Badr Organization

Name: Badr Organization

Type of Organization:
- Militia
- political party
- religious
- social services provider
- terrorist
- transnational
- violent

Ideologies and Affiliations:
- Iranian-sponsored
- Islamist
- jihadist
- Khomeinist
- Shiite

Place of Origin:
Iraq

Year of Origin:
1983

Founder(s):  
Iraqi Shiites loyal to the al-Hakim Shiite clerical dynasty, with the help of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

Places of Operation:  
Iraq, Syria

Overview

Also Known As:

Also Known As:
- Badr Brigade
- Badr Brigades
- Badr Corps
- Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development
- Badr Organisation in Iraq

Susannah George, "Breaking Badr," Foreign Policy, November 6, 2014, [1]
Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development, Stanford University, last modified August 11, 2014, [4]
List of groups designated terrorist organisations by the UAE, [5]
Badr Organization

Executive Summary:

The Badr Organization is a Shiite political party and paramilitary force that acts as Iran’s oldest proxy in Iraq, according to Reuters. Babak Dehghanpisheh, Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran, Reuters, November 12, 2014, and Reuters notes that the group’s military wing is considered the single most powerful Shiite paramilitary group fighting in Iraq. Ned Parker, Babak Dehghanpisheh, and Isabel Coles, Special Report: How Iran’s military chiefs operate in Iraq, Reuters, February 24, 2015.


The Badr Organization was formed in 1983 under the name the Badr Brigades, and the group originally served as the military wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), an Iraqi Shiite political party aimed at bringing Iran’s Islamic Revolution to Iraq. During the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War, SCIRI’s Badr Brigades fought alongside Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) against the Iraqi military. From 1983 to 2003, the Badr Brigades continued to operate out of Iran, carrying out intermediary attacks in southern Iraq.

Formed in 1983 under the name Babr, the Badr Organization originally served as the military wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), an Iraqi Shiite political party aimed at bringing Iran’s Islamic Revolution to Iraq. During the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War, SCIRI’s Badr Brigades fought alongside Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) against the Iraqi military. From 1983 to 2003, the Badr Brigades continued to operate out of Iran, carrying out intermediary attacks in southern Iraq.


In 2009, the U.S. government designated then-current leader of Badr as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. Some units in Iraq’s army, including Iraq’s 5th and 20th Battalions, have reportedly answered to Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. According to a leaked cable from the U.S. State Department, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri personally stands accused of ordering attacks on up to 2,000 Sunnis.

In 2003, the Badr Brigades returned to Iraq to take advantage of the political vacuum there following the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime. That year, the group formally rebranded, changing its name to &ldquo;the Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development&rdquo; and publicly pledging to abstain from violent attacks. From 2004 to 2006, however, the Badr Organization launched a brutal sectarian war on Iraq’s Sunni population.

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The Badr Organization currently leads a significant political force in Iraq in addition to operating as a militia. From 2011 to 2014, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri served as Iraq's Interior Minister. From October 2014 to July 2016, another Badr member, Mohammed Ghabban, served as Iraq's Interior Minister. In January 2018, the Badr Organization held 22 seats in Iraq's parliament. As of late 2016, the Badr Organization holds 22 seats in Iraq's parliament, of which 21 belong to Badr, and in June it allied with Muqtada al-Sadr's Sairoon and with other PMF units to form the Fatah Alliance political party ahead of Iraq's May 2018 elections. In Iraq, America's Allies — and Its Enemies — Are Nervously Waiting for Donald Trump's First Move,
the second largest political bloc in the Iraqi parliament. Michael Knights and Frzand Sherko, &ldquo;Can Asaib Ahl al-Haq Join the Political Mainstream?,&rdquo; Washington Institute, February 14, 2019, <a href="https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/can-asaib-ahl-a...[50] On July 13, 2018, Iraqi protesters in the country&rsquo;s south attacked the political offices of Badr and other Iran-backed groups as they called for Iran to withdraw from Iraq. Seth J. Frantzman, &ldquo;Mass Protests Sweep Iraq, Target Pro-Iran Militias and Parties,&rdquo; <span style="font-style: normal !msorm;">&lt;em&gt;Jerusalem Post&lt;/em&gt;&lt;/span&gt;., July 16, 2018, <a href="https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Mass-protests-sweep-Iraq-target-pro-Ir...[51]

Although the Badr Organization&rsquo;s political arm portrays itself as welcoming and conciliatory to Sunnis, the areas where the group fights ISIS have seen some of the most high-profile Sunni-Shiite violence of the current conflict, according to the latest report by the Middle East Institute, November 30, 2017, <a href="http://www.mei.edu/content/io/iran-backed-badr-organization-call-us-troo...[56] On July 1, 2019, Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul Mahdi issued a decree ordering the militias of the PMF to choose between full integration into the Iraqi armed forces or disarmament by July 31. The prime minister&rsquo;s decree stated that the PMF factions have to choose between either political or paramilitary activity and if they choose politics, they are not allowed to carry weapons. Jared Szuba, &ldquo;Mahdi orders full integration of Shia militias into Iraq&rsquo;s armed forces,&rdquo; July 3, 2019, <a href="https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/10/15/islamic-state-fighters-are-back-and...[54]

