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This Issue's Top Stories

- ***The National Scene:*** The Kurdistan Regional Government has stopped transferring oil from Kirkuk to federal export authorities, perhaps beginning a de facto expropriation, but the government of Hayder al-Abadi is too enmeshed in conflicts internal and external to focus on the matter. These past few weeks are the first time the Kurdish region has taken control of oil exported from fields controlled by the North Oil Company, having recently threatened to do so. The offensive in Anbar is progressing but much of it is outside the control of Prime Minister Abadi. Speaker Salim al-Jiburi has faced a challenge from the Nujayfi wing of the main Sunni bloc, but his good relations with Shia leaders mean his job is safe. We also update our previous provincial narrative, with Najaf Governor Adnan al-Zurfi on the defensive after a vote to remove him.
- ***Security Focus:*** The Shia-dominated militia umbrella organization called the Hashd is too divided on partisan lines to be transformed into a real military organization, and its sharp divisions are likely to portend steep challenges to state stability in the future. This feature article is our most in-depth treatment so far of *al-hashd al-shaabi*, or "Popular Mobilization," which we just call the Hashd. We examine the organization's leadership and unit structure, how it is impacted by the dynamics of intra-Shia political competition, the role of non-Shia in the Hashd, and provide a table with basic reference information on the key groups. We also suggest some scenarios for the movement's future evolution, suggesting some combination of three possibilities – the Hashd could become the national guard, allowing Shia militias to graft onto the state and obtain permanent subsidy; with or without legal structure it could become a Pasdaran-like state-within-a-state; or elements could just descend into criminality, as some groups are now. What is clear is that Hashd units are too steeped in sectarian and partisan loyalties to evolve into a non-political military force.

The National Scene

Baghdad Preoccupied, Kirkuk Slips Further Away

Kurdistan's halt to the transfer of Kirkuk oil is a de facto appropriation, but Prime Minister Hayder al-Abadi is struggling on too many fronts to do anything. Speaker Salim al-Jiburi should survive a Nujayfi-backed effort to remove him.

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is consolidating its control of Kirkuk. The KRG expanded security control over Kurdish population areas last year, taking over *North Oil Company (NOC)*-administrated oil fields in Makhmur to the northwest, leaving Baghdad in control of the remainder, which are producing about 150,000 barrels per day. We noted previously Kirkuk province's threat to seize this federal oil to replace budget money it is not receiving from Baghdad (*IIP 108/8*). And now the KRG is no longer turning over this ~150,000 bpd; MP **Ariz Abdullah**, chairman of parliament's Energy Committee, said this began on July 1;¹ the *Iraq Oil Report*, citing a variety of official and industry sources, dates the break to June 21.² Ariz, who belongs to the *Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)*, said the KRG was exporting 599,000 bpd total.

While perhaps a step toward a Kurdish consensus goal, de facto expropriating NOC oil hits the fault line between President **Masud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)** and other factions in terms of their policy of working with Baghdad. As PUK MP **Rafat Abdullah** put it, the move was "a reaction to Baghdad's pressure and a mistake without studying the consequences." *Gorran's Rauf Othman* said the KRG's KDP-dominated energy policy "was flawed from the beginning" because it united Shia and Sunni Arabs against them.³ MP **Baykrud Talabani**, the PUK's new parliamentary leader, framed the conflict as one of institutional hegemony, saying KDP officials had isolated KRG Deputy PM **Qubad Talabani** on the region's oil committee, adding the recent arrest of PUK figures by KDP-controlled police in Ninawa to the mix.⁴

In Baghdad, this has resulted in expected accusations from Shia MPs about the Kurds "stealing" Iraqi oil.⁵ Prime Minister Abadi blamed the KRG for the breakdown firmly on June 28 (*IIP 110/6*), but he is reacting modestly, saying on July 15 that Oil Minister **Adil Abd al-Mahdi** "will ensure Kurdistan's compliance."⁶ Having lost control of the Anbar offensive and facing payment crises all around – note that Abadi's "Crisis Cell" focuses on economic not security issues⁷ – he has bigger fish to fry.

On the Offensive in Anbar, on the Defensive on the Home Front

The offensive in Anbar is progressing, as the *Islamic State (IS)* is putting up only token resistance in Fallujah and nearby Karma and Saqlawiya, where the offensive is militia-led (*IIP 110/2-3*). IS has never had a large-scale force, and to judge from government casualty counts IS losses are typically in the single digits or a few dozen per encounter.

Even this large operation taking eight areas of Fallujah only claimed 280 IS fighters killed and captured,⁸ assuming these were all IS. The dramatic June 13 announcement from Baghdad of the “launching of an operation to liberate Anbar,” reported by some as something new, was just a way for the military to associate itself with an operation once it was clear it would succeed.⁹ And as *Hashd* spokesman **Ahmad al-Asadi** emphasized on July 14, there was “no coordination with the international coalition.”¹⁰

IS’ defensive goal appears to just be to slow the advance and bring about casualties by leaving behind a few “suicide defenders” and by mining roads, homes, mosques and other buildings. The fruits of this tactic are shown by the killing of three *Badr Organization* field commanders in Saqlawiya (northwest of Fallujah) from a mine. The incident also highlighted Badr’s own centrality, as the funeral procession for three “martyrs” – **Abu Muntathir al-Muhammadawi**, **Abu Habib al-Sikini**, **Abu Sarhan al-Sabihawi**¹¹ – was attended by not only senior Badrists but also VP **Nuri al-Maliki**, Deputy PM **Baha al-Araji** and *Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI)* leader **Ammar al-Hakim**.¹² The deceased, respectively, were Badr’s overall operations commander, Badr 4th Brigade commander, and the operations commander of the same.¹³

IS’ response has been of the kind which can bring about attrition but not repulse the offensive, such as in Khalidiya on July 10 in which IS used a diversionary attack to give bomb planters time to mine a key area.¹⁴ And that one security officials claim to have foiled. The weak defense could be due to pressure from Syria, or a decision to make a firmer stand in Ramadi. An Iraqi security source quoted by *Deutsch Press* indicating that Iraqi IS leaders have withdrawn their families to Syria, leaving disproportionately foreign fighters in Anbar, if reliable, would signal the former.¹⁵

Even as the Anbar offensive advances on its own, Abadi seems to be focusing on ensuring control in Baghdad and other areas behind the front lines. One of the topics we address in the *Security Focus* below is the challenge the prime minister faces in maintaining security in government-controlled areas, as even the official *Hashd* militia organization is struggling with factional violence in Baghdad and Basra.

