

1 Jun 24: Iraqi Parliament Approves Stimulus Package Allowing Borrowing to Continue Paying Government Salaries. Iraq's parliament passed a bill allowing the Finance Ministry to borrow money from internal and external sources to sustain public sector salaries. Iraq's public sector constitutes the majority of its economy; any delay in public sector payments risks civil unrest. The bill stipulated that external borrowing could not exceed 5 billion USD, while internal borrowing could not exceed approximately 4.19 billion USD. Parliament also demanded that the Council of Ministers provide it with a program of economic reform within 20 days of the law's passage. 168 of 329 MPs attended the session despite previous reports that the parliamentary speaker might cancel in-person sessions due to the coronavirus.

2 Jun 25: Prime Minister Kadhimi Announces Campaign to Retake Iraq's Border Crossings from Likely Iranian Proxies as Counterterrorism Services Seize al-Qaim Border Crossing. Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi announced that his government would begin a campaign to retake Iraq's border crossings from groups he identified as "gangs, factions, bandits, and influential people" to raise government revenues. An unspecified unit of Iraq's elite, US-trained Counterterrorism Service (CTS) seized the Iraqi side of the al-Qaim-Abu Kamal Border Crossing in Anbar Province from likely Iranian proxy militias that same day. An unspecified "large" unit of the Iraqi Security Forces also established a presence in the town of Qaim to provide security on June 26. Qaim's Sunni-majority population has repeatedly complained about the presence and abuses of Shi'a militia groups, including key Iranian proxy and US-designated terrorist organization Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH), that currently occupy the area. Iran's proxies and other Popular Mobilization Forces militias control most of Iraq's border crossings, from which they conduct smuggling operations and collect illegal tolls.

3 Jun 25: Kadhimi Directs Iraqi Security Forces to Combat Worsening COVID-19 Pandemic. Prime Minister Kadhimi directed the medical services of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) and the Ministry of Defense (MoD) to assist the Ministry of Health with "all available capabilities," in controlling the coronavirus in a meeting with the PMF and MoD's medical departments. The head of CTS ordered his forces to use CTS supplies to mitigate shortages and support hospitals in Dhi Qar Province and likely elsewhere. Iraq's Ministry of Health announced an estimated 2,200 new cases on June 24, the highest number of daily infections since the virus first arrived in the country.

4 Jun 25: Iranian Proxy Thar al-Muhandis Claims Responsibility for June 19 Attack on US Forces at Baghdad International Airport. Thar al-Muhandis, one of the ostensibly new Iranian proxy "shadow militias" that emerged following the January 3 death of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force (IRGC-QF) Commander Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi proxy leader Abu Mehdi al-Muhandis, released a statement in broken English claiming responsibility for the June 19 operation targeting US forces at Baghdad International Airport. The group stated, "with out our descion [sic]; death, have always been close from tens of American soldiers." Unidentified militants fired one Katyusha rocket from the Abu Gharib neighborhood west of Baghdad to target US facilities near the airport on that date.

5 Jun 25-26: Prime Minister Kadhimi Orders Raid on Kata'ib Hezbollah Position to Prevent Rocket Attacks on US Facilities and Detains 14 Militants. An unspecified special forces CTS unit conducted a raid on a KH facility in the Dora neighborhood of southern Baghdad. KH is a key Iranian proxy but nominally integrated into the Iraqi security apparatus. CTS reportedly seized several rockets and detained at least 14 KH members. Anonymous sources stated that those arrested include three commanders, including one Iranian citizen. Iraq's Joint Operations Command (JOC) claimed that they had actionable intelligence that the targeted group was responsible for previous "indirect fire [rocket attacks]" in Baghdad and was planning additional attacks on government targets within the Green Zone. The United States has blamed KH for dozens of rocket attacks that have targeted US forces and facilities in Iraq since October 2019. This raid marks the first action taken by the government of Iraq against a significant component of Iran's entrenched proxy militia network. It is a bold statement by Prime Minister Kadhimi that he will follow through on his promises to protect US forces in Iraq from Iranian proxy attacks.

6 Jun 26: Hundreds of Iranian Proxy Militia Members Storm Baghdad's Green Zone in Show of Force following CTS Raid on Kata'ib Hezbollah Facility. Over 100 heavily armed members of KH and possibly other unspecified Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) militias drove through Baghdad's Green Zone in a heavily-armed truck convoy after Prime Minister Kadhimi ordered an unprecedented raid on a KH position in southern Baghdad, which led to the detention of 14 KH members. Members of the convoy carried at least one 23 mm twin anti-aircraft cannon and many armed machine gun mounts. Mixed reporting indicates that the convoy drove either to the CTS headquarters or the prime minister's residence and threatened to attack if the detained members were not released within 24 hours. The convoy forced the Iraqi government to transfer the custody of the detained personnel from the CTS to a prison under the control of the PMF, according to an anonymous official close to Prime Minister Kadhimi. Protesters in Baghdad's Tahrir Square demonstrated in support of CTS and against militias outside state control.

7 Jun 26: Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq Leader Condemns CTS Raid and Says that "Resistance" Attacks Claimed by New Shadow Militias Only Target US, not Iraqi, Facilities. The leader of US-designated terrorist organization Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), US-designated terrorist Qais al-Khazali, condemned Prime Minister Kadhimi and the CTS raid on KH in a televised speech. Khazali claimed that attacks against the US "occupation" are a "legitimate right" of every Iraqi and argued that none of the attacks carried out by the "resistance factions [another name for Iran's Islamic Resistance in Iraq proxy network]" have targeted "pure Iraqi" institutions, only US facilities and joint US-Iraqi locations. Khazali's acknowledgment that the Islamic Resistance is responsible for the latest rocket attacks on US facilities is a tacit acknowledgment that the ostensibly new shadow militia groups are part of the same Iranian proxy network in Iraq and coordinate their attacks with Iran's traditional proxy militias.