The decree was an attempt by Abdul Mahdi at curtailing the autonomy of Iranian-backed militias, which boast more than 120,000 fighters. Some critics suggested the United States and Saudi Arabia instigated the decree after U.S. officials concluded that drone attacks on Saudi Arabia’s oil pipeline in May 2018 were launched from Iraq, not Yemen, which raised concerns over the activities of Iran-backed militias in Iraq. The decree forbade political parties and parliamentary blocs from having ties with the PMF. Also, all the headquarters, economic offices, and checkpoints manned by militias are to be shut down.

Abdul Mahdi issued a new decree in September 2019 that restructured the PMF’s leadership. Other PMF leaders were arrested or imprisoned for violating the new regulations. The Badr Organization, which was one of the largest PMF factions, was dissolved.

Since 2003, Shiism and Iranian-influenced Islamism have remained central elements of the Badr Organization’s identity. In 2011, Badr members celebrated the end of the U.S. military presence in Iraq by plastering the walls of government buildings with posters of Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and his predecessor, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. In early 2015, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri reaffirmed his support for Iran’s supreme leader, saying that Khamenei has all the qualifications as an Islamic leader. He is the leader not only for Iranians but the Islamic nation. I believe so and I take pride in it.

With the fight against ISIS in Iraq and the rapid growth of the PMF, Badr experienced a surge of support and influence. This surge was evident in the 2018 parliamentary elections, where the Badr Bloc won 32 seats, becoming the largest bloc in the Iraqi parliament. The Badr Organization’s leader, Hadi al-Amiri, was appointed as the new prime minister.

Since then, Badr has continued to be a key player in Iraqi politics, often siding with Iran against the United States and its allies. The organization remains a powerful force in Iraq, with a significant presence in the country’s political and military spheres.
Badr Organization

Nonetheless, many Iraqis remained suspicious of whether or not Badr would put the interests of Iraq before those of Iran. Amiri sought to turn the popular support for the PMF into a political victory for Badr and moved to draw a distinction between Badr’s political and military wings. In December 2017, Amiri ordered his fighters to withdraw from the cities they occupied, cut ties with Badr’s political wing, and follow the commands of the Iraqi National Army. (footnote 70)

Still, Amiri rebuked calls by Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi for the PMF to abandon its heavy weapons and join the Iraqi Army. (footnote 70) Amiri pledged in April 2018 to personally take up arms to defend Iraq from any danger regardless of any political position he may hold. (footnote 70) Garrett Nada and Mattisan Rowen, Part 2: Pro-Iran Militias in Iraq, Wilson Center, April 27, 2018, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/part-2-pro-iran-militias-iraq. (footnote 74) He also applauded Iran’s support for Badr and other PMF units when ISIS first swept into Iraq, stating in 2017, We commend the support of the Islamic Republic…In the beginning, the international coalition did not support Iraq. It was only the Islamic Republic of Iran that stood with us in the beginning. (footnote 76)

In January 2018, Badr formed the Fatah Alliance, a political bloc of Iran-backed PMF factions including Hezbollah (KH) and Ahmad Majidyar, “Iran-backed militia groups will receive full military benefits under new decree,” Middle East Institute, March 9, 2018, http://www.mei.edu/content/io/iran-backed-militia-groups-will-receive-fu... (footnote 73) Amiri led and Badr’s political wing, and follow the commands of the Iraqi National Army. (footnote 74)坏蛋领袖卡里姆·努里则表示，派系不会在2018年5月的议会选举中寻求与伊朗支持的法塔赫联盟结成政治联盟。Amiri sought to turn the popular support for the PMF into a political victory for Badr and moved to draw a distinction between Badr’s political and military wings. Nonetheless, many Iraqis remained suspicious of whether or not Badr would put the interests of Iraq before those of Iran. Amiri sought to turn the popular support for the PMF into a political victory for Badr and moved to draw a distinction between Badr’s political and military wings. In December 2017, Amiri ordered his fighters to withdraw from the cities they occupied, cut ties with Badr’s political wing, and follow the commands of the Iraqi National Army. (footnote 70)

