The wave of terrorist attacks called "raids of attrition" which began on July 22, 2020, ended on July 31, 2020. **During its ten days more than 100 attacks were carried out** (similar to the previous wave, between May 14 and 24, 2020). **The largest number of attacks was in Iraq, which continues to be ISIS's main arena of activity.**

Most of the attacks were routine (detonating IEDs, attacking military facilities and camps, sniper fire, executions). However, in **Iraq, the Sinai Peninsula and Afghanistan**, several were showcase attacks:

- **Iraq**: In an ISIS attack on a roadblock in Anbar Province (about 140 kilometers northwest of Baghdad) a brigadier general, the commander of the Iraqi army's 29th brigade was killed. He was the army's second high-ranking officer recently killed in an ISIS attack (the commander of the 59th brigade was killed in an ambush on a Iraqi army convoy on July 17, 2020, about 30 kilometers north of Baghdad). In addition, an IED was detonated to attack a minibus carrying Shi'ites inside Baghdad. The attacks provide additional indications that ISIS's operational capabilities in Iraq are improving.

- **The Sinai Peninsula**: Operatives of ISIS's Sinai Province attacked an Egyptian military camp near Rabia', west of Bir al-'Abd (about 30 kilometers from the Suez Canal). Dozens of Egyptian soldiers were killed. After the attack ISIS operatives took control of four nearby villages. **So far Egyptian security forces with air support have not retaken the area.** ISIS continues using guerilla tactics, including IEDs and abducting and executing Egyptian military personnel. The ISIS-affiliated media exaggerated the attack on Rabia', calling it a symbol of "glory and honor" for jihad. The attack showed the improvement in ISIS's operational capabilities and the weakness of the Egyptian security forces in the Sinai Peninsula.
Afghanistan: On August 2, 2020, ISIS operatives carried out a complex attack on the jail in the city of Jalalabad, the capital of the Nangarhar Province. ISIS operatives detonated a car bomb and IEDs at the entrance to the jail, stormed the site and exchanged fire with the Afghan security forces for several hours. They freed several hundred prisoners and killed dozens of Afghan security force operatives. The attack showed ISIS's success in recovering its operational capabilities in Afghanistan after the blows it suffered. Apparently ISIS in Afghanistan poses a threat to the peace agreement between the United States and the Taliban, and to the country's internal stability.

ISIS's Activity Worldwide

On July 30, 2020 ISIS's weekly al-Nabā’ published an infographic with the caption "The harvest of the fighters," summarizing ISIS's activities between July 23 and 29, 2020 [i.e., most of the period of the "raids of attrition"]. During that time ISIS carried out 105 attacks around the globe (up from 42 the previous week). Thirty-four attacks were carried out in Iraq, 16 of them in the al-Anbar Province; in Syria, 28; in the Sinai Peninsula, 16; in West Africa, 13 (mostly in Nigeria); in Central Africa, three; in Yemen, three; in Khorasan (i.e. Afghanistan), three; in East Asia, three (mostly in the Philippines); in Somalia, one; in Pakistan, one; and in Bangladesh, one in Yemen (al-Nabā’, Telegram, July 30, 2020).

More than 325 people were killed in the attacks, up from 95 killed and wounded in the previous week's "raids of attrition." The largest number of casualties, 117, was in the Sinai Peninsula. The others were in the provinces of Syria (64), Iraq (59), West Africa (48), Central Africa (8), Yemen (7), Khorasan (i.e., Afghanistan) (6), Central Asia (the Philippines) (6), Bangladesh (5), Somalia (4), Pakistan (1) (al-Nabā’, Telegram, July 30, 2020).

Jihadi Organizations' Activity in Syria

Idlib region

Exchange of artillery fire

After a number of days during which the Syrian army and the forces supporting them attacked the towns and villages south and southwest of Idlib with artillery, on August 4, 2020, operatives of the Headquarters for the Liberation of al-Sham fired artillery at forces supporting the Syrian army in the region of Kafr Nubl, about 35 kilometers south of Idlib.
According to the Headquarters for the Liberation of al-Sham, artillery was used in reprisal for artillery fired at its forces in Jabal al-Zawiya (Ibaa, August 4, 2020).

