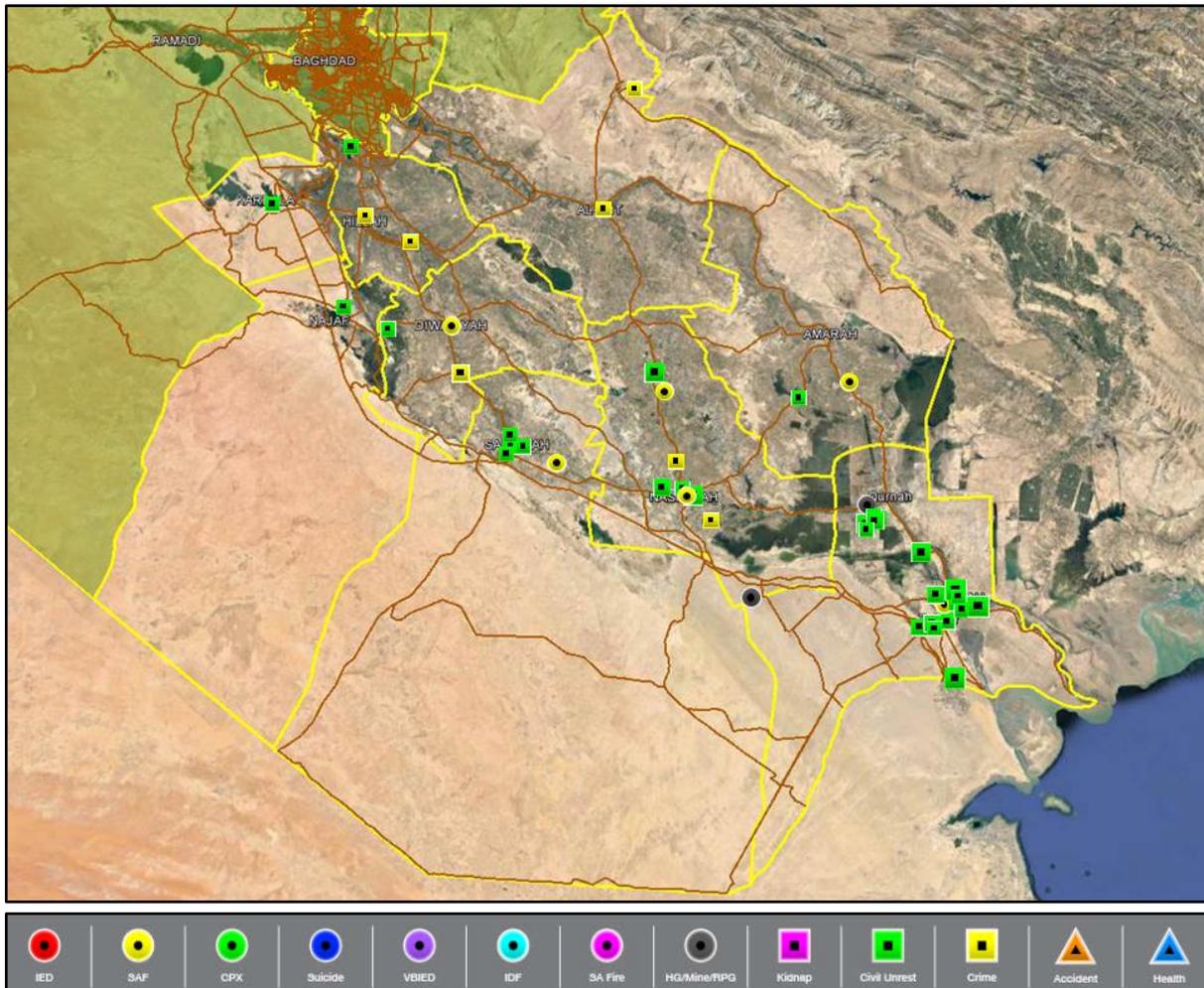
A very quiet reporting period in Baghdad city, with security incidents conforming to established norms. Pritest activity, although evident, was limited this week. Within the city environs, several gunmen reportedly shot at the private residence of the Rusafah municipality director at an unspecified location in Baghdad city, without causing casualties. The attack was thought to be related to the ongoing government operation to remove illegal slums and mobile stalls from the local marketing areas. Dozens of people also reportedly demonstrated in Kadhimiyah demanding better services and the release of the detained protestors, and university graduates gathered in front of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Rusafah, to demand the expansion of the domestic higher education system.

