



Spotlight on Global Jihad

November 25 – December 1, 2021



Main events of the past week

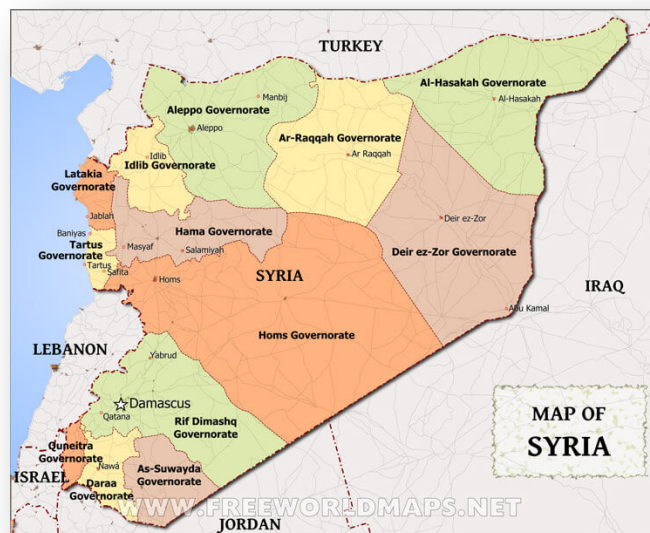
- ▶ **Afghanistan:** Attacks against the Taliban forces continued, although there was a **slight decrease in the scope of ISIS's activity** this week.
- ▶ **Syria:** In Syria as well, ISIS's limited activity continued. Russian Air Force planes continued to carry out airstrikes against ISIS targets in the desert region. **Eight ISIS operatives were killed in these airstrikes and 15 others were wounded.** An infographic published in ISIS's Al-Naba' weekly summing up its activity in Syria indicates that ISIS has been **concentrating its efforts against the Kurdish forces (SDF)**. The Kurdish forces (SDF) released 853 ISIS operatives who had been held prisoner. Most of those who were released are reportedly residents of the Deir ez-Zor Province who had not been involved in ISIS's activity.
- ▶ **Iraq:** The main incident was a **car bomb blast in Mosul's Al-Zohour neighborhood.** According to ISIS, several police and intelligence personnel were killed or wounded, and three cars were damaged. On the other hand, the Iraqi police reported that they are investigating the circumstances in which vehicles were set on fire, stressing that this was not a car bomb blast. **In the Diyala Province,** there were two noteworthy attacks against the Kurdish Peshmerga forces.
- ▶ **The Sinai Peninsula:** Two officers were reportedly killed and several soldiers wounded in two attacks carried out by ISIS operatives against Egyptian army forces.
- ▶ **Africa:** There was a decrease in ISIS's activity this week. The epicenters were **Nigeria and Mozambique.** In Mozambique, a noteworthy attack was carried out by ISIS operatives in the northwestern Niassa Province. **Up to now, ISIS's activity centered mainly on the Cabo Delgado Province.**
- ▶ **The battle for hearts and minds:** The lead article in this week's issue of ISIS's Al-Naba' weekly was devoted to inter-Arab talks aimed at normalizing relations between Arab countries and the Syrian regime. The article presents rapprochement with Syria as an alliance of infidels against Muslim believers.

Afghanistan

► This week, ISIS continued its attacks in Afghanistan, targeting mainly Taliban members, elements collaborating with them, and Shiite civilians. Following are the main incidents (mostly according to ISIS's claims of responsibility on Telegram):

- ◆ **On November 30, 2021**, an IED was activated against a vehicle of the Taliban forces in Kabul. Six of the passengers on board were killed or wounded.
- ◆ **On November 28, 2021**, a Taliban post was attacked in the Kunar Province. Several Taliban members were killed or wounded in the exchanges of fire.
- ◆ **On November 27, 2021**, an IED was activated against a Taliban vehicle in Kabul. Seven of the passengers were killed or wounded.
- ◆ **On November 26, 2021**, a collaborator with the Taliban (a "spy") was killed in Nangarhar, near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.
- ◆ **On November 25, 2021**, an IED was activated against a vehicle carrying Taliban intelligence operatives in Kabul. The passengers were killed or wounded.
- ◆ **On November 25, 2021**, two Taliban fighters were targeted by gunfire in Jalalabad. They were both killed.