Jabal al-Zawiya: the results of the artillery fired by the forces supporting the Syrian army (Ibaa, July 29, 2020).

**Russian aerial attacks**

- **August 2, 2020**: Russian war planes attacked settlements about seven kilometers northeast of Idlib. At the same time, the Syrian army and its supporting forces attacked the settlements with artillery fire (Idlib Plus, August 2, 2020).

Russian aerial attack northeast of Idlib (Idlib Plus, August 2, 2020).

**Sending reinforcements to the Jabal al-Zawiya area**

- The media affiliated with the rebel organizations reported that the rival sides sent reinforcements to the **Jabal al-Zawiya area south of Idlib**, recently a hot spot for clashes between the Syrian army and the rebel organizations. A convoy that included armed vehicles arrived in Jabal al-Zawiya from Turkey on August 2, 2020. Palestinian and Shi’ite militias reinforced the troops, some of them operating under Iranian sponsorship (Khutwa, Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, August 2, 2020).
The Jabal al-Zawiya area (Wikimapia)

ISIS's activity in the Deir al-Zor-al-Mayadeen-Albukamal region (all claims of responsibility and reports from Telegram unless otherwise noted)

- **August 4, 2020**: An IED was detonated to attack a vehicle carrying SDF fighters, about five kilometers east of al-Mayadeen. Two fighters were killed and eight were wounded.
- **August 4, 2020**: A prison guard was shot and killed about ten kilometers north of al-Mayadeen.
- **August 4, 2020**: An ISIS operative set fire to an SDF vehicle about five kilometers northeast of al-Mayadeen. The vehicle burned to the ground.
- **August 4, 2020**: ISIS operatives captured an SDF investigator tens of kilometers northwest of Deir al-Zor. He was interrogated and executed.
- **August 2, 2020**: ISIS operatives captured an SDF fighter about ten kilometers northeast of Deir al-Zor. The fighter was executed.
- **August 2, 2020**: An SDF vehicle was attacked with machine guns about 20 kilometers southeast of al-Mayadeen. The passengers were killed or wounded.
- **August 2, 2020**: An IED was detonated to attack an SDF vehicle about 25 kilometers north of Albukamal. The passengers were killed or wounded.
- **August 1, 2020**: An SDF intelligence agent was attacked with machine guns and killed about 20 kilometers north of al-Mayadeen.
- **August 1, 2020**: ISIS operatives captured and executed three SDF fighters near the Conoco gas field, about ten kilometers east of Deir al-Zor.
- **July 30, 2020**: An "infidel" was shot and killed about ten kilometers north of al-Mayadeen.
July 30, 2020: An SDF roadblock was attacked with machine guns about 20 kilometers southeast of al-Mayadeen. Two SDF fighters were wounded.

July 29, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack an SDF vehicle about five kilometers east of al-Mayadeen. The passengers were killed or wounded.

July 29, 2020: A hand grenade was thrown at a tanker bringing crude oil for the Syrian regime about ten kilometers southeast of Deir al-Zor. The tanker belonged to al-Katraji, a member of the Syrian parliament and commander of the National Defense Forces.

July 29, 2020: SDF fighters were attacked with machine guns about 20 kilometers southeast of al-Mayadeen. One fighter was killed and another was wounded.

July 28, 2020: Shots were fired at two SDF fighters about 20 kilometers north of al-Mayadeen. One fighter was killed and the other was wounded.

**ISIS's activity in the al-Sukhnah-Palmyra region (the Syrian desert) (all information and claims of responsibility from Telegram)**

August 2, 2020: ISIS operatives attacked Syrian army soldiers in the al-Sukhnah desert about 60 kilometers northeast of Palmyra. Three soldiers were killed, and weapons and ammunition were seized.

August 1, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack a Syrian army vehicle in the al-Sukhnah desert. The passengers were injured.

**ISIS's activity in northern Syria**

July 30, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack an SDF vehicle at Manbij, northeast of Aleppo. The passengers were killed or wounded (Telegram, July 30, 2020).