Parliament Returns & Stalemates, Speaker Jiburi Challenged

Parliament returned on July 1, and if anything prospects for passage of key legislation have grown slimmer; on debaathification, *State of Law Coalition (SLC)* MPs have gone on the offensive, demanding that the statutory criminalization of the Baath (which many Sunnis reject) be passed first and a new debaathification entity be created to remove people from ministries.¹⁶ Parliament’s first reading of the amnesty and debaathification bills on July 5 likely means little; as noted the amnesty law appears written to focus on the release of Shia prisoners.¹⁷ Divisions also remain on the national guard bill, and Legal Committee MP **Ibtisam Hashim** says that they are considering rejecting it in favor of conscription.¹⁸ Indeed, our analysis of the *Hashd* suggests the national guard would be militia-dominated and not fulfill its original purpose.

More interesting is that Speaker Jiburi, whose first anniversary in office was on July 14, is facing a challenge. It appears the two main drivers of the effort are his decision to allow the vote to remove Ninawa Governor (and fellow *Mutahidun* leader) **Uthil al-Nujayfi**, and his failure to oppose Abadi's appointment of **Abd al-Latif al-Humayam** as Sunni Waqf head, as well as a general sense that he is too close to Shia leaders.¹⁹ The Nujayfis are reportedly putting forward MP **Talal al-Zoubi** as his replacement,²⁰ but it is precisely Jiburi's good relations with Shia leaders that means his job looks safe.

Of greater import is whether Sunni leaders have a credible plan to get out of the mess they are in. **Iyad al-Samarrai**, leader of Jiburi's *Islamic Party*, gave an interview on *al-Dijla* ([video](#)) on July 15 to lay out a two-prong plan for Sunnis: 1) either a single regional state becomes the sponsor of Iraqi Sunnis, on the principle that multiple sponsors has divided them; or 2) the government sponsors Sunnis, on the condition it accepts the Baath and other insurgent groups as democratic partners. Both ideas are extremely offensive to mainstream Shia, so it is unclear to whom Samarrai has been talking.

Zurfi on the Ropes, Nasrawi Holds On

On July 13 Najaf's provincial council voted to remove Governor **Adnan al-Zurfi**, with 18 of 28 councilmen voting in favor.²¹ Council Chairman **Khudayr al-Jiburi** described the day as "historic," claiming that most projects in the province went to Zurfi's friends or political allies, adding that relevant files had been forwarded to the *Integrity Commission* for investigation ([video](#)). We suggested in the preceding issue (*IIP 110/4*) that the coalition against Zurfi – which included every bloc except his own – may have been driven by less noble incentives, including possible *quid pro quo* relating to the political fight in Basra. Zurfi's *Fidelity to Iraq* naturally objected, arguing that the removal procedure violated the law and pledged to appeal and have it overturned.²²

The purported deal was to have a Badrist replace Zurfi in exchange for sparing Governor **Majid al-Nasrawi** in Basra, yet the ISCI governor still faces pressure. On July 14, Badr Councilman **Ahmad al-Sulayti**, who heads the council's Finance Committee, declared he had "discovered major financial violations" by Nasrawi, claiming the governor had spent \$10 million more on salaries than authorized without documenting to whom this money was paid.²³ Public recriminations between Nasrawi and Badr's **Salam al-Dirawi**, who heads the Basra Hashd, have died down, however. This may be because one of the fallen Badr commanders was a Basrawi, or because the Hashd has itself asked for the province's help in cracking down on "unofficial Hashd" offices.

Nasrawi himself has not been idle, using ISCI's relationship with Abadi to obtain "exceptional authorizations" for service projects amounting to over \$300 million, bypassing the finance and planning ministries.²⁴ After years of fighting with his predecessor, ISCI is one of the few factions – Shia or Sunni – which is not actively undermining Abadi, and apparently he realizes he needs to take care of them.

Security Focus

Security and Politics Mix Inseparably in Hashd Forces

The *Hashd* forces are organized largely along partisan lines, making it implausible for them to be transformed into true military units. The political profile of a group shapes its military role, with Iran-backed groups with no political wing being the most aggressive, and Iraqi clerical groups being the most defensive.

The Hashd forces – *al-hashd al-shaabi*, or “Popular Mobilization” – have brought partisan militias into the consensus of Iraqi security policy, after years in which they were rejected, at least rhetorically, even by some of the very parties that now sustain their own Hashd factions.²⁵ The origins of the Hashd lie in former prime minister **Nuri al-Maliki**’s alliance with Iran securing his reelection in 2010, which involved the *Badr Organization* splitting with the *Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI)* to support him. While Badr was nominally a political party with an armed wing (the reality being the opposite), this was followed by Maliki’s sponsorship of pure militias, including the pro-Iranian Sadrist splinter *Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH)* from at least mid-2012, and, more discretely, the *Jund al-Imam Battalions (JIB)*, a small but specialized militia which operated as the *Mujahidin of the Islamic Revolution* during the 1991-2003 period. The Hashd itself was established by Maliki as a “reserve army” after the fall of Mosul on June 10, 2014, although given his reputation as a failed leader, Hashd leaders habitually cite Ayatollah **Ali al-Sistani**’s fatwa that week for its origins.²⁶ A review of that June 13 sermon makes it clear Sistani actually intended for Shia to join the security services.²⁷

The Hashd is both a government agency and an umbrella group for militias which in some cases share intense mutual hostility. It is overseen by the *Hashd Commission*, which nominally reports to Abadi as commander-in-chief. Its chairman is National Security Advisor **Falih al-Fayyad**. Fayyad is a former *Dawa Party* cadre tied politically to Foreign Minister **Ibrahim al-Jaafari**, and we view his role as purely administrative. Deputy Hashd Commander **Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis**, a long-time Iranian asset, is the closest the Hashd has to an overall military commander.²⁸ Assistant Chairman for Administration **Hamid al-Shatari** served under Fayyad before at the National Security Advisory.²⁹ Badr leader **Hadi al-Ameri**’s official title is simply “Assistant Commander,” placing him directly under Muhandis, to whom he is clearly subordinate; in practice Ameri is Diyala’s military governor in all but name (with a commission from Maliki last year), and ad hoc field commander elsewhere as needed, such as during the current Anbar offensive, although unlike in Diyala he does not supervise army generals.³⁰ (Note the nomenclature: sources uniformly place Fayyad above Muhandis, but use the term *ra’is* for Fayyad, but almost always *qa’id* for Muhandis and Ameri; *ra’is* (“president, chairman”) has administrative connotations, while *qa’id* is literally “commander”). The Hashd has one senior Sunni figure, **Thamir al-Tamimi**, “Assistant Commander for Tribal Affairs,” and we discuss him below. **Ahmad al-Asadi**, who heads the JIB, serves

as the Hashd's primary spokesman, and like Ameri, is an MP. **Karim Nuri**, a senior Badr figure, is also a Hashd spokesman, but appears junior to Asadi (Asadi gives official press conferences whereas Nuri just appears on talk shows).³¹