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controls PMF Brigades 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 30, 52, 55, and 110 and has the allegiance of additional PMF brigades and several Iraqi Army brigades operating in Diya. &lt;span class="footnote">Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi, &amp;ldquo;Hashd Brigade Numbers Index,&amp;rdquo; Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi&amp;rsquo;s blog, May 30, 2019, &lt;a href="http://www.aymennjawad.org/2017/10/hashd-brigade-numbers-index"&gt;http://www.aymennjawad.org/2017/10/hashd-brigade-numbers-index[78]. Michael Knights, &amp;ldquo;Iran&amp;rsquo;s Expanding Militia Army in Iraq: The New Special Groups,&amp;rdquo; &lt;em&gt;CTC Sentinel&lt;/em&gt;, Vol 12, Issue 17, August 2019, &lt;a href="https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2019/08/CTC-SENTINEL-072019.pdf"&gt;https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2019/08/CTC-SENTINEL-072019.pdf[37] One Human Rights Watch employee said that Amiri &amp;ldquo;is an extremely powerful figure and he&amp;rsquo;s essentially acting with total impunity now. It&amp;rsquo;s not really the government leading the militias; it&amp;rsquo;s the other way around.&amp;rdquo;&lt;span class="footnote">The Battle for Iraq: Shia Militias vs. the Islamic State, &amp;rdquo; VICE News, February 12, 2015, &lt;a href="https://news.vice.com/video/the-battle-for-iraq-shia-militias-vs-the-isl...[79]<p>In his capacity as leader of the Badr Organization&amp;rsquo;s militia, Amiri claimed that he presented the group&amp;rsquo;s military plans to Abadi for approval. &lt;span class="footnote">Ned Parker, Babak Dehghanpisheh, and Isabel Coles, &amp;ldquo;Special Report: How Iran&amp;#39;s military chiefs operate in Iraq,&amp;rdquo; Reuters, February 24, 2015, &lt;a href="http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/24/us-mideast-crisis-committee-sp...[12] idUSKBN0LS0VD20150224&lt;/a&gt;.&lt;/span&gt; However, in April 2015, Abadi ordered that all Popular Mobilization Force (PMF) militias, including the Badr Organization, be placed under his office&amp;rsquo;s direct command. &lt;span class="footnote">Rod Nordland, &amp;ldquo;After Victory Over ISIS in Tikrit, Next Battle Requires a New Template,&amp;rdquo; &lt;em&gt;New York Times&lt;/em&gt;, April 7, 2015, &lt;a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/08/world/middleeast/iraq-isis-anbar-sunni...[80]<p>Although Amiri appeared to act without much Iraqi government oversight, reports suggested he answered to the leader of Iran&amp;rsquo;s IRGC-Quds Force, &lt;a href="www.countermilitants.com/extremists/qasem-soleimani/"&gt;Qasem Soleimani;&lt;/a&gt; In the 2015 fight to retake Tikrit from ISIS militants, Soleimani &amp;ldquo;was directing operations on the eastern flank from a village about 5km (35 miles) from Tikrit,&amp;rdquo; according to a Reuters report. &lt;span class="footnote">Ahmed Rasheed and Dominic Evans, &amp;ldquo;Iraqi forces try to seal off Islamic State area around Tikrit,&amp;rdquo; Reuters, March 3, 2015, &lt;a href="http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/03/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN...[32] Another Reuters report noted that Soleimani also directed Iranian-trained Shi&amp;rsquo;ite militias&amp;mdash;including the Badr Brigade.&amp;rdquo;&lt;span class="footnote">Mehdi Bazzi, &amp;ldquo;Iraqis may fear Shi&amp;rsquo;ite militias more than Islamic State,&amp;rdquo; Reuters, February 19, 2015, &lt;a href="http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2015/02/19/does-islamic-state-fear...[81] these guys-as-much-as-their-own-countrymen-do;&lt;/a&gt;.&lt;/span&gt; RAND Corporation analyst Alireza Nader has written that the Badr Organization &amp;ldquo;appears[ to be taking direct orders from Tehran,&amp;rdquo; &lt;span class="footnote">Alireza Nader, &amp;ldquo;Salvaging Iraq,&amp;rdquo; RAND Corporation, January 26, 2015, &lt;a href="http://www.rand.org/blog/2015/01/salvaging-iraq.html"&gt;http://www.rand.or...[82] This assertion is supported by the historic ties between Iran and Badr, which spent the first two decades of its existence as a direct military arm of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq and was led by Iranian officers. &lt;span class="footnote">Qasem Soleimani&amp;rsquo;s &amp;ldquo;Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development,&amp;rdquo; Mapping Militant Organizations, November 13, 2016, &lt;a href="http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/435#n...[83] Amiri has continued working directly alongside the IRGC since returning to Iraq, including working side-by-side with Soleimani during the battle for Mosul. &lt;span class="footnote">Ahmad Rasheed and Dominic Evans, &amp;ldquo;Iraqi forces try to seal off Islamic State around Tikrit,&amp;rdquo; Reuters, March 3, 2015, &lt;a href="https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraqi-forces-try...[85] Amiri was photographed outside the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad on December 31, 2019, as protesters threw stones and torched a security post at the embassy, prompting suspicions that he was encouraging the violence. After the attack, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called Amiri an Iranian &amp;ldquo;proxy;&amp;rdquo; aide&hellip;&lt;span class="footnote">Barbara Starr, Kevin Bohn, and Ross Levitt, &amp;ldquo;US strikes 5 facilities in Iraq and Syria linked to Iranian-backed militia,&amp;rdquo; CNN, December 29, 2019, &lt;a href="https://www.cnn.com/2019/12/29/politics/us-strikes-iran-backed-militia-f...[86] Ghassan Adnan, Isabel Coles, and Michael Gordon, &amp;ldquo;Trump Blames Iran After Militia Supporters Try to Storm U.S. Embassy in Baghdad,&amp;rdquo; &lt;span style="font-style: normal !msorm;"&gt;&lt;em&gt;Wall Street Journal&lt;/em&gt;&lt;/span&gt;, December 31, 2019, &lt;a href="https://www.wsj.com/articles/protesters-attempt-to-storm-u-s-embassy-in...[87] Seth J. Frantzman, &amp;ldquo;Pompeo names Iraqi Badr militia leader Hadi al-Amiri as Iranian proxy,&amp;rdquo; &lt;span style="font-style: normal !msorm;"&gt;&lt;em&gt;Jerusalem Post&lt;/em&gt;&lt;/span&gt;, January 2, 2020, &lt;a