July 28, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack an SDF vehicle on a bridge about 25 kilometers northeast of Manbij. Three passengers were killed or wounded (Telegram, July 28, 2020).
Attack on Shi’ite civilians in Baghdad

On July 29, 2020, a minibus was attacked an IED in the region of Bab al-Sharqi in the center of Baghdad. The Iraqi media reported that two people were killed in the attack and five were wounded (al-Sumaria, July 29 and August 2, 2020). ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. Its announcement said it had detonated an IED to attack a minibus carrying Shi’ite passengers in the region of Bab al-Sharqi, and that five Shi’ites had been killed or wounded (Telegram, July 29, 2018).
The Iraqi media reported that following intelligence information acquired by the Iraqi national security apparatus, **the person responsible for the attack on the minibus had been detained within 24 hours**. Equipment was found in his hiding place which had been used to manufacture the IED, as well as other evidence linking him to the attack (al-Sumaria, August 2, 2020).

### Other Attacks for Which ISIS Claimed Responsibility

#### Diyala Province

**July 29, 2020**: An Iraqi commando was shot and killed by sniper fire west of Khanaqin (about 100 kilometers northeast of Baqubah). In addition, an IED was detonated to attack an Iraqi army vehicle in the same location. The passengers were killed or wounded (Telegram, July 30, 2020).

#### Al-Anbar Province

**Iraqi army brigade commander killed**

On **July 28, 2020** the joint operational headquarters of the Iraqi chief of staff reported the death of Brigadier General Ahmed Abd al-Wahid Muhammad al-Lami, commander of the 29th brigade in the 7th infantry division. A lieutenant was also killed and two soldiers were wounded. The attack was carried out in the evening at a roadblock in the region of Hit, about 140 kilometers northwest of Baghdad (al-Sumaria, July 28, 2020).


**According to claim of responsibility**, an Iraqi army soldier had been shot and killed by sniper fire at a roadblock near the city of Hit. **A supporting force that arrived at the site was**
also attacked by sniper fire. Four soldiers were killed, among them a brigade commander, and three soldiers were wounded (Telegram, July 29, 2020).

It was the second time during the past two weeks that brigade commanders in the Iraqi army were killed in ISIS attacks. The deaths of the two commanders was probably a blow to the morale of the Iraqi army and Iraqi regime, and proved the improvement of ISIS’s operational capabilities in the Iraqi arena.

Other ISIS attacks in al-Anbar Province (all claims of responsibility and information from Telegram)

► August 3, 2020: A limpet charge was detonated to attack the vehicle of an intelligence officer of the Popular Mobilization in Fallujah. The officer was killed.

► August 2, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack an Iraqi army armored vehicle west of al-Ramadi, about 90 kilometers west of Baghdad. The passengers were killed or wounded.

► July 30, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack an Iraqi army armored vehicle west of al-Ramadi. The passengers were killed or wounded.

► July 30, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack an Iraqi army armored vehicle near the city of Hit. Three soldiers were wounded.

► July 29, 2020: A limpet charge was detonated to attack the vehicle of a Popular Mobilization fighter about ten kilometers north of Fallujah. The fighter was killed.

► July 28, 2020: ISIS operatives attacked an Iraqi army command post near the Iraqi-Saudi Arabian border, killing one soldier and wounding another. The post was damaged.

► July 28, 2020: ISIS operatives ambushed an Iraqi army vehicle near the Iraqi-Saudi Arabian border, killing an officer and a soldier.

► July 28, 2020: ISIS operatives attacked an Iraqi army command post near the Iraqi-Jordanian border. One soldier was killed and three were wounded. The post was damaged.

Salah al-Din Province (all claims of responsibility and information from Telegram)

► July 31, 2020: ISIS operatives raided an Iraqi federal police compound about ten kilometers northwest of Samara. Six policemen were killed or wounded.

► July 30, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack the Popular Mobilization operative responsible for explosives engineering, about ten kilometers north of the center of Tikrit. The operative was killed.