The fractured nature of the Hashd is clear from the fact that beyond these figures with official titles, there are other prominent figures who use the "Hashd" label but in fact report to their own political bosses rather than Muhandis. The most important are the Sadrists commanders of the *Peace Companies*, a reincarnation of **Muqtada al-Sadr's** old *Mahdi Army* (and also the *Promised Day Brigades*; commanders between these groups appear interchangeable.) The group's most senior commander appears to be **Kathim "Abu Dua" al-Isawi**,³² who doubles as Sadr's commander in the shrine city of Samarra, the PC's main area of activity. Isawi was considered by some to have been the MA's senior commander when he fled to Lebanon in 2011.³³ ISCI militia commanders (see table) are functionally similar. Maliki made a play to be declared "Commander of the Hashd" in February (*IIP 101/3*), but this was quickly rebuffed, although he plays a role overseeing Dawa-aligned factions, as does SLC MP **Amer al-Khuzai**,³⁴ who served as Maliki's "advisor on national reconciliation" through April 2014.

Key Hashd Factions

The breakdown of forces among the various Hashd factions is very difficult to determine. The Hashd Commission does not release official statistics, and statements from individuals leaders about how many fighters they have are not reliable due to the incentive for inflation, although it is possible to estimate the relative size of groups. Badr, AAH and the Peace Companies are the only three groups able to muster a large presence in multiple provinces, although Sadrists militiamen appear to be disproportionately part-timers, perhaps reflecting the lack of Iranian funding for salaries. The table below includes the key groups and is not comprehensive.

Faction	Brigade Number	Leaders	Political Affiliation	Claimed/ Estimated Strength	Locations of Deployment
Abbas Combat Division	unknown	Maytham Zaydi, Brigadier General Ismail Maryud	Administration of the Abbas Shrine in Karbala	Claims 7,000 active and more in reserves	Jurf al-Sakhr, Amerli, heavy deployment in & around Karbala
Abu al-Fadl al-Abbas Brigades	unknown	Aws al-Khafaji	Formerly Sadrists, closer to Iran and Maliki since 2012	unknown	Baghdad belts, Fallujah, Samarra
Ali al-Akbar Brigade	unknown	Qasim Muslih al-Tai	Administration of the Hussein shrine in Karbala	Claimed 1,800 as of August 2014, current strength unknown	Bayji, Fallujah, Jurf al-Sakhr, Samarra
Ansar al-Aqida	2 nd , 66 th	Jalal al-Din al-Saghir; Abu	ISCI	One source says low hundreds, but actual	Diyala, Balad, Samarra, Latifiya

		Zayn al-Abidin al-Ghizzi		strength could be higher	
Ansar Allah al-Awfiya	29 th	Hayder al-Gharawi	Pro-Iran	unknown	Samarra, Balad, Fallujah
Ansar al-Hujja	unknown	Muhammad al-Kinani; Majid al-Imara	Dawa, Pro-Maliki	Claims 4,500 in three brigades	Samarra, rear bases in Wasit
Ansar al-Marjaiya	unknown	Hamid al-Yasseri	Independent, receives support from Shia shrine administrators	Claims 2,600	Anbar, recruitment conducted primarily in Muthanna
Asaib Ahl al-Haq	unknown	Qays al-Khazali, Muhammad al-Tabatabai	Pro-Iran	thousands	Iraq-wide, but based in Baghdad
Ashura Companies	8 th , 9 th	Ammar al-Hakim, Kathim al-Jabiri	ISCI	Claims 3,000	Baghdad belts, Samarra, Tikrit
Babiliyun	unknown	Rayan al-Kildani, Usama al-Kildani	Christian, pro-Iran	Claims 800, real number likely lower	Baghdad, Bayji
Badr Military Wing	1 st , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , perhaps others	Hadi al-Ameri, Abd al-Karim Yunus al-Ansari	Badr Organization	thousands	Iraq-wide, but based in Diyala
Fursan Brigade	unknown	Brigadier General Maan al-Zurfi	Dawa	unknown	Recruited in Qadisiya, current deployment unknown
Hussein's Stand Brigades	unknown	Muhammad al-Khafaji, Salih al-Asadi	Nominally independent, but allied with Badr	Claims 4,000-5,000, real number probably much lower	Baghdad, Hamrayn hills region of Diyala
Imam Ali Brigades	unknown	Shibl al-Zaydi	Pro-Iran	unknown	Tuz Khurmato, Diyala, Bayji, Tikrit, Balad, Fallujah
Jihad & Construction Companies	17 th	Hassan al-Sari, Abu Kathim al-Mayahi	ISCI	Claims 6,000, real number probably much lower	Baghdad, Balad, Dhi Qar, Basra, Maysan
Jund al-Imam Battalions	6 th , 15 th	Ahmad Jasim Sabir al-Asadi	Pro-Iran, but close to Dawa-Maliki wing	Claims 4,500	Samarra, Balad, Tikrit, Bayji
Hizbullah Brigades	unknown	Associated publicly with Muhandis but controlled from Iran	Pro-Iran	unknown	Iraq-wide
Khorasani Companies	18 th	Ali al-Yasseri, Hamid al-Jazairi	Pro-Iran	unknown	Bayji, Samarra, Diyala

Lion of God in Iraq Brigades	unknown	MP Amer Muhammad Ghulam al-Asadi	Dawa, pro-Maliki	Claims 4,500	Baghdad belts, Samarra, Diyala
Nujaba Movement	unknown	Akram al-Kaabi	Pro-Iran	unknown	Samarra, Fallujah, Bayji
Peace Companies ("Saraya al-Salam")	unknown	Kathim al-Isawi; others include	Sadrist Current	Low tens of thousands but largely part-time	Iraq-wide, but chiefly deployed in Samarra
Promise of God Brigades	unknown	Abu Akbar al-Khalidi	Fadhila Party	unknown	Samarra, Anbar
Sayid al-Shuhada Brigades	14 th	Hashim Abu Alaa, MP Falih al-Khazali	Pro-Iran	Claims 5,000	Samarra, Kirkuk, training bases in Dhi Qar and Wasit
Victorious Lion of God Brigades	unknown	Hisham al-Maksusi	Independent, but claims affiliation with Sadr	Claims 4,000, real number probably much lower	Diyala, Yusufiya, Anbar, training bases in Karbala and Basra
30th Brigade	30 th	Colonel Mahmud Murthi al-Jumayli	Independent, made up of Anbari Sunnis	probably in the hundreds	Fallujah

Partisan to the Core

It has become customary in Iraqi discourse (among Shia, anyway) to emphasize that the constitution bans "militias outside the framework of the state" (*kharij itar al-dawla*) and that the Hashd groups function "under the law" (*ma ghita' qanuni*). This is important because Article 9(b) of the constitution says: "It is prohibited to establish military militias outside the framework of the security forces." While the framers of the 2005 constitution surely did not intend to allow political actors to form militias and then have the state give them legal cover (and weapons, salaries, etc.), this is what has happened. Whereas in a true military unit soldiers are never organized according to party affiliation, this is consistently the case among Shia militias. The same is true for VP **Osama al-Nujayfi's** camps in northern Ninawa, which are overseen by loyalists and are part of his political base. The difference between Nujayfi's militia and Badr or AAH is that the latter have weapons and official state functions and the former do not, for reasons which are entirely related to the political system's sectarian configuration.