8 Jun 26: Another New Iranian Proxy Shadow Militia, Jund al-Soleimani, Announces Its Existence by Demanding Release of Kata'ib Hezbollah Detainees. An ostensibly new Iranian proxy shadow militia calling itself "Jund al-Soleimani" (JS), or Soleimani's Soldiers, announced its presence via a Telegram account linked to the IRGC. JS issued a statement following the CTS raid on a KH facility. The statement condemned the detention of KH militants by the CTS and demanded their release. The group identified itself as part of the "Islamic Resistance," Iran's proxy network in Iraq. JS is the eighth new militia group to announce its existence following the death of Soleimani on January 3.

9 Jun 27: Prime Minister Kadhimi Reportedly Begins Plan to Change or Remove Thousands of Government Positions by September, Targeting Entrenched Interests and Corruption. Kadhimi began to implement his government reform plan to replace the occupants of 6,000 government positions in the next three months. These removals will target unqualified individuals and entrenched, corrupt interests. Prime Minister Kadhimi reportedly intends to replace several high-ranking officials as soon as possible but has not yet officially done so; progress will be reported weekly. The most prominent position under discussion is that of national security advisor, which is currently held by the pro-Iranian Faleh al-Fayyadh. Two names have been floated to replace him: Sunni former Defense Minister Khaled al-Obaidi and Ali Jabbar Mu'nis al-Ghanmi, a member of the parliamentary defense committee for the State of Law Coalition. Additional positions reportedly under consideration for the purge include several leadership positions in the Iranian proxy-dominated Communications and Media Commission (CMC), the head of the Shi'a Endowment, the head of the Aviation Authority, the head of the General Pension Authority, and the director of al-Rashid Bank.

10 Jun 29: Iraqi Government Folds to Pressure and Releases Kata'ib Hezbollah Detainees to PMF Custody; PMF Releases Most Detainees. Iraqi security forces released the 14 detained Kata'ib Hezbollah militants to the custody of the PMF Security Directorate. KH spokesperson Jaafar al-Husseini said that the detainees were released after a PMF judge dropped the charges "due to a lack of evidence." The spokesperson also said, "the arrests shouldn't have happened." However, a spokesperson for Prime Minister Kadhimi claimed that one KH detainee remained in government custody as of June 30. An anonymous militia official told the Associated Press that 11 of the 14 suspects were released on bail, while three remained in custody. Photos circulated following the reported release showing 11 freed militants at the KH headquarters in Baghdad. The photos also showed the detainees burning US and Israeli flags while stomping on photographs of Prime Minister Kadhimi following their release. KH Secretary General Ahmad al-Hammadawi issued a triumphant statement declaring that KH will not subjugate itself to the Iraqi government and that its weapons will never be "handed over, restricted or counted."

11 Jun 30: Shi'a Cleric Hakim Founds New Parliamentary Bloc to Provide Political Support to Prime Minister Kadhimi. Shi'a cleric Ammar al-Hakim announced the creation of a new parliamentary bloc: al-Iraqiyoun, or the Iraqis Alliance. The new bloc will pursue what Hakim described as a moderate approach to ten key legislative priorities including restoring confidence in the political system, supporting the armed forces of the state, and introducing reforms to curb corruption. Hakim's original political party, Wisdom Trend, controlled 19 out of 329 parliamentary seats and supported Prime Minister Kadhimi's ascension. The makeup of the Iraqis Alliance is not yet finalized, but reports indicate that the new bloc already encompasses 41 members of parliament. The bloc's creation partially confirms earlier rumors that Hakim sought to build a new alliance to execute reformist legislation on behalf of Prime Minister Kadhimi and to marginalize the two largest Shi'a blocs, nationalist Shi'a cleric Moqtada al-Sadr's Toward Reform and Iranian proxy Hadi al-Ameri's Conquest Alliance. The new bloc may align with pro-Kadhimi Sunni and Kurdish factions, thereby shifting the balance of power in Parliament away from Iran's proxies and toward Kadhimi, who previously had no political base.



- Iraqi Security Forces
- ISIS
- Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)
- Major Cities
- Anti-ISIS Coalition
- Iran
- Iraqi Council of Representatives
- Demonstration
- Iranian Proxy Militias
- Religious Figures
- Iraqi Prime Minister and Cabinet

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Key Takeaway: Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi began a coordinated campaign to retake segments of the Iraqi state from entrenched interests, build toward a state monopoly on use of force, and increase his negotiating position with the United States in the ongoing US-Iraq Strategic Dialogue. Kadhimi ordered Iraq's elite, US-trained Counterterrorism Service (CTS) to retake Iraq's border crossings from poorly regulated militias and to conduct a raid on key Iranian proxy militia and US-designated terrorist organization Kata'ib Hezbollah to prevent additional rocket attacks on US facilities in Iraq. These moves are intended to demonstrate to the United States that Kadhimi is a reliable security partner ahead of his planned visit to Washington in July, when Kadhimi will renegotiate the US-Iraqi relationship in the next stage of the Strategic Dialogue. Meanwhile, pro-Kadhimi parliamentarians announced the establishment of a new political bloc. This bloc could provide Kadhimi the political base he needs to weather the ongoing backlash against his bold moves, particularly from Iranian allies and proxies who have thoroughly penetrated the Iraqi state.

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