1 On July 17, 2020, Brigadier General Ali al-Khzraji, commander of the 59th brigade, was shot and killed when ISIS operatives ambushed an Iraqi army convoy about 30 kilometers north of Baghdad.
July 29, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack a Popular Mobilization vehicle north of Baiji, about 200 kilometers northwest of Baghdad. One fighter was killed and others were wounded.

July 28, 2018: IEDs were detonated inside the home of a Tribal Mobilization fighter about ten kilometers north of the center of Tikrit. The house was completely destroyed.

Kirkuk Province

July 30, 2020: An IED was detonated to attack a Tribal Mobilization vehicle about 35 kilometers southwest of Kirkuk. Two fighter were wounded (Telegram, July 30, 2020).

July 27, 2020: ISIS operatives raided a compound of the oil facilities' police and fired machine guns near the Khabbaz oil field, about 30 kilometers northwest of Kirkuk, killing one policeman (Telegram, July 27, 2020).

Iraqi security forces' counterterrorism activities

Diyala Province

August 2, 2020: The Iraqi security forces, along with the counterterrorism unit, invaded a village where an ISIS network operated (about 35 kilometers northwest of Baqubah). Four ISIS operatives were detained. They confessed they were planning to carry out attacks during Eid al-Adha (al-Sumaria, August 2, 2020).

Al-Anbar Province

August 2, 2020: The Iraqi army carried out a search about 20 kilometers north of Hit. They found five IEDs placed by ISIS operatives (Facebook page of the Iraqi defense ministry, August 2, 2020).

August 1, 2020: Iraqi security found a weapons warehouse used by ISIS operatives about 20 kilometers east of al-Ramadi. They found 50 artillery shells prepared for turning into IEDs.
They were supposed to be used in terrorist attacks during Eid al-Adha (al-Sumaria, August 1, 2020).

**Kirkuk Province**

*July 31, 2020:* The Iraqi security forces, with support from the Iraqi air force, attacked concentrations of ISIS operatives about 30 kilometers south of Kirkuk. They destroyed vehicles used by ISIS operatives in attacks, as well as a tanker that brought oil to ISIS squads (al-Sumaria, July 31, 2020).

**The Sinai Peninsula**

**Large-scale attack in the Bir al-Abd area (update)**

**Overview**

About two weeks after the attack on the Egyptian army camp in the region of the village of al-Rabia', west of Bir al-Abd, ISIS operatives still have control over four villages they invaded on July 24, 2020. Clashes continue between ISIS operatives and Egyptian security forces, supported by the Egyptian air force. During the fighting Egyptian army war planes carried out dozens of sorties attacking concentrations of ISIS operatives, including attacks on the villages ISIS controls (al-Araby al-Jadeed, August 2, 2020; Facebook page of Shahed Sinaa, July 31, 2020). Reportedly, the fighting resulted in extensive damage to village houses. Local sources reported that ISIS operatives were besieging an Egyptian army force at a roadblock south of the village of Qatia (Facebook page of Shahad Sinaa, August 4, 2020).  

The destruction in the villages of Rabia' (right) and Janain (left) by fighting in the region (Shahed Sinaa al-Rasmia, August 2, 2020).
Other attacks (all claims of responsibility information from Telegram unless otherwise noted)

- **July 28, 2018**: An IED was detonated to attack an Egyptian police armored vehicle on the international road west of El Arish. ISIS claimed responsibility, and reported that five of the vehicle’s passengers had been killed or wounded.

- **August 3, 2020**: An IED was detonated to attack an Egyptian army bulldozer south of al-Sheikh Zuweid. The bulldozer was destroyed.

**The battle for hearts and minds**

- **The ISIS-affiliated media praised the attack in Rabia’**, representing it as a symbol of the honor and glory of ISIS operatives. The weekly magazine al-Nabā’ reported that the initial attack was followed by a series of others, including the detention and execution of an Egyptian officer; an attack on seven Egyptian army vehicles and an attack on a vehicle of the tribal militias that support the Egyptian army (al-Nabā’, Telegram, July 30, 2020).

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Right: An article about the attack on Rabia’ on the front page of the weekly al-Nabā’. Left: The body of the article, with a description of the events and a picture of ISIS operatives before the attack (al-Nabā’, Telegram, July 30, 2018).