The Syrian arena



Syrian governorates (freeworldmaps.net)

The Idlib region

► Exchanges of artillery fire continued this week between the Syrian army and the rebel forces in the rebel enclave in Idlib. In the Saraqeb region, in the southeastern part of the province,

there were exchanges of fire between **the rebel forces and Turkish forces** on the one hand, and Syrian regime forces on the other. No casualties were reported (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, November 25-28, 2021).

► Three fighters of the Ansar al-Turkestan rebel organization were reportedly killed by Syrian army artillery fire in the Al-Ghab Plain, in the southwestern part of the rebel enclave. Two Syrian soldiers were killed by rebel forces sniper fire in the same area (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, November 30, 2021).

Infographic summing up ISIS activity in Syria on November 8-21, 2021

► ISIS's Al-Naba' weekly published an infographic **summing up ISIS's attacks in Syria on November 8-21, 2021**. According to the infographic, ISIS carried out **17 attacks** in the period in question: 7 attacks with light and heavy weapons, 5 IED attacks, 3 targeted killings, and 2 ambushes. **A total of 35 people were killed and wounded in those attacks** (24 SDF fighters, nine Syrian regime operatives, and two officers or commanders – no details were specified regarding the affiliation of the latter). **Most of the attacks were in the Al-Hasakah Province** (8). In addition, there were attacks in Deir ez-Zor (6), Al-Raqqah (2) and Hawran (1). One oil well was set on fire by ISIS, and seven vehicles were destroyed or put out of commission (Al-Naba' weekly, Telegram, November 25, 2021).



ISIS's attacks in Syria
(Al-Naba' weekly, Telegram, November 25, 2021)

The desert region (Al-Badia)

► Russian fighter jets continued to carry out airstrikes against ISIS targets in the desert region. On December 26, 2021, it was reported that **eight ISIS operatives had been killed and 15**

wounded in airstrikes carried out in the regions of Al-Raqqah and Deir ez-Zor (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, November 26-30, 2021).

Al-Raqqah region¹

► **On November 25, 2021**, an SDF fighter was killed after ISIS operatives broke into his house in west Al-Raqqah.

SDF forces released 853 “non-violent” ISIS prisoners

► The Kurdish forces (SDF) announced that they had released 853 ISIS “non-violent” prisoners in northern Syria. According to the Kurdish forces, about 80% of the released prisoners are residents of the Deir ez-Zor Province who had not been involved in violent activity (Kurdistan 24, November 27, 2021). The release of the prisoners apparently stems from the Kurdish forces’ difficulty to continue holding them.

The British Ministry of Defense: an ISIS commander eliminated by aircraft

► The British Ministry of Defense announced that on October 25, 2021, **a senior ISIS operative in northern Al-Hasakah Province** had been killed in an airstrike. The name or post of the senior operative were not specified (British Ministry of Defense website, November 27, 2021). According to the estimate of Syrian opposition website Nida Post, it was **Sabahi al-Ibrahim al-Misbah**, codenamed Abu Hamza al-Shahil, a senior figure in Islamic religious law who was affiliated with ISIS. It was also noted that two of his escorts were killed along with him, and that he was on his way to Turkey (Nida Post, November 29, 2021).

The Iraqi arena



Provinces of Iraq (Wikipedia)

¹ According to ISIS’s claims of responsibility posted on Telegram

Attacks by province²

Diyala Province

► **On November 30, 2021**, two Iraqi police cars were targeted by gunfire in the Al-Azim region, about 60 km north of Baqubah. They were reportedly damaged (Telegram, November 30, 2021).

