



Spotlight on Global Jihad

August 18-25, 2022



Main events of the past week

- ▶ **This week, ISIS's activity around the globe continued on a relatively low scale.**
- ▶ **The Sinai Peninsula:** The Egyptian army and the Sinai Tribal Union continued to fight against ISIS in the area of the village of Jalbanah, near the Suez Canal. A Palestinian ISIS operative and three senior ISIS operatives were killed in the operation. According to a report from August 23, 2022, after 13 days of fighting, the Egyptian army and the Sinai Tribal Union regained control of the village.
- ▶ **Syria:** ISIS fought against the Kurdish SDF forces in the Deir ez-Zor-Al-Mayadeen region.
- ▶ **Iraq:** This week as well, the scope of ISIS activity remained low while the Iraqi security forces conducted extensive counterterrorism activity.
- ▶ **Afghanistan:** The main events were two attacks against a gathering of the Taliban in Kandahar, southern Afghanistan, and an attack on a mosque in Kabul. The fatalities in Kabul included an imam who was known as an opponent of ISIS. For the time being, no organization has claimed responsibility, but the attacks were apparently carried out by ISIS.
- ▶ **Africa:** In Somalia, Al-Shabaab operatives carried out an attack on a hotel in Mogadishu, taking hostages. After prolonged fighting, Somalia's security forces gained control of the event. Dozens of hostages were released, 21 people were killed and 117 others were wounded. In Nigeria, dozens of ISIS operatives were killed in Nigerian army airstrikes.

The Sinai Peninsula

Clashes with ISIS continue near the Suez Canal

- ▶ The clashes between ISIS on the one hand and the Egyptian army and the Sinai Tribal Union forces on the other, which started on August 11, 2022, around the village of Jalbanah in the northwestern Sinai Peninsula (about 12 km east of the Suez Canal), continued this week as well. Sinai Tribal Union fighters kept on sending reinforcements to the region. On August 18, 2022, ISIS activated an IED against a Sinai Tribal Union patrol, wounding two fighters (Nahawand al-Ikhbariya Telegram channel, August 18, 2022). Several ISIS operatives turned

themselves in after searches conducted by Sinai Tribal Union fighters around the village (Sinai Tribal Union’s Facebook page, August 22, 2022). On August 23, 2022, it was reported that after 13 days of fighting, the Egyptian army and the Sinai Tribal Union had regained control of the village of Jalbanah.



Right: Sinai Tribal Union fighters during activity against ISIS (Sinai Tribal Union’s Facebook page, August 18, 2022). Left: Reinforcements being sent to the region (Sinai Tribal Union’s Facebook page, August 22, 2022)

► On August 23, 2022, after 13 days of fighting, the Egyptian army and the Sinai Tribal Union forces announced that they had regained control of the village of Jalbanah and its environs. Maj.-Gen. (*Liwa*) Mohammad Rabi’a, commander of the Egyptian Second Army, visited the village (Sinaa Mubasher Facebook page, August 24, 2022).



Sinai Tribal Union fighters after mopping up the village from ISIS (Sinaa Mubasher Facebook page, August 23, 2022). Left: Maj.-Gen. Mohammad Rabi’a visiting the village of Jalbanah (Sinaa Mubasher Facebook page, August 24, 2022)

ISIS activity

► At the same time, ISIS continued to carry out terrorist attacks. At least one Egyptian soldier and three Sinai Tribal Union fighters were reportedly killed in a series of terrorist attacks carried out by ISIS against Egyptian army forces in several sites in the Sinai Peninsula (Telegram, August 19-21, 2022; Sinai Tribal Union’s Facebook page, August 22, 2022). On

August 19, 2022, ISIS operatives fired at a Sinai Tribal Union patrol near the Al-Wifaq region, west of Rafah, killing one fighter and wounding several others (Telegram, August 21, 2022).

Counterterrorism activity

► Egyptian army and Sinai Tribal Union forces carried out searches mopped up terror hotbeds in the Al-Janadel region, south of Bir al-Abd. Three senior ISIS operatives were killed. In addition, the forces seized weapons and ammunition (Sinaa Mubasher Facebook page, August 23, 2022).



**Camels of the senior operatives who were killed
(Sinaa Mubasher Facebook page, August 23, 2022)**

► Sinai Tribal Union forces operating around the village of Jalbanah killed **Bassel Sheikh Eid, AKA Abu Muslama al-Ghazawi**, a Palestinian senior ISIS cleric from the Nusseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip (Mahmoud Gamal@mahmouedgamal44 Twitter account, August 21, 2022).