In addition to his capacity as the Badr Organization’s military leader, Amiri also heads the group’s political wing, which maintains an office in east Mosul. [43] Campbell MacDiarmid and David Kenner, Foreign Policy, "Goodbye, Islamic State. Hello, Anarchy," Chicago Tribune, March 24, 2017, 89 Since it split from political party ISCI in 2012, the Badr Organization has emerged as a prominent political party within Iraq. In December 2010, then Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki appointed Amiri as Iraq’s transportation minister. phillip Smyth, "Iranian Militias in Iraq’s Parliament: Political Outcomes and U.S. Response," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, June 11, 2018, 89 In 2014, Prime Minister Abadi appointed a Badr member, Mohammed Chabban, as interior minister. At the time of Chabban’s appointment, the Washington Post reported that “Amiri’s political wing,which maintains an office in east Mosul, was involved in smuggling and distributing explosives that were intended for use against U.S. forces, according to leaked documents.” 89 The Badr parliamentary bloc, Amiri had been involved in smuggling and distributing explosives that were intended for use against U.S. forces, according to leaked documents. [91] Iraqi Minister of Interior: from pro-Saddam to pro-Iran, &ldquo;Al-Arabyia, January 31, 2017, 89 Rafidah Alaswadi, "Iraq’s interior minister resigns after massive Baghdad bomb attack," Reuters, July 5, 2016, 89 Qais Khazali, secretary-general of AAH, claimed that &ldquo;Amiri was the first to initiate contacts with the Badr Organization and in accordance with conditions set by the Fateh Alliance.&rdquo; 89 Qais al-Khazali, secretary-general of AAH, claimed that &ldquo;Amiri was the first to initiate contacts with the Badr Organization and in accordance with conditions set by the Fateh Alliance.&rdquo; [93] Anagnostos, "The Campaign for Mosul: January 24-31, 2017," Institute for the Study of War, January 31, 2017, 89 Patton, &ldquo;Iraq’s powerful Interior Minister, now leading fight against ISIS, was held twice by U.S. forces after 2003," Newsweek, January 31, 2017, 89 In January 2018, Kata&rsquo;ib Hezbollah (KH), Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), and the Badr Organization joined with other PMF units to form the Fatah Alliance political party in preparation for Iraq’s May 2018 elections. [94] Qais al-Khazali, secretary-general of AAH, claimed that &ldquo;Amiri was the first to initiate contacts with the Badr Organization and in accordance with conditions set by the Fateh Alliance.&rdquo; [95] Al-Monitor, June 14, 2018, 89 The Badr Organization formed a coalition government with Muqtada al-Sadr’s Sairoon Alliance, which received the largest number of parliamentary seats in the elections. The coalition placed Amiri and Fatah in a position to obtain high level government positions and have a final say in who will be Iraq’s next prime minister. [96] In May, the alliance exceeded expectations, winning 47 parliamentary seats in the election. The following month, Iraq&rsquo;s parliament ordered a manual recount of the 11 million votes amid claims of fraud. [97] Notwithstanding, on June 11, the Fatah Alliance formed a coalition government with Muqtada al-Sadr’s Sairoon Alliance, which received the largest number of parliamentary seats in the elections. The coalition placed Amiri and Fatah in a position to obtain high level government positions and have a final say in who will be Iraq’s next prime minister. [98] "Iraqi Minister of Interior opens door to militia and Iranian influence," Middle East Institute, March 6, 2018, 90 In October 2014, Prime Minister Abadi appointed a Badr member, Mohammed Chabban, as interior minister. At the time of Chabban’s appointment, the &ldquo;Washington Post reported that “Amiri’s political wing, which maintains an office in east Mosul, was involved in smuggling and distributing explosives that were intended for use against U.S. forces, according to leaked documents.” [91] Iraqi Minister of Interior: from pro-Saddam to pro-Iran, &ldquo;Al-Arabyia, January 31, 2017, 91 Qais Khazali, secretary-general of AAH, claimed that &ldquo;Amiri was the first to initiate contacts with the Badr Organization and in accordance with conditions set by the Fateh Alliance.&rdquo; [93] Al-Monitor, June 14, 2018, 91 In January 2018, Kata&rsquo;ib Hezbollah (KH), Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), and the Badr Organization joined with other PMF units to form the Fatah Alliance political party in preparation for Iraq’s May 2018 elections. [94] Qais al-Khazali, secretary-general of AAH, claimed that &ldquo;Amiri was the first to initiate contacts with the Badr Organization and in accordance with conditions set by the Fateh Alliance.&rdquo; [95] Al-Monitor, June 14, 2018, 91
The Badr Organization is backed by Iran, and Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri has confirmed that his group receives support from Iran. Senior Badr official Muen al-Kadhimi has said that Iran helped the group with everything from tactics to drone and signals capabilities, including electronic surveillance and radio communications. Badr-controlled areas of Diyala province have also reportedly served as transit points for Iranian arms supplies entering Iraq.