The Shia Hashd factions can be divided into three main groups. The largest and most significant are factions affiliated with active political parties. The second most important group includes the radical factions which lack a popular base within Iraq and portray themselves as loyal servants of Iran. The last group are the apolitical religious factions, financially supported by the endowments of the Shia shrines.

This first category is organized upon lines dictated by Shia political competition. The killing of three Badr commanders in Saqlawiya, Anbar mentioned in the *National Scene* above illustrates this. The incident involved Badr's 4th Brigade, which although

“Hashd” has an entirely Badrist chain of command. As noted above, the funeral was attended by senior Shia political figures, and news coverage from mainstream media outlets focused on Ameri marching in the procession and other political leaders giving him their condolences. The procession itself was dominated by Badr flags, with Iraqi flags mixed in (see this [video](#) from the “War Media of Badr Military Wing”). But Badr is also a political party with 22 MPs currently; no campaign could buy an ad like this.

While Badr is the most important political militia group, the political-military tie-in is the same for smaller groups. The *Fadhila Party*, which follows Ayatollah **Muhammad al-Yaqubi**, a follower of Sadr’s late father and a political competitor to him, has a military wing called *Promise of God*. Like all Shia factions, Fadhila uses the term “Hashd,” but then heaps praise on its own group as if “Hashd” automatically referred to its own militia. This July 14 news report based on a Fadhila statement is illustrative:

The Islamic Fadhila Party expresses its full support for the Popular Mobilization Forces [Hashd] in the fight against terrorism. A party statement by Fadhila Assistant Secretary **Jamal al-Muhammadawi** confirmed during his meeting with a delegation from the forces of Promise of God headed by Commander **Abu Akbar al-Khalidi**, ‘our full support for the heroes of the Hashd and Promise of God and praise for their efforts in facing the terrorist Daesh organization in Karma in Anbar, and also in Holy Samarra.’ Muhammadawi added that ‘the sacrifices of the martyrs of Promise of God/*Young Men of the Message Brigade*³⁵ was the most prominent factor in the liberation of Karma from the hands of the Daeshists, and their blood is what has brought defeat to terrorism and will bring an end to it.’³⁶

While Fadhila is exaggerating its role in Karma, nonetheless this is vital to its political future as its candidate list in upcoming elections will need to include individuals who fought on the front lines, and be able to claim “martyrs” in the fight.

Among other actors, ISCI maintains multiple militias, likely to avoid letting any one commander develop a dominant role that could challenge **Ammar al-Hakim**, a lesson perhaps derived from Badr’s defection. Dawa operates fighters under the name of the *First Martyr Forces*, although this is also an umbrella group that includes several smaller, Dawa-aligned factions, most of them loyal to the Maliki wing of the party. The group’s nominal commander is **Karim al-Ghizzi**.³⁷ The Sadrist Peace Companies operates large units with proper military designations, including the 1st Division in Baghdad and the 3rd Division in the south.³⁸ As noted above, its overall military commander and Samarra unit commander is one Abu Dua, who was appointed by Sadr himself, and the other units by region also have commanders whose names are public.

A tension exists between the factions of the established parties and the less political, more militant factions such as AAH, the *Hizbullah Brigades*, and the *Khorasani Companies*. AAH has a long-standing rivalry with the Sadrist Current that has at times included violence (*IIP 96/6*), while Hizbullah Brigades recently seized an ISCI office in

Basra for its own use, leading to a public exchange of accusations between the two groups.³⁹ Several of the militant groups have proclaimed Iran's Supreme Leader **Ali Khamenei** as their religious leader, a move which suggests they answer to Iranian authority rather than to Abadi. For some of the militant leaders, fealty to Khamenei may be less an ideological commitment than a tactical way of differentiating themselves from existing parties and justifying their defiance of government authority.

While the militant factions' belief in an extra-legal religious authority for their actions has led to clashes with state authority, these have remained localized and sporadic. Several of the militant factions, including the Khorasani Companies and AAH, have become infamous for gangsterism and bully tactics, picking fights with pro-government Sunni tribal fighters, Kurdish Peshmerga, and even Shia civilians.⁴⁰

The third category, the Iraqi cleric-based factions, likely exist in part to serve as a check against a power grab in the shrine cities by Iran-backed rivals. The *Abbas Combat Division* and the *Ali al-Akbar Brigade* are overseen by Karbala shrine administrators appointed by Ayatollah **Ali al-Sistani**. These factions have fought in Salah al-Din and Anbar, but their heaviest deployment is in Karbala itself. Nominally to protect the city from Sunni jihadists, the Karbala deployment is probably also intended to prevent any attempt by Shia militias to seize shrines for political purposes, along the lines of the Mahdi Army's takeover of Najaf in 2004, and *Jund al-Sama'*'s move on Karbala in 2007. The Abbas Division uses a dual-command system, in which training and operations are overseen by retired army officers but with close supervision from Shia clerics.⁴¹

Non-Shia Hashd Factions Fight IS, Make No Political Demands

Abadi's administration has had some success in integrating Sunni volunteers into the Hashd. The Sunni factions tend not to speak much in public of their connection to the Hashd, which is associated in Sunni media with sectarian violence. The Sunni integration effort is overseen by Thamir al-Tamimi ("Abu Azzam"), a former Sahwa leader from Abu Ghayb. Abadi appointed him "Assistant Chairman of the Hashd Committee for Tribal Affairs" in January, at the behest of Speaker Jiburi.⁴² According to Tamimi, Sunnis make up about 15 percent of the Hashd's 100,000 men. The same estimate is also given by Basra Sunni MP **Abd al-Athim al-Ajman**.⁴³

Sunni Hashd in Anbar and Salah al-Din are organized along local and tribal rather than political lines. Much of the Sunni Hashd's strength is in Anbar, including 2,000 mostly Isawi tribesmen in Ameriyat al-Fallujah, and a similar number of volunteers in the Haditha pocket.⁴⁴ The 30th Brigade, commanded by former army officers, is active in Karma (northeast of Fallujah).⁴⁵ The 15,000 figure must be taken with skepticism, though, since Tamimi was including forces loyal to the Nujayfi brothers in Kurdish-controlled Ninawa which they call *al-hashd al-watani* or "National Mobilization," but which has been plagued by mutual recriminations with Baghdad over salaries and arms, and at present has just 2,000 fighters on the Hashd payroll,⁴⁶ only about a quarter

of the total the Nujayfis claim to have trained at their camps. Some of the Shia factions have also recruited small numbers of Sunni volunteers from their areas of operation to serve as local auxiliaries, especially in Salah al-Din.⁴⁷ If Tamimi was including all Nujayfi-claimed forces in the 15,000, there are probably only about half that active.