Meanwhile, the Baghdad Operations Command (BOC) announced the reopening of more than a thousand streets in Baghdad on July 30. The commander of BOC, Major General Jalil al-Rubaie, said in a press statement that "the number of streets closed in Baghdad was very large because of the [past] security situation. It required that we take some actions on the ground". However, "the operations command has reopened more than 1,000 streets in both Karkh and Rusafah Districts". He added that "the security situation in Baghdad has become stable and the leadership does not have any reluctance in opening of streets. [This move] will certainly help citizens move around more easily and shorten travel times". He pointed out that "a large number of checkpoints on both sides, Karkh and Rusafah, were lifted with 30 checkpoints and more than 90-95 stations in Rusafah lifted and 30-40 checkpoints and more than 150 stations in Karkh".

In the wider Baghdad belts, hostile activity was also largely limited to small arms and routine low-yield IED attacks. A civilian was killed in a close-quarter shooting by gunmen carrying suppressed weapons in Bob al-Sham, and another SAF attack in Nawrawan, south east of Baghdad resulting in one civilian death. A sound bomb IED also detonated near shops in Radwaniyah, south west of Baghdad, wounding one person. Tribal fighting was also reported this week in Husseiniya sub-district north of Baghdad, where light and medium weapons were used during the clashes. Finally, a roadside IED exploded targeting a security vehicle in Sabaa al-Bour, northwest Baghdad on the evening of August 02, killing one ISF member and injuring another.



Southern Provinces



Protest activity remained the main theme of reporting from southern Iraq for another week, although at a much reduced level compared to previous weeks. Protests have continued in Basra, with a number of organisers planning to hold even larger protests this weekend. The members of Basra's 'Coordination Committee', which are made up of local activists that are attempting to coordinate and organise the protest movement in Basra, said that preparations were underway to revive the protests in the south. The Coordination Committee said that they would be raising their demands in the protests, including cancelling the constitution and abolishing the current political parties.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the PM's office announced on July 28 that the Federal Government had agreed to release the funds needed to complete a number of projects in Basra in relation to the current electricity and water crisis. The spokesman explained that the funds were to come from the petrodollar allocation and the revenues from the borders and ports. Other monies would come from allocations for development already agreed in the 2018 budget. Similar assurances were given by the PM to a large group of tribal sheikhs and elders at a meeting he chaired in Baghdad on July 29. This was followed by the suspension of the Minister of Electricity, Qassim al-Fahdawi. It was further reported that a number of Basra clans held a conference on the night of July 28, the event being used to draw up a 'roadmap' to 'save the country'. The tribes agreed with the edict from the Grand Ayatollah given during a sermon on July 27 that the government move swiftly and agree a new government and act without delay to meet the demands of protest groups. If no tangible action is witnessed, (no timeline was given to see change) then the tribes said they would have no choice but to continue with more sustained protest action.

The overall situation in Basra – excluding demonstrator action - remains unchanged with the majority of hostile incidents confined to Basra City and related to a typical pattern of social violence, tribal disputes and criminal activity. No notable incidents were recorded over the reporting period in the city with all incidents remaining low-level, however the shooting dead of a young man in the district of Shaibah on 30 July could be the continuation of a tribal feud dating back to October last year – the body of a young man who appeared to have been beaten to death – was discovered in a landfill site near Shaibah on the 31st. Two hand grenade incidents were also recorded this period – one tribal and the other linked to the intimidation of a government employee (the two devices thrown at his house were safely removed by police EOD). Meanwhile, as part of his commitment to the protection of International Oil Companies (IOCs) and State/Federal infrastructure in Basra and the southern provinces, the Iraqi PM has ordered the Joint Operations Command to send reinforcements to Basra to secure the state institutions and oil companies. Some security forces from the MoD and Mol have used force to remove sit-in tents – these mainly at the front of the Basra Provincial Council building, hours after it was erected.