After ISIS was expelled from Iraq, Badr reportedly took control of the Safra border crossing between the Baghdad-controlled parts of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Local sources claim that the Badr Organization receives between $12 and $15 million each month in customs tariffs and taxes on the goods traded through Safra.

Since April 2014, the Badr Organization has established numerous city-based popular committees to recruit fighters for its military wing. After Iraq's most influential Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, issued a fatwa in July 2014 calling on Iraqis to fight ISIS, one Badr Organization recruiter claimed to have received 7,000 applications. The militia reportedly operates training facilities in Hillah, central Iraq.
Key Leaders

Hadi al-Amiri
Leader and secretary general of the Badr Organization. Al-Amiri was also Iraq’s transportation minister from 2010 to September 2014, and oversees Iraq’s military forces in Diyala province.

Muen al-Kadhimi
Deputy leader; leader in western Baghdad

Hassan al-Kaabi
Badr parliamentary bloc leader

Qasim al-Araji
Iraq’s Minister of Interior; former parliamentary bloc leader; former IRGC member and Badr commander

Mohammed Ghabban
Iraq’s former interior minister and a subordinate to Hadi al-Amiri

Mohamed Mahdi Bayati
Leader of Badr’s Northern Axis

Talib al-Musawi
Commander of all PMF operation in Diyala province and member of Badr Organization

Karim al-Nouri
Former spokesman

Ali al-Allaq
Senior member

Kareem Alew al-Mohamadawi
Spokesman

Jaafar al-Quraishi
Media spokesman

Haji Jawdat
Media officer
History:


- **July 16, 2019**: Joan Polachik, the acting principal deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, tells the U.S. Senate that some Iran-backed PMF groups “plot against U.S. interests and plan operations that could kill Americans, coalition partners and Iraqis.” Source: “Statement by Joan A. Polachik,” United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, July 16, 2019, [https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/071619_Polaschik_Testimony.pdf] [114].

- **July 1, 2019**: Iraq’s Prime Minister Adil Abdul Mahdi issues a decree ordering the country’s PMF militias to choose between full integration into the Iraqi armed forces or disarmament. The decree is Mahdi’s latest attempt at gaining influence over the Iran-backed militias, which boast more than 120,000 fighters. However, KH vehemently opposes the decree while other factions choose to support integration. The prime minister’s decree stated that the PMF factions have to choose between political and paramilitary activity and remain within the state army. If they choose politics, they are not allowed to carry weapons. Sources: Jared Szuba, “Mahdi orders full integration of Shia militias into Iraq’s armed forces,” July 3, 2019, [https://thedefensepost.com/2019/07/03/iraq-mahdi-orders-popular-mobilization-units-integration] [115]; “Shia militia agrees to integrate into state army,” Middle East Monitor, July 3, 2019, [https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/2019/07/shia-militia-agrees-to-integrate-into-iraq-state-army] [116].

