The Triton Report is compiled monthly by highly specialised data collators and former British Military Ammunition Technical Officers using state of the art data-mining technology. We work with global partners to gather, analyse and evaluate, comprehensively, all recorded IED events worldwide.

TFR-028: YEMEN - COMPLEX ATTACK AGAINST CID BUILDING IN ADEN - 05 NOVEMBER 2017

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On 05 November 2017, a group of militants carried out an assault on the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) building in the Khormaksar district of Aden. A SVBIED and at least one PBIED functioned near to entrances to the building, whilst further militants, some dressed in military fatigues, engaged security forces, took at least two female police officers hostage, and seized control of the building.

During the night there were three separate assaults carried out on the building carried by Yemeni security forces, with at least one militant functioning a PBIED during each attempt. On the morning of 06 November, security forces entered the building following a fourth assault, in which a suicide bomber functioned a device, killing the remaining militants.

Up to 29 security force members were killed during the attack, including the two female police officers who were executed by the attackers. Six civilians were also killed. Ali Jarjour Al Jahafi Abu Abboud, a senior Yemeni Army commander, and Abdul Karim Shaif Al-Dhale, a Salafist Sheikh were among those killed.

The bodies of at least three militants, killed by small arms fire, were also recovered suggesting that at least nine were involved in the attack.
Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility through Amaq Agency, stating that 69 people were killed or injured during the attack which lasted 11 hours.

TRITON COMMENT

Both IS and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) have previously used VBIEDs to target key structures. AQAP has also frequently used SVBIEDs to breach perimeter walls or defensive positions in preparation for Inghimasi assaults by mixed arms equipped suicide bombers.

Post attack imagery (see left from Twitter) indicates that the CID complex perimeter wall was at least partially surrounded by a HESCO-type gabion. It is possible that the VBIED was deployed in order to target a weak-point along the perimeter, or to disrupt security forces within the building and maximise the impact of the initial Inghimasi assault.

It is possible that militants wearing security force uniforms were able to take advantage of confusion following the SVBIED in order to gain access to the perimeter as, barring a breach caused by the VBIED, it is unlikely given its height and fencing, that militants scaled the wall.

IS has been particularly active within Aden since 2015, however the last recorded suicide attack took place on 18 December 2016, when a suicide bomber targeted soldiers queuing to collect salaries at Sawlaban Military Base in the north of the city.

Whilst IS has previously used suicide bombers, individually, in small groups and in conjunction with emplaced IED attacks, the group has not previously deployed Inghimasi to the same extent within Aden.

The 05-06 November attack represents a significant increase in the capability of IS within Aden. A large-scale counter-terror strategy has been put in place to counter AQAP within the southern provinces, however it is possible that IS elements within Aden have been able to strengthen their presence given their relatively small
numbers and the increased focus by security forces on AQ elements. IS may also have taken advantage of relatively poor security within the city, with assassinations of security officials and religious figures occurring frequently, to access the Khormaksar district, where the majority of government buildings are located.

The attack may have been aimed at demonstrating the capability of IS to gain access to a key security building within the de facto capital of Yemen following the release of a series of propaganda videos promoting the group. It is also possible that IS will seek to expand its operations in Yemen as the group continues to suffer losses in Syria and Iraq.