► **On November 27-28, 2021**, a group of Kurdish Peshmerga fighters was targeted by sniper fire in Kolajo, near the Iraq-Iran border. Four fighters were wounded. A little later, an IED was activated against a Peshmerga vehicle. Five fighters were killed, two of them officers (Kurdistan 24, November 28, 2021).



Peshmerga vehicle hit by the IED (Telegram, November 30, 2021)

► **On November 27, 2021**, a group of Peshmerga fighters was attacked in a rural area about 100 km northeast of Baqubah. Four fighters were wounded (Iraqi News Agency, November 27, 2021).

► **On November 24, 2021**, an Iraqi army post was attacked west of Qara Tapa, about 75 km north of Baqubah. One soldier was wounded (Telegram, November 26, 2021).

Nineveh Province

► ISIS's Iraq Province announced that its operatives had parked a car bomb in the Mosul neighborhood of Al-Zohour and detonated it close to a gathering of Iraqi police and intelligence personnel. Several police and intelligence members were killed or wounded and three cars went up in flames (Telegram, November 24, 2021). The Iraqi police said that it was investigating an incident in which cars were set on fire, noting that it was not a car bomb and there were no casualties in the incident (Al-Sumaria, November 22, 2021).

² Mostly according to ISIS's claims of responsibility posted on Telegram

Salah al-Din Province

► A Tribal Mobilization post was targeted by gunfire southwest of Samarra. Two fighters were killed (Telegram, November 25, 2021).

Counterterrorism measures in Iraq

► The Iraqi army launched an extensive campaign to locate ISIS operatives. The activity focused **on the Diyala Province, the mountainous region of Jalula and Qara Tapa**, about 75 km northeast of Baqubah (Al-Sumaria, November 25, 2021), **and in the Al-Anbar Province, in the Al-Khalidiyah region**, east of Fallujah (Al-Sumaria, November 27, 2021).

Baghdad Province

► The Iraqi security forces thwarted an escape attempt from the Al-Taji Prison in Baghdad by three ISIS prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment. The forces conducted a manhunt and finally located them. One of the escaped prisoners, who resisted arrest, was shot to death, and the other two turned themselves in (Iraqi News Agency, November 27, 2021).

Salah al-Din Province

► The Iraqi security forces located two ISIS guesthouses in the Al-Azim region, about 60 km northeast of Samarra (Al-Sumaria, November 28, 2021).

Sinai Peninsula

► An Egyptian officer was killed in the explosion of an IED in the central Sinai Peninsula, close to the cement factory. In another incident, an officer was killed and several soldiers were wounded by sniper fire south of Rafah (Shahed Sinaa al-Rasmia Facebook page, November 30, 2021). ISIS was apparently behind the attacks.

► ISIS operatives activated an IED against militia fighters loyal to the Egyptian army while they were searching the area south of Rafah. According to ISIS, three militia fighters were killed (Al-Naba' weekly, Telegram, November 25, 2021).

Counterterrorism measures

► A force of the Sinai Tribal Union ambushed and arrested two senior ISIS operatives (Facebook account of the Sinai Tribal Union, November 30, 2021).