- **April 13, 2019**: Hundreds of current and former members of the Badr Organization protest in downtown Baghdad demanding long-overdue financial compensation for their combat service against Saddam Hussein, whose regime was toppled in 2003. However, security forces affiliated with the party’s leader, Hadi al-Amiri, use violence to deter protesters, and a number of demonstrators are jailed for days. The protests failed to get coverage in local Iraqi newspapers and media outlets because of Amiri’s political influence, according to participants and organizers. Source: Omar al-Jaffal, “Badr strongman Amiri faces dissent within his group’s ranks,” Al Monitor, May 4, 2019, [https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/05/iraq-hadi-amiri-badr-organization-pmu-iran.html] [117].


- **March 11, 2019**: A former senior Badr Organization official reportedly states that officials in Iraq’s financial system, headed by Central Bank of Iraq governor Ali Al’Alaq, were operating in service of Iran’s IRGC and participating in counterfeiting money and money-laundering for the IRGC and Hezbollah in Lebanon. The claims have not been confirmed, although Al Arabiya has obtained reports on counterfeit funds seized at airports that correlates to the activity the senior official claims. Source: “Senior Former Hashd Al-Sha’bi Official To Saudi Alarabiya.net: Iraqi Central Bank Governor Is Collaborating With Iran In Counterfeiting, Money-Laundering – As Part Of Iran’s Efforts To Circumvent U.S. Sanctions,” Middle East Monitor, March 11, 2019, [https://www.memri.org/reports/senior-former-hashd-al-shabi-official-saudi-alarabiyanet-iraqi-central-bank-governor#_edn4] [119].

- **February 28, 2019**: A large section of the Badr Organization’s political movement breaks away, forming a new party called the Patriotic Badr Movement (Badr al-Wataniya). The group claims that Amiri failed “to preserve the legacy of the martyrs, achieving the interests of the country, and fulfilling the ambitions of the people and their hopes, not to mention those of its own members.” Source: Hanezeh Haddad, “BADR: THE LATEST SPLINTERING OF A MAJOR PARTY IN IRAQ,” 1001 Iraqi Thoughts, March 1, 2019, [http://1001iraiqithoughts.com/2019/03/01/badr-the-latest-splintering-of-a-major-party-in-iraq/] [120].
**Badr Organization**


- **September 6, 2018:** Protesters set fire to dozens of mostly pro-Iran political party offices of in the city of Basra, including the offices of the Badr Organization, Asaib Ahl al-Haq, and Kata’ib Hezbollah. The following day the Fatah Alliance, of which Badr is the leading member, demands that Iraqi Prime Minister Hadi al-Abadi step down due to his inability to rein in the protesters. Source: Ali Mamouri, “Mass protests hit Iraq’s Green Zone as violent protests continue,” Al-Monitor, September 7, 2018, https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/09/iraq-basra-green-zone-us-pmu-iraq.html#ixzz5ixo8DX2 [122].


- **June 12, 2018:** Badr’s Fatah Alliance enters a coalition agreement with Muqtada al-Sadr’s Sairoun Alliance after Sadr’s party wins the Iraq elections. However, a leader within Fatah states that the new coalition will not alter Iraq’s standing relations with Iran or the United States. Source: Ali Mamouri, “Sadr allies with Iran-backed coalition to form government in Iraq,” Al-Monitor, June 14, 2018, https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/06/iraq-election-muqtada-sadr-sairoun-fatah-badr-iraq.html [124].


- **January 2018:** Several PMF militias join Badr to form the Fatah Alliance, a political party running in the May 2018 parliamentary elections. Amiri leads the alliance, which also includes the terror group Kata’ib Hezbollah. Source: Ahmad Majidyar, “Iraqi Hezbollah calls on Baghdad government to set up US exit timeline,” Middle East Institute, March 6, 2018, http://www.mei.edu/content/to/iraqi-hezbollah-calls-baghdad-government-set-us-exit-timeline [126].


- **December 2015:** The Badr Organization claims to have regained control of over half of Iraq’s Baiji refinery from ISIS. Source: “Iraq Badr Organization: 50 percent of Baiji refinery held by Iraqi forces,” Rudaw, December 5, 2015, http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/20151205/iraq-is-vs-iraq-shiite-baiji-shiite.html [129].


January 2015: Hadi al-Amiri allegedly meets with U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Stuart Jones, who offers U.S. air support to al-Amiri’s ground campaign. When questioned about the alleged meeting with Amiri, a spokesman for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad stated, “We don’t confirm the details of our conversations. Our policy is that we support the [Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)] with air strikes and we have urged that the militias be under the command and control of the ISF.” Source: Eli Lake, “Iraq’s Militias Are Taking Over the Army,” Bloomberg View, February 3, 2015, http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2015-02-03/exclusive-iran-s-militias-are-taking-over-iraq-s-army [135].