Furthermore, the Sunni Hashd cannot serve to balance the political influence Shia parties have gained. The only serious attempt has been that by the Nujayfis and their camps in Ninawa, which have Turkish trainers and in part for that reason are held at a distance (*IIP 105/6-7*), and indeed helped lead to parliament's removal of Governor Nujayfi himself and the new split between the Nujayfis and Speaker Jiburi (page four above). Furthermore, Tamimi, the "tribal affairs" assistant commander, has explained his personal opposition to the Sunni autonomy project, arguing that it would leave Sunnis in Baghdad and other mixed provinces isolated.⁴⁸ Thus the Sunni Hashd may turn out to be a political asset of Abadi, a double-edged sword he can use to dilute Iranian control of the Hashd and undermine Nujayfi at once. Apart from Nujayfi, the only other attempt to create a political Sunni militia was that by businessman **Khamis al-Khanjar**, who tried to form a counterbalance to Badr in Sunni areas of Diyala last September.⁴⁹ But Badr's domination of Diyala is complete and nothing came of it.

The Sunni Hashd also provides only a partial solution to Sunni demands for greater integration. They are local and largely apolitical, making no demands on Baghdad other than for weapons and funds to use in the fight against Sunni terrorists. In the present environment, Sunnis are vulnerable to accusations of "siding with terrorists," which makes it hard for them to resist Shia militias' predatory tactics - as the Balad police force found out when 60 of its men were arrested in May by Interior Ministry forces after clashing with Khorasani fighters who had tried to seize their police station.⁵⁰

The hope for a role in security policy has even tempted some Christians to join the Hashd. A faction calling itself "Babiliyun," trained by and affiliated with the *Imam Ali Brigades*, has a dual function of fighting IS and protecting Christians in Baghdad from criminal attacks.⁵¹ Its leader, **Rayan al-Kildani**, praises Iran and compares himself to Wahab and John, two Christian servants of Imam Hussein.⁵² Kildani has no military experience to speak of, but he does have political connections: in Dec. 2013, he paid a visit to Detroit in his capacity as an advisor to the Maliki government on Christian affairs; video of the event shows him drinking whisky with members of the local Iraqi Christian community, who appear honored by his presence ([video](#)). Kildani's Babiliyun militia is of little military significance, but represents an attempt to build ties with Shia Islamists and to build a new, non-Westernized image of Christians in Iraq.

The Future Hashd: National Guard, Pasdaran or Criminal Gangs?

It should now be clear why the much-discussed "national guard" project is headed toward a dead end, at least in terms of its original purpose of ensuring Sunnis play a predominate role in security for their areas. Originally proposed by the US Embassy,

the national guard bill came out of the cabinet in the only format which could have passed a cabinet vote, ensuring control by Baghdad and making it likely just to be a renamed Shia militia-dominated Hashd. As we noted in our original analysis of the bill in March (*IIP 102*), the text allows guard units to be formed from those “resident” in provinces and not merely natives of them. Comments from Shia MPs have made it clear they expect the Hashd to have priority in guard units. Salah al-Din is majority Sunni but its guard would almost certainly be Shia-dominated; Anbar would be mostly Sunni with Nukhayb Shia militia-controlled, closing off Anbar’s link to Saudi Arabia; Diyala’s guard would essentially just be Badr’s armed wing, permanently funded by the state.

Shia provinces do not need national guard units, and the Hashd is already becoming the equivalent of Iran’s *Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)*. Maliki is the most senior figure to openly advocate 1980s-era Iran as a model for Iraq’s armed forces,⁵³ although other militia leaders clearly have the same in mind. What complicates matters is that instead of one Khomeini there are a dozen, and while some faction leaders are close to one other, others are mutually hostile. This has kept Abadi from being dominated by pro-Iranian Hashd, but even so this means no one is really in charge.

A third future for the Hashd, the possibility that the Hashd itself cannot prevent the movement from evolving into criminality, is even scarier for ordinary citizens. Events the past two weeks in both Baghdad and Basra have illustrated this. In one prominent incident, on July 9, an armed group took control of a government building in the Zayuna area of Baghdad, planning to make it their headquarters, leading to a shoot-out with Interior Ministry-led government forces.⁵⁴ Some sources indicate it was the *Hizbullah of Iraq Brigades*,⁵⁵ a group not close to the Hashd leadership. Separately, Christians claim politically-affiliated gangs are taking over their property and killing their owners, with Baghdad Councilman **Muhammad al-Rubai** saying 70 percent of property owned by Christians who had left Baghdad had been seized illegally.⁵⁶ Christian MP **Imad Yukhanna** has made similar claims, saying the killings and property takings rose to the level of “cleansing.”⁵⁷ Since Christians pose no strategic threat to Shia factions, the killings are likely just criminally-motivated.

In Basra we have noted the conflict between ISCI and Badr for militia dominance (*IIP 110/4*), but there is an undercurrent to this as the Badr-run official Hashd has found itself asking for government help in stamping out “unofficial Hashd” groups. It is unclear how many are real fighting groups which are merely unlicensed, and how many are just criminal gangs calling themselves “Hashd,” but officials claim to have shut down multiple offices and arrested individuals falsely claiming Hashd military ranks.⁵⁸ Abadi decried both events, condemning the July 9 event and asking why new “Hashd” groups were cropping up in Basra so far from the front.⁵⁹ Basra Operations Commander **Samir Abd al-Karim** declared on July 12 that security forces would now arrest anyone “claiming to be Hashd without confirming documents,” adding that the command had formed a new interagency committee to shut down unlicensed groups.⁶⁰

For the Record

Iraqi Politics July 1 – July 16

This is a timeline of key political events during the period covered by this issue. It is primarily focused on the actions of parliament and the prime minister; meetings of the parliamentary committees of Security & Defense, Oil & Energy, Finance, Economy, Foreign Affairs and Legal Affairs, as well as other notable events, may also be included. Cabinet and parliament sessions are presented in summary format.