Summary of ISIS's activity in the various provinces

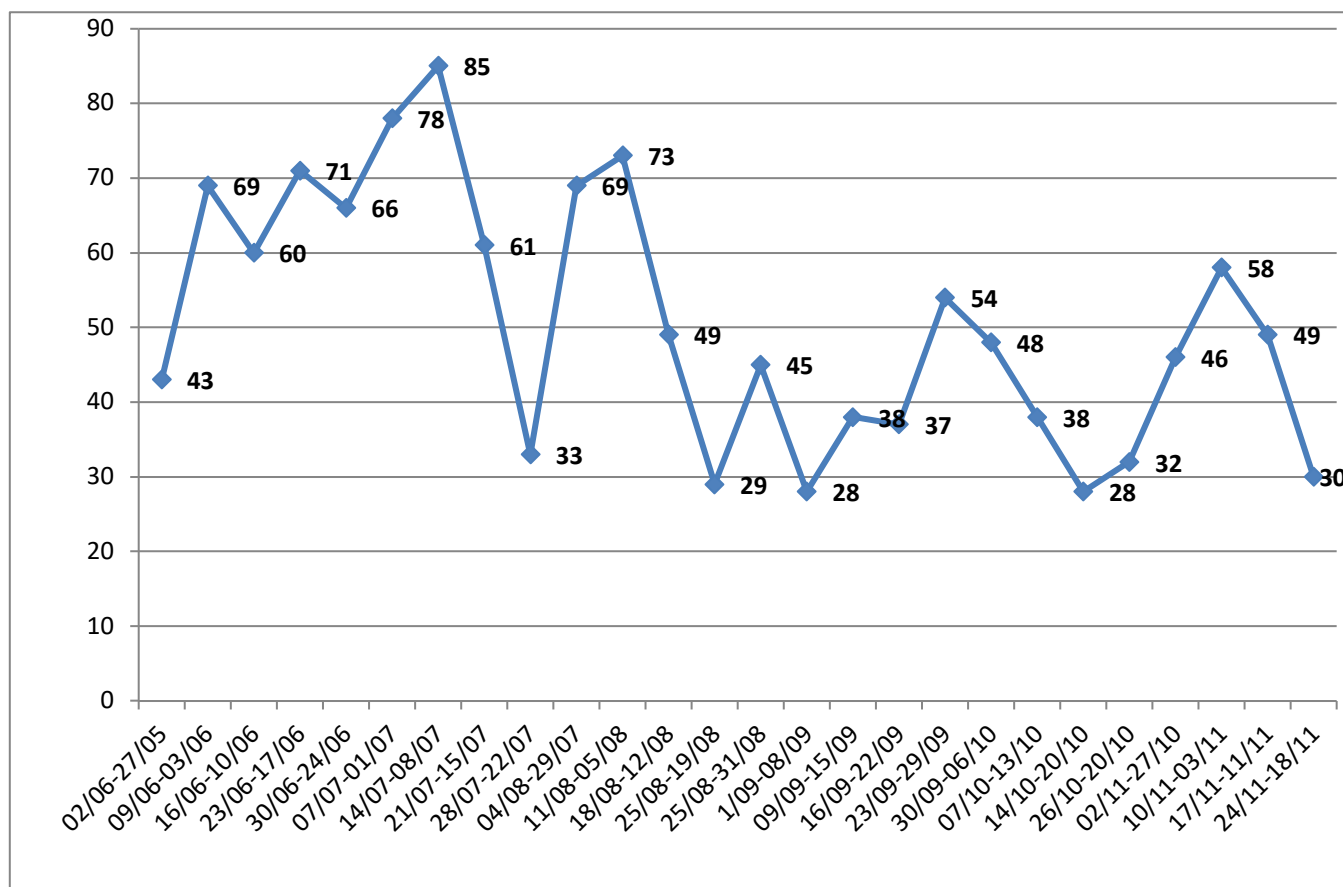
Weekly summary of ISIS's activity

► An infographic published by ISIS summing up its activity around the world **in the period between November 18 and November 24, 2021**, indicates that in this period, ISIS carried out **30 attacks** in its various provinces in Asia and Africa, compared to 49 in the previous week. **The largest number of attacks was carried out by ISIS's Khorasan Province** (i.e., Afghanistan) (9). Attacks carried out in the other provinces: Iraq (8); Central Africa (5); Syria (3); West Africa (2); Pakistan (1); Sinai (1); and Somalia (1). **A total of 78 people were killed and wounded in the attacks**, compared to 206 in the previous week. **The largest number of casualties was in Khorasan** (26). The other casualties were in the following provinces: Iraq (20); West Africa (16); Syria (6); Sinai (3); Central Africa (3); Somalia (3); and Pakistan (1) (Al-Naba' weekly, Telegram, November 25, 2021).