**July 4, 2014:** Human Rights Watch accuses the Badr Organization of killing Sunni prisoners. Also in July, the Badr Organization comes under criticism for allegedly employing child soldiers. One Badr recruiter says he has seen 16-year-old fighters and “also boys younger than that. Some are still in training, and some have already taken part in the fight.” A Badr senior member denies that the group employs child soldiers, saying, “We are the most prominent group in liberating areas so far, so some young people may be bragging that they are fighting for us. But that is not true.” Sources: Babak Dehghanshebeh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-iraq-security-teenagers-insight-idUSKBN0FG1UG201410711 [147]; Maggie Fick, “Underage fighters drawn into Iraqi sectarian war,” Reuters, July 11, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/11/iraq-security-teenagers-insight-idUSKBN0FG1UG201410711 [147].


**March 2014:** Amer al-Qalamouni, director of the Syrian opposition-affiliated Qalamoun media center, says that Badr “is taking the lead in the number of fighters [near Yabroud, Syria], now over 1,000 men, after it arrived in Syria recently.”


**November 20, 2013:** Analyst Phillip Smyth testifies before Congress that Iranian proxy groups, including the Badr Organization, “are the main contributors of Shia fighters through Syria.”

According to Smyth, “[W]hile initially claiming that they were dropping their armed capability, Badr has become a key Iraqi Shia’s Islamist militia in Syria. Through their ‘Armed Wing,’ Badr has claimed to have sent some 1,500 members to Syria as part of their expeditionary unit called Quwet al-Shahid Muhammed Baqr al-Sadr (the Martyr Muhammed Baqr al-Sadr Forces).” Source: Terrorist Groups in Syria: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives, 113th Cong. 17-24 (2013) statement of Phillip Smyth, Middle East research analyst, University of Maryland, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg85643/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg85643.pdf [150].


**June 2013:** Reuters reports that “[m]ost of those fighting in Syria are former members of the Mehdi army of anti-U.S. cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, or from the Badr Organization.” Source: Suadad al-Salhy, “Iraqi Shi’ites flock to Assad’s side as sectarian split widens,” Reuters, June 19, 2013, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/19/us-iraq-syria-militants-idUSBRE5IOZA20130619 [152].


**December 30, 2011:** Badr members celebrate the end of the U.S. military presence in Iraq by plastering the walls of government buildings with posters of Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khameini, and his predecessor, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.


**December 12, 2011:** Hadi al-Amiri visits the White House, sparking protest from survivors of the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing, as well as relatives of the victims.

Badr Organization


December 2010: Hadi al-Amiri is appointed as Iraq’s transportation minister.


2008: Nouri al-Maliki retakes Basra from Sadrist with the help of government forces, the Badr Organization, and others.


2006: The U.N. human rights chief in Iraq reports that hundreds of Iraqis were being tortured and executed by death squads working for Iraq’s interior ministry.


2005: U.S. soldiers raid a police building in Baghdad, uncovering secret prisons that hold 168 abused and mistreated prisoners.


2004 - 2006: Hadi al-Amiri plays “a leading role in organizing attacks by the Badr Corps militia…against Sunnis,” according to a leaked cable from the U.S. State Department.

The cable indicates Amiri “may have personally ordered attacks on up to 2,000 Sunnis.” It continues, “One of [Amiri’s] preferred methods of killing allegedly involved using a power drill to pierce the skulls of his adversaries.” Sources: Loveday Morris, “Appointment of Iraq’s new interior minister opens door to militia and Iranian influence,” http://www.foxnews.com/world/2010/06/22/iraq-security-force-drills
The cable indicates Amiri “may have personally ordered attacks on up to 2,000 Sunnis.” It continues: “One of [Amiri’s] preferred methods of killing allegedly involved using a power drill to pierce the skulls of his adversaries.” Sources: Loveday Morris, “Appointment of Iraq’s new interior minister opens door to militia and Iranian influence,” http://www.foxnews.com/world/2010/06/22/iraq-security-force-drills

2003: Coalition forces ban party militias.

The Badr Brigades change their name to “the Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development” and pledge to lay down their arms.

September 2003: Coalition forces ban party militias.

The Badr Brigades change their name to “the Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development” and pledge to lay down their arms. However, SCIRI leader Abdul Aziz al-Hakim maintains that the Badr Organization will continue to serve a purpose by “maintaining security and stability.” Sources: Lionel Beehner, “Iraq’s Militia Groups,” Council on Foreign Relations, October 26, 2006, http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/world/iraq/fp.htm


March 2003: Following the U.S. invasion in Iraq, Hadi al-Amiri returns from neighboring Iran "to lead the Badr Brigade that waged a vicious sectarian war on Iraqi Sunnis," reports the Globe and Mail.


1991: Badr Brigades forces cross the border from Iran into Iraq during the Shiite uprising, but are quickly crushed by the Iraqi army.