Bassel Sheikh Eid (Mahmoud Gamal@mahmouedgamal44 Twitter account, August 21, 2022)

► Egyptian army and Sinai Tribal Union forces operating against ISIS in the village of Al-Wifaq west of Rafah killed Jamil Abu Zari'i, an ISIS operative (Sinaa Mubasher Facebook page, August 19, 2022). On August 19, 2022, Egyptian army Special Forces killed an ISIS operative who had been in charge of planting IEDs. One ton of explosives was found in his possession (Sinaa Mubasher Facebook page, August 19, 2022).

The Syrian arena



Map of the Syrian provinces (freeworldmaps.net)

Deir ez-Zor-Al-Mayadeen region

- ▶ On August 21, 2022, two SDF fighters riding on a motorcycle were targeted by gunfire in the village of Saada, about 60 km northeast of Deir ez-Zor. One was killed and the other was wounded (Telegram, August 22, 2022).
- ▶ On August 20, 2022, rockets were fired at an SDF checkpoint in the village of Suwaidan Jazirah, about 15 km southeast of Al-Mayadeen (Deir ez-Zor 24 Twitter account, August 20, 2022).
- ▶ On August 19, 2022, an SDF vehicle was targeted by gunfire in the town of Darnaj, about 15 km southeast of Al-Mayadeen. The passengers on board were wounded and the vehicle was put out commission (Telegram, August 20, 2022).

Al-Raqqah region

- ▶ On August 18, 2022, an IED was activated against an SDF vehicle on the Al-Manakher road east of Al-Raqqah. The passengers on board were killed or wounded and the vehicle went up in flames (Telegram, August 18, 2022).
- ▶ On August 17, 2022, an SDF vehicle was targeted by gunfire on the Mazraat Madar road, near the town of Al-Karamah, about 20 km east of Al-Raqqah. One fighter was wounded and the vehicle sustained damage (Nahawand al-Ikhbariya Telegram channel, August 17, 2022).

► On August 17, 2022, an SDF vehicle was targeted by gunfire on the Mazraat Hittin road, in the city of Al-Raqqah. One fighter was wounded (Nahawand al-Ikhbariya Telegram channel, August 17, 2022).

Families of Iraqi ISIS operatives in the Al-Hawl camp in Syria

► The directorate of the Al-Hawl detainee camp started to collect the names of those interested in moving out of the camp to Iraq, as part of the seventh round of releasing detainees. The SDF controlled camp, which is located about 35 km east of Al-Hasakah, is mainly used for family members of ISIS operatives. There are now 30,739 Iraqi detainees in the camp and the Iraqi government intends to repatriate them. It was reported that those released from the Al-Hawl camp in the current round would be transferred to the Al-Jadaa camp, south of Mosul, in order for the Iraqi government to decide what to do with them. So far, six rounds have taken place, in collaboration with the Iraqi Parliament's Security Committee and Immigration and Immigrants Committee. Some 500-600 people were released in each round (Akhbar Al-Aan, August 19, 2022).

The Iraqi arena



Provinces of Iraq (Wikipedia)

ISIS attacks by province¹

Kirkuk Province

- ▶ On August 22, 2022, Tribal Mobilization fighters and Iraqi policemen were targeted by gunfire in the village of Al-Batatha, about 40 km southwest of Kirkuk. A Tribal Mobilization mukhtar and a policeman were killed and two others were wounded (Telegram, August 23, 2022).
- ▶ On August 23, 2022, an IED was activated against a vehicle of the Iraqi security forces near the village of Zanjali, about 70 km south of Kirkuk. Three soldiers were wounded (Al-Sumaria, August 23, 2022).
- ▶ On August 20, 2022, mortar shells were fired at an Iraqi army compound near the village of Al-Tar, south of Daquq, about 30 km south of Kirkuk (Telegram, August 20, 2022).