Protest action recommenced at the D27 (Mirbad Gate) eastern checkpoint on 29 July and was conducted daily until the 2nd August. During the first three days of action, a small group of 30 – 40 protesters arrived and conducted a peaceful action, however on the morning of 1 August they were joined by 70 more militant actors who entered into acts of stone throwing. The group was quickly dispersed by OPF/ISF on site and no casualties or increase in OPF/ISF reaction was witnessed (no shots fired or baton charges). As a result of the frequency of these protests over the previous two week – the BMP (armoured military vehicles) that arrived last week are positioned at the main checkpoint (G72) and two more are permanently at D27 (Mirbad) - these behind the T-walls at the main roundabout and out of site to the demonstrators. Protesters also arrived at G72 for the first time this week on 2 August – their presence restricted access for a limited period. Discussion between the two groups and the Zubayr Mayor on the morning of 2 August looks to have halted protest action – at least for the short term, this after names were taken in relation to possible future employment.

While most of the protests have focused on criticising the government’s provision of public services, there have been minimal calls for the overthrow of the political system. As the local and federal government continue to fail to meet protesters’ demands, patience with the prevailing political system and authorities will likely wear thin and calls for more drastic political change will gain more salience and become more widespread.

Elsewhere, and throughout this week, protest activity in Muthanna province has been evident, centred on celebration yard in Samawah. Protesters started setting up tents on Sunday (July 29) as part of a sit-in in the province demanding job opportunities for the unemployed and an improvement to the living standards of citizens.

Meanwhile, a representative of Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani was the target of an assassination attempt in the province of Muthanna. Armed men reportedly stormed the home of Sheikh Raadhi al-Ta’ei in the district of alKhidhr in Muthanna. According to reports, the gunmen shot al-Ta’ei’s nephew with three bullets to the chest, severely injuring him, before fleeing the scene. Security forces believe that the attack was in fact targeting al-Ta’ei, who was not present at his home at the time of the attack. The security services have confirmed that they will be carrying out a thorough investigation into the attack in order to find out who is responsible.