July 1: Abadi speaks by phone with Egyptian President Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi.⁶¹

Parliament meets ([parliamentary schedule](#)) with 240 MPs present, officially beginning the first session of the second year of its term. It passes the [Fifth Revision of the Public Companies Law No. 22 of 1997](#). It completes first readings of a bill on state holidays, of a trade agreement with Kuwait, and of a scientific and cultural cooperation agreement with France. It completes the second reading of a law on treaties. It passes a non-binding resolution against ratifying Iraq's accession to the International Organization for Migration.⁶²

July 2: Abadi speaks by phone with Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu.⁶³ Abadi also speaks by phone with US Vice President Joe Biden.⁶⁴

Parliament's Legal Committee meets to discuss the General Amnesty Law.⁶⁵

Parliament meets ([parliamentary schedule](#)) with 215 MPs present. Deputy Prime Minister Baha al-Araji presents a report on energy issues, primarily electricity, and answers MPs questions. Muhammad Sahib al-Darraji of the Sadrists' Ahrar Bloc is sworn in as industry minister.⁶⁶

July 4: Abadi meets with Kuwaiti ambassador Ghasan al-Zawawi.⁶⁷ Abadi visits a camp for internally displaced persons in the Dura neighborhood of Baghdad ([video](#)).

Parliament meets ([parliamentary schedule](#)) with 238 MPs present. It completes the first reading of Iraq's accession to the Arab Peace and Security Council's charter. It completes the first reading of Iraq's accession to a loan agreement with the Islamic Development Bank. It completes second readings of a law on Islamic banks and of a revision to the Compulsory Automobile Insurance Law No. 52 of 1980. Speaker Jiburi decides to postpone a vote on a measure to provide financial aid to Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries.⁶⁸

July 5: Abadi meets newly appointed Industry Minister Darraji.⁶⁹ Abadi holds a meeting with ambassadors from Arab and Islamic countries to discuss the fight against IS.⁷⁰

Parliament meets ([parliamentary schedule](#)) with 244 MPs present. It ratifies Iraq's accession to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS). It completes the first reading of the Amnesty Law and of the Justice and Accountability Law. It decides to send back to committee for further revisions a bill granting pensions to government workers acting under temporary appointment. It completes the first reading of a bill attaching the Judicial Academy to the judicial branch. Rasul Sabah Hassan is sworn in as a new MP, replacing Muhammad al-

Darraji, who resigned from parliament to take up his new post as minister.⁷¹ Separately, Speaker Jiburi chairs a meeting with parliamentary bloc chiefs and with members of the Security and Defense Committee to discuss the National Guard Law.⁷²

July 6: Abadi meets with Anbar Governor Suhayb al-Rawi to discuss the fight against IS.⁷³

July 7: The cabinet meets and discusses war affairs, but publishes no specific decisions.⁷⁴

July 8: Abadi visits the Joint Operations Center for briefings on military developments.⁷⁵

July 9: Abadi meets with members of the Anbar provincial council and Governor Rawi. Abadi reiterates the government's commitment to the swift liberation of Ramadi.⁷⁶ Abadi meets with US Deputy Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL Brett McGurk.⁷⁷

July 11: Speaking at a memorial ceremony for Ayatollah Muhammad Mahdi al-Asifi, Abadi calls for lowering the salaries of senior government officials "for the sake of social solidarity."⁷⁸

July 12: Abadi meets with the World Bank's Director for the Middle East, Ferid Belhaj.⁷⁹

The cabinet meets, and decides to require all ministries to print their publications inside Iraq. It approves Iraq's accession to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It announces its intention to cut the salaries of the highest-ranking government officials.⁸⁰

July 13: Abadi visits the military's Joint Operations Center for briefings on military operations. He is accompanied by Defense Minister Khalid al-Obaydi.⁸¹

July 14: Abadi's office issues a statement on the Iranian nuclear agreement, congratulating "the people of neighboring Iran and all the peoples of the region and the world on this important agreement, which we hope will spare the region from the woes of disaster and war."⁸²

Abadi attends an Iftar meal with personnel of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF) and gives a speech ([video](#)).⁸³

July 15: Abadi chairs a meeting of the crisis cell, which discusses plans to raise funds through a bond issue and measures to solve problems facing investment projects.⁸⁴

Abadi meets with Speaker Jiburi to discuss the war effort and reconstruction plans.⁸⁵

July 16: Abadi again visits the military's Joint Operations Center to oversee Anbar operations.⁸⁶

Citation Note: At times we link to videos in the text, indicating the link is to a video, and at other times in the endnotes, in some cases simply based on whether the additional characters would add a line to the paragraph. For clarity from now on, in the endnotes we will be adding a "TV" notification to indicate that the link is a video. For example, "al-Jazeera TV" or "al-Iraqiya TV" indicates a link to a video of the actual program, while a link to "al-Jazeera" or "al-Iraqiya" is to their website. We will continue to use "video" when giving a link in the text.