¹ According to ISIS claims of responsibility and the Iraqi media



ISIS operative firing a mortar shell at an Iraqi army compound south of Daquq (Telegram, August 23, 2022)

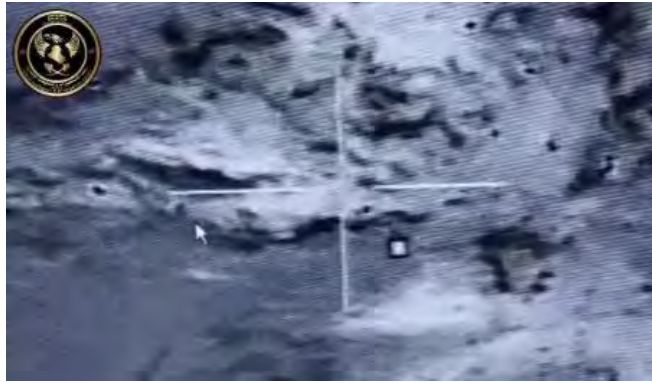
- ▶ On August 18, 2022, a Tribal Mobilization compound was targeted by gunfire in the village of Burhan, in the Hawija region, about 50 km southwest of Kirkuk. One soldier was wounded and a thermal camera was destroyed (Telegram, August 18, 2022).
- ▶ On August 17, 2022, Iraqi army forces were targeted by gunfire and mortar shells while operating near the village of Al-Tar. The soldiers fled (Telegram, August 17, 2022).

Salah al-Din Province

- ▶ On August 20, 2022, an IED was activated against an Iraqi army vehicle in the Al-Sheikh Hamad region, northeast of Al-Taji, about 20 km north of Baghdad. The passengers on board were wounded and the vehicle was put out of commission (Telegram, August 21, 2022).
- ▶ On August 18, 2022, mortar shells were fired at a Popular Mobilization compound in the village of Albu Saeed, in the Al-Ayth region, about 100 km north of Baghdad (Telegram, August 18, 2022).

Counterterrorism activity

- ▶ On August 12, 2022, an Iraqi police force carrying out searches in the Muazila region, about 35 km southwest of Kirkuk, found weapons, including two machine guns, two Kalashnikov rifles, one sniper rifle, and an explosive belt (Iraqi News Agency, August 21, 2022).
- ▶ On August 20, 2022, the Iraqi Air Force attacked ISIS targets in the Hamrin Mountain ridge (about 50 km northeast of Baqubah). Six ISIS operatives were killed in the airstrike, including Abu Maryam al-Qahtani, the operative in charge of the General Administration of the Salah al-Din Province. He had supervised the murder and abduction of Iraqi civilians and members of the security forces (Sawt al-Iraq, August 21, 2022).



Airstrike against ISIS targets in the Hamrin Mountain ridge (SecMedCell Facebook page, which belongs to the Iraqi Prime Minister's Office, August 20, 2022)

► On August 19, 2022, the Iraqi National Security Service apprehended several ISIS commanders who were in charge of the Al-Farouq sector (Qate' al-Farouq) in the Kirkuk Province (Al-Sumaria, August 19, 2022).



One of the apprehended ISIS commanders (Al-Sumaria, August 19, 2022)

► On August 18, 2022, Iraqi army forces found a cache of explosive devices south of the Al-Mithaq neighborhood in Al-Rutba, in the western Al-Anbar Province. The cache contained several dozen IEDs made of 10-liter canisters filled with C4 plastic explosive. The explosive devices were detonated in a controlled manner (Iraqi Defense Ministry's Facebook page, August 18, 2022).



Iraqi soldiers near ISIS's IEDs that were found (Iraqi Defense Ministry's Facebook page, August 18, 2022)

► On August 15, 2022, Iraqi army ground and intelligence forces operated in three sites in western Iraq: in the Rawa Desert, about 85 km east of Al-Qaim; in the Al-Jazeera Desert, the desert region in northwestern Iraq; and in the Al-Mashari' region. In their searches, they found an underground depot containing weapons, ammunition, an explosive belt, and explosive devices. The weapons were blown up in a controlled manner (Iraqi Defense Ministry's Facebook page, August 18, 2022).



Iraqi soldiers near some of ISIS's weapons that were found (Iraqi Defense Ministry's Facebook page, August 18, 2022)

► On August 17, 2022, a Popular Mobilization force captured an ISIS operative who operated in the Abu Ghraib District (SecMedCell Facebook page, which belongs to the Iraqi Prime Minister's Office, August 17, 2022). That same day, Iraqi security forces in the Daquq sector captured an operative codenamed Abu Hani who had been in charge of logistical aid and charity (*Zakat*) in ISIS (SecMedCell Facebook page, which belongs to the Iraqi Prime Minister's Office, August 17, 2022).