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**ISIS's Activity Around the Globe**

**Africa**

**Nigeria** (all information from Telegram)

- **July 31, 2020**: ISIS operatives attacked a compound of the Nigerian army in Borno State in northeastern Nigeria, killing and wounding soldiers.
July 30, 2020: ISIS operatives ambushed Nigerian policemen about 100 kilometers northeast of Maiduguri, the Borno State capital. They attacked with machine guns and IEDs, killing and wounding policemen.

July 29, 2020: ISIS operatives exchanged fire with Nigerian army soldiers in the city of Baga, about 25 kilometers southwest of the Nigerian-Chad border, killing and wounding soldiers.

July 28, 2020: ISIS operatives attacked a Nigerian army compound about 160 kilometers northeast of Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, killing and wounding soldiers.


The Democratic Republic of the Congo (all information from Telegram)

July 29, 2020: ISIS operatives ambushed Congo army soldiers in the village of Kanana in the Beni region in the eastern part of the country. An officer and his escort were killed. Weapons and ammunition were seized.

July 29, 2020: ISIS operatives ambushed Congo army soldiers in the Beni region, killing one soldier, and seizing weapons and ammunition.

July 28, 2020: ISIS operatives attacked a Congo army compound in the Beni region, killing four soldiers and wounding others. Weapons and ammunition were also seized.

Mali

July 28, 2018: ISIS operatives exchanged fire with al-Qaeda operatives in the northern part of the country. ISIS reported that dozens of al-Qaeda operatives had been killed or wounded (Telegram, July 28, 2020).

Somalia

July 30, 2020: ISIS operatives threw a hand grenade at a Somali police compound in Mogadishu, the capital city, killing one policeman and wounding two other (Telegram, July 30, 2020).

Asia

Afghanistan

Attack on the central jail in Jalalabad

On August 2, 2020, ISIS operatives carried out a combined attack on the main jail in the city of Jalalabad, the capital of the Nangarhar Province. One objective of the attack was to release
about 300 ISIS operatives imprisoned in the jail\(^2\) (along with other prisoners\(^3\)). Another objective was to challenge the United States-Taliban peace agreement,\(^4\) which was supposed to allow for a reduction in the presence of the American army and international coalition forces (an agreement which ISIS strenuously opposes). The attack is another illustration of the fact that ISIS's Khorasan Province successfully rehabilitated itself after the blows it suffered,\(^5\) that it enjoys substantial operational capabilities and can potentially undermine the country's internal stability after the reduction of the American forces.

According to initial reports based mainly on the Afghan media, the attack began on the afternoon of August 2, 2020 with the detonation of a car bomb and IEDs at the prison gates. After that a group of ISIS operatives stormed the jail compound and exchanged fire with Afghan security forces for several hours. According to one report the attackers were ISIS operatives, who are one of its most important objectives. On March 19, 2020, the weekly al-Nabā' published an article calling on Muslims to act to release "Muslim prisoners" [i.e., ISIS operatives] imprisoned in jails and camps.

\(^1\) ISIS regards the freeing of imprisoned operatives as one of its most important objectives. On March 19, 2020, the weekly al-Nabā' published an article calling on Muslims to act to release "Muslim prisoners" [i.e., ISIS operatives] imprisoned in jails and camps.

\(^2\) According to a spokesman for Nangarhar Province, there were 1,793 prisoners in the jail at the time of the attack.

\(^3\) On February 29, 2020, the United States and the Taliban signed a peace agreement in Doha, Qatar. It included the withdrawal of all American and NATO forces from Afghanistan, a commitment from the Taliban to prevent al-Qaeda from operating the areas under its control and maintaining Taliban-Afghan government talks.

\(^4\) In November 2019 ISIS suffered a severe blow in its Nangarhar Province in the extensive operation carried out by the Afghan security forces to rid the area of the ISIS presence. The Afghan forces were supported by the United States and the international coalition. However, after several months without significant activity the Khorasan Province and ISIS's operatives renewed their attacks in Afghanistan.
foreign fighters who did not speak local languages (Afghanistan Times, August 4, 2020). According to another report, the attackers were led by an Indian from the State of Kerala in southwestern India. (Indus Scrolls, August 4, 2020). The Afghan security forces summoned to the jail encountered IEDs placed by ISIS operatives on their way to the jail.