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- ¹ "Kurdistan Region Exporting 599,000 Barrels Per Day Independently of SOMO," [NRT Arabic](#), July 11, 2015.
- ² "KRG Extending Control Over Oil Exports," [Iraq Oil Report](#), July 9, 2015.
- ³ "Only KDP Considers KRG Oil Policy to be on the Right Track," [Levin Press](#), July 12, 2015.
- ⁴ "Increasing Split Between Barzani and Talabani Parties in Kurdistan Over Security and Economic Issues," [al-Hayat](#), July 14, 2015.
- ⁵ For example, see "Rihab al-Abudi Considers Kurdistan's Export Outside the Export Agreement to be Theft Regardless of the Justification Put Forward," [al-Mustaqbal News](#), July 13, 2015.
- ⁶ "Abadi: Oil Minister Will Follow-Up on Compliance of Kurdistan on the Oil Agreement Between Baghdad and Erbil," [Youm 7](#), July 15, 2015.
- ⁷ See the immediately preceding news report. The "Crisis Cell" includes certain individuals and they hold the economic portfolios.
- ⁸ "The Iraqi Army Confirms Killing of Hundreds of Daesh Members," [al-Hayat](#), July 16, 2015.
- ⁹ Afternoon Broadcast, [al-Sumaria TV](#), July 13, 2015; Evening Broadcast, [al-Sumaria TV](#), July 13, 2015.
- ¹⁰ "The Iraqi Army Progresses with Caution Toward Central Fallujah," [al-Hayat](#), July 15, 2015. Note the reference to the "army" in both of these preceding headlines is incorrect.
- ¹¹ "Badr Buries Leaders Amid High-Level Official Attendance," [State of Law Network](#), July 14, 2015.
- ¹² See, Evening Broadcast, [al-Sumaria TV](#), July 14, 2015.
- ¹³ "Badr's Secretariat and its Leader Hadi al-Ameri Recognize New Constellation of Martyrs," [al-Ghadeer](#), July 13, 2015.
- ¹⁴ "Daesh Launches Attack Against Strategic Khalidiya Area in Anbar," [al-Arabiya](#), July 10, 2015.
- ¹⁵ "Foreigners in the Islamic State Organization Lead the Fight in Anbar After Most Leaders Flee to Syria," [Deutsch Press Arabic](#), July 16, 2016.
- ¹⁶ "National Alliance Opposes Dissolving the 'Accountability Commission' and State of Law Demands Baath Ban First," [al-Mada](#), July 10, 2015.
- ¹⁷ See IIP 109/3. From the provisions made public, it is clear that anyone fighting the Iraqi government cannot receive the amnesty, but others, such as Sadrist militiamen who only fought US forces, could be freed.
- ¹⁸ "Seven Divisions Between Political Factions Impede Passage of National Guard Bill," [al-Alem](#), July 8, 2015.
- ¹⁹ "Effort to Remove Jiburi Due to Recent Decisions Which He Has Made in the National Interest," [al-Etjah TV](#), July 13, 2015. The most detailed treatment of the topic came in an interview with Jiburi himself; see, Interview with Salim al-Jiburi, [al-Dijla TV](#), July 4, 2015.
- ²⁰ "With the Nujayfis' Support... Talal al-Zoubi Advanced to Replace Salim al-Jiburi," [Chakooch](#), July 12, 2015.
- ²¹ "Najaf Provincial Council Votes By Majority to Remove Governor Adnan al-Zurfi," [al-Sumaria News](#), July 13, 2015.
- ²² "Fidelity to Najaf Appeals Council Vote Removing Zurfi," [al-Mada Press](#), July 13, 2015.
- ²³ "Sulayti Reveals Major Financial Violations in Nasrawi's Documents," [State of Law Network](#), July 14, 2015.
- ²⁴ "Basra Provincial Government Announces Exceptional Approvals for Projects in the Hundreds of Billions [Dinars]," [al-Rafidayn](#), July 10, 2015.
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²⁵ See for example a speech given by ISCI's Jalal al-Din al-Saghir in 2008, arguing forcefully for a separation between security and political affairs: "Shaykh Jalal al-Din al-Saghir Reveals Names of Those Responsible for Destroying Basra and Spreading Death and Corruption In It," [Buratha News](#), March 21, 2008.

²⁶ For background on this narrative, see "The Rise of Iraq's Militia State," Kirk H. Sowell, [Sada](#), April 23, 2015, or in Arabic on the JIB, see this two-part series with the group's leader, Ahmad al-Asadi, [Jund al-Imam Battalions, Part I](#) and [Jund al-Imam Battalions, Part II](#) which aired on al-Dijla on March 28 and April 4, respectively, of this year. Asadi is introduced in the text below, and in these interviews he talks about his relationship with Maliki in the 2010-2014 period, among other topics.

²⁷ See the second sermon from Sistani representative Abd al-Mahdi al-Karbalai from [Imam Hussein.Org](#), June 13, 2014.

²⁸ As an example of Muhandis' role in managing the the militias, see "Testimony From Bayji: Hashd Militias Demolish Mosques and Burn Orchards," [al-Sharq al-Awsat](#), June 8, 2015.

²⁹ Interview with Thamir al-Tamimi, [al-Dijla TV](#), July 15, 2015.

³⁰ Prior to last December, Muhandis was merely described as "a prominent leader in the Hashd," and the "Deputy Commander" title he adopted at the end of the year, giving his first press conference on Dec. 31. While Ameri is often referred to colloquially as "the commander of the Hashd" (*qa'id al-hashd al-shaabi*), it is clear he is subordinate to Muhandis. It is Muhandis, and he only, who gives the kind of strategic-level supervision similar to the role played by American commanders such as General Ray Odierno in Iraq. Ameri is a political symbol for the Hashd and never talks militarily outside of the theatre he is operating in. When he is outside Diyala, which is where he is from and where he has his headquarters (at the old camp Ashraf held by the Mujahidin e Khalq), he is always the most senior "field commander" - a role he played in Jurf al-Sakhr and now Anbar. But whereas he can be seen in photos and videos having army generals - including Tigris Operations Commander Abd al-Amir al-Zaydi - report to him in Diyala, the same is not true in Anbar. Fayyad is never presented as overseeing anything military. Muhandis and Ameri are the only two figures who appear to have real power over military movements.

³¹ See for example, "Behind the News... Escalation Warning for the Worse," [al-Jazeera TV](#), July 5, 2015.

³² "Muqtada al-Sadr Obligates the Peace Companies to Follow Abu Dua," [Sirat al-Mustaqim](#), July 5, 2014.

³³ "Flight of Commander of the Mahdi Army 'Promised Day Brigade'," [Jordan News](#), Aug. 15, 2011.

³⁴ Khuzai's role was mentioned in a press conference by Saraya Khorasani leader Ali al-Yasseri ([video](#)), April 5, 2015; Khuzai has apparently served as Maliki's liaison to the Hashd since at least fall of 2014 ([video](#)).

³⁵ From past interviews it appears that Fadhila uses these two names because they called the group "Young Men of the Message" at first and changed the name later to "Promise of God."

³⁶ "The Fadhila Party Affirms its Full Support for the Hashd," [al-Iraq News](#), July 14, 2015.

³⁷ Interview with Karim al-Ghizzi, [Afaq TV](#), June 21, 2015. Ghizzi's comments echoing Maliki's claim that "al-Qaeda" was associated with the Sunni protest movement and the need for a "reserve army" before the fall of Mosul are notable.

³⁸ "Dhi Qar: Peace Companies Volunteers Continue Training to Defend Iraq and Its Holy Places," [al-Janoob](#), July 28, 2014.