Right: ISIS operatives captured (SecMedCell Facebook page, which belongs to the Iraqi Prime Minister's Office, August 17, 2022)

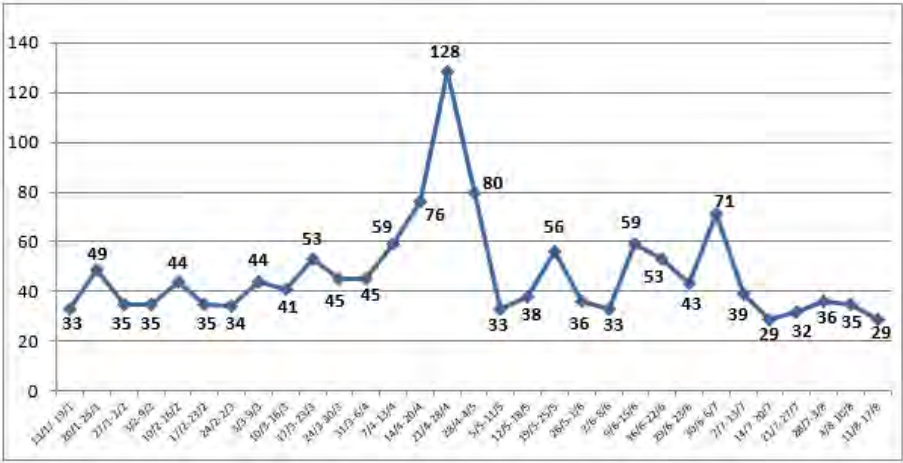
Summary of ISIS's activity in the various provinces

► An infographic published by ISIS, summing up its activity around the world in the period between August 11 and August 17, 2022, indicates that the organization carried out 29 attacks in its various provinces around the globe (compared to 35 in the previous week). The largest number of attacks was carried out by ISIS's provinces of Iraq and West Africa (7 each). Attacks carried out in the other provinces: Syria (6); Central Africa (5); and Khorasan, i.e. Afghanistan (4). A total of 50 people were killed or wounded in the attacks, compared to 146 in the previous week. The largest number of casualties was in the Khorasan (Afghanistan) Province (16). The other casualties were in the following provinces: Central Africa (10); West Africa (9); Syria (8); and Iraq (7) (Al-Naba weekly, Telegram, August 18, 2022).



Summary of ISIS attacks (Al-Naba weekly, Telegram, August 18, 2022)

ISIS attacks by week (according to ISIS data)



Africa

Nigeria

- ▶ On August 19, 2022, four mortar shells were fired at a Nigerian army compound in the town of Buni Gari, in the Gujba region of Yobe State. According to ISIS, accurate hits were observed (Telegram, August 20, 2022).
- ▶ On August 18, 2022, three Nigerian army checkpoints were attacked in the town of Dikwa, about 80 km northeast of Maiduguri. The soldiers fled and equipment was seized (Telegram, August 20, 2022).
- ▶ On August 17, 2022, six farmers were abducted in the Mafa region, about 45 km east of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State (Akhbar Al-Aan, August 18, 2022).

Counterterrorism activity

- ▶ On August 20, 2022, Nigerian army aircraft carried out airstrikes against a camp headed by **Fiya Ba Yuram**, a senior operative of ISIS's West Africa Province. The camp is located in the Sambisa forest, about 65 km southeast of Maiduguri. Dozens of ISIS operatives were killed in the airstrike, but it is unclear whether Yuram was among the fatalities (Vanguard.ng, August 23, 2022).
- ▶ On August 17, 2022, Nigerian army forces with air support carried out an attack against ISIS on the Damba– Galbi highway, in Kaduna State, northeast of the capital Abuja. According to reports, ISIS sustained fatalities (Sky News in Arabic, August 17, 2022).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

- ▶ On August 17, 2022, an attack was carried out against the Christian village of Loloa, on the Komanda–Mambasa highway, west of the Congo-Uganda border in northeastern Congo. Eight civilians were killed and several others were wounded. Several houses were set on fire (Nahawand al-Ikhbariya Telegram channel, August 17, 2022).

Somalia

- ▶ On August 19, 2022, fighters of the Al-Qaeda-affiliated Al-Shabaab organization detonated two car bombs near the Hyatt Hotel in Mogadishu, which is popular among lawmakers and government officials. After detonating the car bombs near the hotel and at the entrance gate, the armed fighters entered the hotel building and took hostages. Somalia's Special Forces fought against the Al-Shabaab operatives who had barricaded themselves in the hotel for

about 30 hours and then took it over. Dozens of hostages were released. A total of 21 people were killed and 117 others were wounded in the attack (Reuters, August 21, 2022).