- Attaullah Khogyani, spokesman for the Nangarhar Province, reported that at least 29 people had been killed in the attack and more than 50 had been wounded. Among those killed were prisoners, members of the Afghan security forces, ISIS operatives and even three Taliban operative prisoners. He said that the Afghan security forces detained more than 1,000 prisoners who had tried to escape, but apparently several hundred had successfully escaped in the wake of the attack (an Afghan army source reported that 338 prisoners had escaped).

- ISIS's Khorasan Province claimed responsibility for the attack (Telegram, August 2, 2020). The following day, August 3, 2020, ISIS's A'maq agency issued a more detailed claim of responsibility (Telegram, August 3, 2018). It said that ISIS's operatives had attacked the jail in the evening and that the attack lasted for several hours. Initially a car bomb was detonated by an ISIS suicide bomber near the entrance of the jail. After that, ISIS operatives detonated IEDs they had brought with them to destroy the jail walls, allowing ISIS operatives to break into the compound and exchange fire with the jailers. Additional ISIS squads waited in ambush and detonated IEDs to attack Afghan forces who were coming to the site of the attack, moving along the main roads leading to the jail.

- According to SIS's claim of responsibility, hundreds of prisoners had escaped because the Afghan security forces were engaged in halting ISIS's attack. ISIS claimed its operatives had killed dozens of jail security guards and Afghan army soldiers who had been called to the site to support them. ISIS also claimed that its operatives launched mortar shells at an international coalition army base in Jalalabad to keep them from helping the Afghan army soldiers (Telegram, August 2 and 3, 2020).
Right: The ISIS operatives who attacked the jail in Jalalabad. Left: Two ISIS operatives near the mortars and mortar shells launched at the international coalition base during the attack (Telegram, August 3, 2020).

Right: The ISIS suicide bomber known as Abu Rawaha al-Muhajer ("the immigrant"), who detonated the car bomb at the beginning of the attack (Telegram, August 3, 2020). Left: Afghan army soldiers inside the jail compound in Jalalabad after the attack (Twitter account of Fawad Aman, August 3, 2020).

Additional attack in Afghanistan

► July 39, 2020: A limpet charge was detonated to attack a bus carrying Shi’ites in the city of Herat in western Afghan, killing or wounding 15 Shi’ites (Telegram, July 30, 2018). The attack was a "raid of attrition."

Counterterrorism activity

Head of ISIS intelligence in the Khorasan Province killed near Jalalabad

► On August 1, 2020, the directorate of Afghan national security announced that Afghan special forces had killed Ziauurahman, aka Assadullah Orakzai, in a clash in Jalalabad. Orakzai was a Pakistani in charge of intelligence in ISIS’s Khorasan Province. He was involved in a number of deadly terrorist attacks against military and civilian targets in Afghanistan (Indus Scrolls, August 3, 2020; AP, August 2, 2020).
Assadullah Orakzai, in charge of intelligence in ISIS’s Khorasan Province (Indus Scrolls, August 2, 2020).

Bangladesh

➤ **July 31, 2020**: An IED was detonated inside a Hindu temple in the city of Naogaon in the Sapahar region, about 60 kilometers east of the Bangladesh-Indian border. The temple was damaged (Telegram, August 2, 2020).

➤ **July 29, 2020**: An IED was detonated to attack Bangladesh policemen near the police station in Dhaka, the capital of the country. Five policemen were injured (Telegram, July 29, 2020).

Yemen

➤ **July 28, 2020**: Two Grad rockets were fired at a Houthi rebel camp in the al-Bayda Province, about 140 kilometers southeast of Sanaa, the capital of the country. ISIS claimed direct hits were observed (Telegram, July 30, 2020).

An ISIS operative launches a Grad rocket at a Houthi rebel camp (Telegram, July 30, 2020).