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- ³⁹ “Abu Kalal: Kataib Hezbollah Are Targeting ISCI Deliberately in a Manner That Serves ISIS’ Interests,” [al-Mada Press](#), May 10, 2015.
- ⁴⁰ “Shia Tribe Accuses Hashd of Crimes Against Civilians,” [al-Arab \(London\)](#), March 19, 2015; “Hashd Faces Off Against Kurds in Iraq,” [al-Hayat \(London\)](#), June 14, 2015; “Baghdad Shootout Points to Growing Militia Threat,” [Agence France-Presse](#), Oct. 21, 2014; “60 Policemen Arrested After Killings of Saraya Khorasani Men in Balad, Southern Salah al-Din,” [al-Baghdadia News](#), May 7, 2015.
- ⁴¹ “Shadow Rifles Episode Seven: The Abbas Combat Division,” [al-Dijla TV](#), March 21, 2015.
- ⁴² Interview with Thamir al-Tamimi, [al-Dijla TV](#), July 15, 2015.
- ⁴³ “Baghdad Cuts Salaries of Ninawa Volunteers Over Suspicions of Five Thousand Ghost Soldiers in Their Ranks,” [al-Mada](#), June 25, 2015.
- ⁴⁴ Interview with Thamir al-Tamimi, [al-Dijla TV](#), July 15, 2015.
- ⁴⁵ Special Assignment, [Hona Baghdad TV](#), May 23, 2015.
- ⁴⁶ “Baghdad Cuts Salaries of Ninawa Volunteers Over Suspicions of Five Thousand Ghost Soldiers in Their Ranks,” [al-Mada](#), June 25, 2015.
- ⁴⁷ “Iraqi Sunnis Join Feared Shiite Militia to Battle IS,” [Agence France-Presse](#), March 13, 2015;
- ⁴⁸ See the interview with al-Dijla by Thamir al-Tamimi linked above.
- ⁴⁹ “Sunni Tribes in Diyala Demand the Formation of a Special Force to Protect Their Areas,” [al-Sharq al-Awsat](#), Sept. 27, 2015.
- ⁵⁰ “60 Policemen Arrested After Killings of Saraya Khorasani Men in Balad, Southern Salah al-Din,” [al-Baghdadia News](#), May 7, 2015.
- ⁵¹ Untitled Press Release, Babiliyun ([Facebook](#)), July 10, 2015.
- ⁵² “Political Evening,” Interview with Riyan al-Kildani, [al-Baghdadia TV](#), June 22, 2015.
- ⁵³ Maliki discussed this near the end of an interview with AAH’s TV channel, see “Decision Maker – Interview with Nuri al-Maliki,” [al-Ahad TV](#), April 17, 2015.
- ⁵⁴ “Violent Clashes Between Shia Militia and Police Over Government Building in Baghdad,” [al-Quds al-Arabi](#), July 9, 2015.
- ⁵⁵ “Clashes Between Militia and Iraqi Security in Baghdad,” [al-Arabiya](#), July 9, 2015.
- ⁵⁶ “Christians in Baghdad: Our Property is Sold and Bought Without Our Knowledge with Political and Armed Elements Taking Over,” [al-Mada](#), July 15, 2015.
- ⁵⁷ “MP Accuses Religious Parties of Taking Over Christians’ Property in Baghdad,” [al-Sumaria News](#), July 11, 2015.
- ⁵⁸ “Military Operations in Basra Close Offices Falsly Claiming Approval from the Hashd,” [Iraq Media Net](#), June 29, 2015.
- ⁵⁹ “Abadi Criticizes Militias of the Hashd,” [al-Jazeera TV](#), July 11, 2015.
- ⁶⁰ “Basra Operations Commander: We Will Arrest Anyone Claiming to Be Hashd Without Documentation,” [al-Iraq News](#), June 12, 2015.
- ⁶¹ “PM Abadi Speaks by Phone With Egyptian President Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi,” [Prime Minister’s Office](#), July 1, 2015.
- ⁶² “Parliament Opens its Second Legislative Season by Passing Two Laws and Completing Readings of Four Bills,” [Iraqi Parliament](#), July 1, 2015.
- ⁶³ “PM Abadi Speaks by Phone with Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu,” [Prime Minister’s Office](#), July 2, 2015.
- ⁶⁴ “Abadi Speaks by Phone With Vice President Jo Biden,” [Prime Minister’s Office](#), July 2, 2015.
- ⁶⁵ “Parliamentary Legal Committee Meets to Discuss General Amnesty Law,” [Iraqi Parliament](#), July 2, 2015.
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- 66 "Parliament Hosts Deputy Prime Minister Baha al-Araji," [Iraqi Parliament](#), July 2, 2015.
- 67 "PM Abadi Receives Kuwaiti Ambassador," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 4, 2015.
- 68 "Parliament Completes First and Second Readings of Four Bills," [Iraqi Parliament](#), July 4, 2015.
- 69 "PM Abadi Receives New Industry Minister Muhammad al-Darraji," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 5, 2015.
- 70 "PM Abadi Meets Ambassadors From a Number of Arab and Islamic Countries," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 5, 2015.
- 71 "Parliament Approves One Law and Completes Readings of Four Bills, Including the Amnesty Bill and the Justice and Accountability Bill," [Iraqi Parliament](#), July 5, 2015.
- 72 "Speaker of Parliament Chairs Meeting of Chiefs of Parliamentary Blocs," [Iraqi Parliament](#), July 5, 2015.
- 73 "PM Abadi Receives Anbar Governor Suhayb al-Rawi," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 6, 2015.
- 74 "The Cabinet Welcomes Victories Achieved by Security Forces Against Daesh Terrorists in Bayji, Kirkuk, Western Fallujah, and Haditha," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 7, 2015.
- 75 "PM Abadi Receives Briefings on Security and Military Operations," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 8, 2015.
- 76 "PM Abadi Meets With Members of Anbar Provincial Council and Governor Suhayb al-Rawi," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 9, 2015.
- 77 "PM Abadi Receives US Assistant Secretary of State Brett McGurk," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 9, 2015.
- 78 "PM Abadi Calls for Lowering Salaries of Government Officials to Achieve Social Justice and Solidarity," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 11, 2015.
- 79 "PM Abadi Receives Regional Director of World Bank," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 12, 2015.
- 80 "Cabinet Confirms Determination to Liberate All Areas Polluted by ISIS Terrorist Gangs and Condemns Crimes Against Civilians," [Prime Minister's Office, July 13, 2015.](#)
- 81 "PM Abadi Receives Briefings on Progress of Military Units in Operations to Liberate Anbar," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 13, 2015.
- 82 "Statement on the Occasion of the Iranian Nuclear Agreement," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 14, 2015.
- 83 "PM Abadi Visits Special Forces Headquarters and Shares Iftar Meal With Heroic Fighters," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 14, 2015.
- 84 "PM Abadi Chairs Meeting of Crisis Cell," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 15, 2015.
- 85 "PM Abadi Receives Speaker of Parliament," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 15, 2015.
- 86 "PM Abadi Receives Briefings on Progress of Military Operations of Our Heroic Forces," [Prime Minister's Office](#), July 16, 2015.
-