The Hyatt Hotel in Mogadishu after the attack (Akhbar Al-Aan, August 20, 2022)

Asia

Afghanistan

► During a speech delivered by Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada at a gathering on August 18, 2022 in Kandahar, southern Afghanistan, there was an explosion. According to reports, 22 people were killed and dozens of others were wounded (Nahawand al-Ikhbariya Telegram channel, August 18, 2022). About 3,000 clerics, politicians and personalities from various circles in Afghan society attended the gathering. The purpose of the conference was to examine the current situation in Afghanistan and support the Taliban (Khaama Press, August 18, 2022). To date, no organization has claimed responsibility for the attack, but it was apparently carried out by ISIS.



The attendees of the gathering in Kandahar where the attack was carried out (Khaama Press, August 18, 2022)

► On the evening of August 17, 2022, there was an explosion at a mosque in Kabul. At least 21 people were killed and 33 others were wounded. The dead included **Muhammad Kabuli, one of the members of the Taliban's Islamic Jurisprudence Headquarters** (Khaama Press,

August 18, 2022). It should be noted that a few days earlier, he met with senior Taliban officials and issued an Islamic religious ruling (*fatwa*) permitting the killing of Muslims (this is a reference to ISIS operatives) (Nahawand al-Ikhbariya Telegram channel, August 17, 2022). The identity of the organization that carried out the attack is currently unclear. A Saudi news site claimed that ISIS was responsible (Al-Arabiya YouTube channel, August 18, 2022).



Imam Amir Muhammad Kabuli (Khaama Press, August 18, 2022)

► On August 15, 2022, a Taliban compound was attacked in the Nurgal District, in the Kunar Province, northeast of Jalalabad. A Taliban member was wounded (Telegram, August 17, 2022).

Pakistan

► On August 17, 2022, there were attempts on the lives of two people working with Pakistani Intelligence in the city of Swabi, about 75 km east of Peshawar. One person was killed and the other was wounded (Nahawand al-Ikhbariya Telegram channel, August 17, 2022). To date, no organization has claimed responsibility for the attack, but it was apparently carried out by ISIS.

Britain

► On August 18, 2022, a 15-year-old boy from the coastal town of Cowes, on the Isle of Wight in southern Great Britain, was charged with making preparations to carry out an attack during a music festival that took place in June 2022. The boy displayed an interest in radical Islam and supported ISIS's ideology (Mail Online, August 18, 2022).

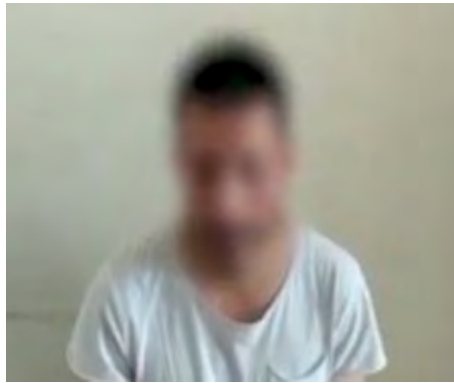
The United States

► On August 19, 2022, a Virginia court sentenced **Al-Shafi'ee Al-Sheikh** to eight consecutive life sentences. Al-Sheikh is a British ISIS operative who was a member of ISIS's execution squad known as the Beatles (due to their British accents). He played a role in holding hostages and killing four Americans, two Britons and two Japanese. The sentence was

announced on the eighth anniversary of the murder of one of his victims, American journalist James Foley in Al-Raqqah, Syria (CNN in Arabic, August 19, 2022).

Russia

► The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) detained an ISIS operative from a country in Central Asia, who admitted that he had planned to carry out a suicide bombing attack against a senior Indian government official for insulting the Prophet Muhammad. The ISIS operative stated in a video that he had pledged allegiance to ISIS in April 2022 and underwent special training. He flew to Russia in order to fly from there to India, where he was supposed to receive the equipment he would use to carry out the attack (TASS, August 22, 2022). According to an Indian source, he was recruited to ISIS in Turkey by a senior ISIS operative (NDTV, August 22, 2022).



**ISIS operative who had intended to carry out a suicide bombing attack in India
(NDTV, August 22, 2022)**