ACRONYM LIST

- All - Area of Intelligence Interest
- AKA - Also Known As
- AO - Area of Operations
- APC - Armored Personnel Carrier
- APIED - Anti-Personnel IED
- AQ - Al-Qaeda
- AT - Anti-Tank
- ATGW - Anti Tank Guided Weapon
- AVIED - Anti-Vehicle IED
- BBIED - Body Borne IED
- Bde - Brigade
- Bn - Battalion
- BXP - Border Crossing Point
- CET - Convoy Escort Team
- CLC - Concerned Local Citizens
- CoP - Chief of Police
- CP - Check Point
- C-PERS - Captured Personnel
- CPX - Complex Attack (attack using multiple weapon systems)
- CQA - Close Quarter Assassination/Attack
- DBS - Drive by Shooting
- Div - Division
- DoD - Department of Defense
- DoS - Department of State
- DoS - US Department of State
- ECP - Entry Control Point
- EFP - Explosively Formed Projectile
- EOD - Explosive Ordnance Disposal (Bomb Squad)
- ERW - Explosive Remnants of War
- FoM - Freedom of Movement
- Gol - Government of Iraq
- HCN - Host Country National
- HG - Hand Grenade
- HME - Home Made Explosive
- HMG - Heavy Machine Gun
- HVT - High Value Target
- IC - International Community
- IDF - Indirect Fire (i.e.: rockets, mortars)
- IDP - Internally Displaced Persons
- IEC - Independent Electoral Commission
- IED - Improvised Explosive Device
- IM - International Military
- IOC - International Oil Company
- IRAM - Improvised Rocket Assisted Mortar
- IRL - Improvised Rocket Launcher
- IS - Islamic State
- IVCP - Illegal Vehicle Check Point
- IVO - In Vicinity Of
- IZ - International Zone
- KIA - Killed in Action
- LN - Local National/Iraqi Civilian
- MAIED - Magnetically attached IED (aka UVIED)
- MIA - Missing in Action
- MoD - Ministry of Defense
- MoF - Ministry of Finance
- MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- MoHE - Ministry of Higher Education
- Mol - Ministry of Interior
- MoJ - Ministry of Justice
- MoO - Ministry of Oil
- MoT - Ministry of Transportation
- MSR - Main Supply Route
- NFDK - No Further Details Known
- NGO - Non-Governmental Organization (aid/charity)
- NSTR - Nothing Significant To Report
- OCG - Organized Crime Group
- OPF - Oil Protection Force
- PAX - Person, Persons or Passenger
- PBIED - Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (UN Term)
- PMF – Popular Mobilisation Forces
- PoI - Point of Impact (for IDF)
- PoO - Point of Origin (for IDF)
- PSAF - Precision Small Arms Fire
- PSC - Private Security Company
- PSD - Private Security Detail
- RCIED - Remote-Controlled IED
- RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade
- RTA - Road Traffic Accident
- SAF - Small Arms Fire
- SAFIRE - Surface to Air FIRE
- SF - Special Forces
- SVBIED - Suicide Vehicle Borne IED
- SVEST - Suicide Explosive Worn Vest
- TCN - Third Country National
- TCP - Traffic Control Point
- Technical - An improvised weapon-mounted pick-up truck
- TTP - Tactics, Techniques and Practices
- UVIED - Under Vehicle IED
- UXO - Unexploded Ordnance
- VBIED - Vehicle Borne IED
- VCP - Vehicle Checkpoint
- WIA - Wounded in Action



GARDAWORLD INFORMATION SERVICES

From our management offices and field offices in strategic locations our constant monitoring of the high-risk environments in which we work is conveyed through our range of .Xplored™ risk analysis reports. The reports contain detailed updates, delivering current and relevant ground-truth information to assist both our personnel and our clients in their decision-making.

Our wider risk management solutions provide members of the defense, diplomatic, development, oil & gas and infrastructure sectors operating in potentially high-risk and complex environments with a comprehensive range of risk analysis, intelligence, crisis response, and training services. These services are designed to provide clients with the proactive capability to remain aware in potentially hostile environments and identify risks while strengthening their reactive capacity in emergency situations.

Our current regular reporting geographies include: Nigeria, Mali, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan and Yemen on a daily, weekly, fortnightly, and monthly basis.

Through our constant monitoring and predictive threat analysis our Information Services team help you plan for, manage, and respond to risks.

For more information on our .Xplored reports or for information about our special-to-task reports tailored to individual client requirements, please contact us: informationops@garda.com or contact our regional representative iraq.ram@garda.com (Mobile: +964 7823 783 972)

For more information on how our services can support your business in Iraq contact: Daniel Matthews, Senior Director Iraq daniel.matthews@garda.com

GARDAWORLD

A global leader in comprehensive security and risk management

GardaWorld International Protective Services is the international security division of GardaWorld Security Corporation, the world's largest privately owned security company with over 62,000 global staff.

We support clients in emerging, complex and high-risk markets around the world with static security, security consulting, risk analysis and reporting, crisis management and business continuity, mobile security, close protection, training and kidnap for ransom and extortion response solutions.

We work across multiple business sectors to provide protection and security for clients in the extractives, aerospace and defense, critical infrastructure, government and diplomatic and development sectors to secure employees, assets, and reputation so clients can focus solely on running daily operations and growing their business.

Discover more about the markets we serve and to learn how our international security solutions can help you contact us today: gwinfo@garda.com



Middle East

International Protective Services Headquarters
Office 2502, Tower 2, Currency House
DIFC, PO Box 482069
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

United States

1101 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 1725
Arlington, VA, 22209
United States

UK

5th Floor
1, London Bridge
London
SE1 9BG

Europe

37-39 rue des Deux Eglises
1000 Brussels
Belgium

garda.com