The infographic as it appeared in Al-Naba' weekly (Al-Naba' weekly, Telegram, November 25, 2021)

ISIS attacks in recent months (according to ISIS data)



Africa³

Nigeria

- **On November 29, 2021**, a Christian resident and a teacher at a Christian school were abducted at a temporary roadblock on the Mainok-Jakana road in northeastern Nigeria.
- **On November 28, 2021**, an IED was activated against a Nigerian army vehicle on the Mararaba-Katafila highway in northeastern Nigeria. The passengers on board were killed or wounded.
- **On November 22, 2021**, an IED was activated against a Nigerian army foot patrol in the Baga region, about 25 km west of the Nigeria-Cameroon-Chad tri-border area. Several soldiers were killed or wounded.

Cameroon

- **On November 24, 2021**, a Cameroonian army camp was attacked in the Fotokol region, in the north of the country, on the Cameroon-Nigeria border. Two soldiers were killed in the

³Mainly according to ISIS's claims of responsibility posted on Telegram

exchange of fire. The other soldiers fled. ISIS operatives set the camp on fire, destroying heavy weapons and seizing weapons and ammunition.



Weapons and ammunition seized by ISIS operatives during the attack on the Cameroonian army camp (Telegram, November 25, 2021)

Somalia

► **On November 23, 2021**, an IED was activated against a police car escorting an armored vehicle carrying a police officer in Mogadishu. Three policemen were wounded and the vehicle was damaged (Telegram, November 24, 2021).

Mozambique

► **On November 27, 2021**, a Mozambican army patrol was targeted by gunfire in the Mikula region of the Niassa Province in the northwest of the country. Two soldiers were killed (Telegram, November 30, 2021). **It should be noted that up to now ISIS's activity centered mainly on the Cabo Delgado Province.**

► **On November 29, 2021**, a Mozambican army patrol was targeted by gunfire in the Macomia region of the Cabo Delgado Province in the northeast of the country. Several soldiers were killed or wounded (Telegram, November 29, 2021).

Asia

The Philippines

► An IED was activated against a high-voltage pylon belonging to the Philippine government in the Lanao del Sur province in the southern Philippines. The pylon was destroyed (Telegram, November 30, 2021). This is another attack as part of what ISIS calls its economic war against the Philippine government.

Turkey

► Turkey's counterterrorism unit detained three ISIS operatives who had entered Turkey from Syria (Anatolia News Agency, November 24, 2021).

Europe

Kosovo

► An indictment has been filed against a citizen of Kosovo who recently returned from Syria, after fighting there in the ranks of ISIS. He traveled via Turkey to Al-Raqqah in Syria, where he was detained by the Kurdish forces (SDF) and sent back to his country. If he is convicted, he faces up to 10 years in prison. It should be noted that about two years ago, Kosovo repatriated 110 of its citizens who had been in Syria, mainly women and children. Charges of involvement in terrorist activity have been filed against many of the adults. It is estimated that more than 400 citizens of Kosovo have joined the ranks of jihadi organizations in Syria and Iraq (AP, November 24, 2021).

The battle for hearts and minds

► The lead article in this week's issue of ISIS's Al-Naba' weekly was devoted to inter-Arab talks aimed at normalizing relations between Arab countries and the Syrian regime. The article, entitled "The Infidels are Loyal to Each Other," presents the rapprochement between Arab states and Syria as an "alliance of infidels against Muslim believers." The article presents ISIS as an organization that adheres to the principles of Islam and jihad and is opposed to those infidels. The author is especially critical of the rulers of the Emirates for, according to him, spearheading the normalization of relations, inter alia through forging closer ties with Turkey, on the pretext of economic motives. The author stresses that ISIS has constantly persevered in the struggle against the Syrian regime, and calls on Muslims in Syria to distinguish between friend and foe and to assist ISIS's jihad fighters. He emphasizes that ISIS operatives are determined to carry out jihad against the infidels in Syria until the end of days (Al-Naba' weekly, Telegram, November 25, 2021).



The article criticizing the rapprochement between Arab countries and Syria (Al-Naba' weekly, Telegram, November 25, 2021)