1990 - 1999: The Badr Brigades attack targets in southern Iraq.


1980 - 1989: The Badr Brigades fight as a pro-Iranian militia during the Iran-Iraq War.

Source: Ahmed Rashide and Ned Parker, “Shi’ite militias expand influence, redraw map in central Iraq,” Reuters, December 31, 2014,
Badr Organization

Badr Organization

Violent history:

- **1980s:** The Badr Brigades fight as a pro-Iranian militia during the Iran-Iraq War.¹

- **1990s:** The Badr Brigades attack targets in southern Iraq.²

- **1991:** Badr Brigades forces cross the border from Iran into Iraq during the Shiite uprising, but are quickly crushed by the Iraqi army.³

- **June 25, 1996:** A bomb explodes near a housing complex in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 U.S. Air Force servicemen. Hadi al-Amiri is linked to the attack through a U.S. federal indictment.⁴

- **2004-2006:** Hadi al-Amiri plays “a leading role in organizing attacks by the Badr Corps militia...against Sunnis,” according to a leaked cable from the U.S. State Department. The cable indicates that Amiri “may have personally ordered attacks on up to 2,000 Sunnis.” It continues: “One of [Amiri’s] preferred methods of killing allegedly involved using a power drill to pierce the skulls of his adversaries.”⁵

- **2006:** The U.N. human rights chief in Iraq reports that hundreds of Iraqis were being tortured and executed by death squads working for Iraq’s interior ministry. According to the *Independent*, “Many of the 110,000 policemen and police commandos under the ministry’s control are suspected of being former members of the Badr Brigade.”⁶

- **June 2013:** Reuters reports that “[m]ost of those fighting in Syria are former members of the Mehdi army of anti-U.S. cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, or from the Badr Organization.”⁷

- **July 13, 2013:** Badr announces on Facebook that it has 1,500 militants operating in Syria.⁸

- **November 20, 2013:** Analyst Phillip Smyth testifies before Congress that Iranian proxy groups, including Badr, “are the main contributors of Shia fighters through Syria.” According to Smyth, “[W]hile initially claiming that they were dropping their armed capability, Badr has become a key Iraqi Shi’a Islamist militia in Syria. Through their ‘Armed Wing,’ Badr has claimed to have sent some 1,500 members to Syria as part of their expeditionary unit called Quwet al-Shahid Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr (the Martyr Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr Forces).”⁹

- **July 2014:** Human Rights Watch accuses the Badr Organization of killing Sunni prisoners.¹⁰ Also in July, Badr comes under criticism for allegedly employing child soldiers. A Badr recruiter says he has seen 16-year-old fighters and “also boys younger than that. Some are still in training, and some have already taken part in the fight.”¹¹ A Badr senior member denies that the group employs child soldiers, saying, “We are the most prominent group in liberating areas so far, so some young people may be bragging that they are fighting for us. But that is not true.”¹²

- **Late August 2014:** The Badr Organization fights to retake the Shiite town of Amerli in northern Iraq.¹³

- **September 1, 2014:** Anti-ISIS forces, including the Badr Organization, take Amerli.¹⁴

- **December 2014:** ISIS and the Badr Organization clash in the Iraqi town of Mukayshfh, on the highway between Samarra and then-ISIS-held Tikrit.¹⁵

- **December 29, 2014:** Hadi al-Amiri threatens residents of the district of Muqdadiyya in Diyala province, saying, “The day of judgment is coming” and “We will attack the area until nothing is left. Is my message clear?”¹⁶ In January, 72 civilians will be killed in Barwana, Muqdadiyya. Hadi al-Amiri and the Badr Organization are suspected of responsibility.¹⁷

- **January-February 2015:** The Sunni governor of Iraq’s Diyala province and other officials accuse Shiite militants and security forces in Diyala (under the control of Hadi al-Amiri) of executing at least 72 unarmed civilians in Diyala’s eastern province in January. Amiri denies these claims.¹⁸ However, the Badr Organization refuses to take journalists to the village of Barwana, where the Sunni men were found shot dead “execution-style,” according to the *Washington Post*.¹⁹

- **January 2016:** The Badr Organization engages in a series of abductions and killings targeting Sunnis throughout the
Badr Organization

month, which Human Rights Watch characterizes as “serious violations of international humanitarian law.”

- **January 5, 2018**: Locals and human rights organizations accuse the Badr Organization and other Shiite militias of looting, arson, and bombing Kurdish homes in the mixed Iraqi town of Tuz Khurmatu, which the militias occupy as part of their fight against ISIS.

- **December 24, 2018**: Members of the Yazidi Peshmerga unit Ezidkhan accuse the Badr Organization of arresting 30 of their members in Sinjar. The men were reportedly released after 12 hours.

- **July 19, 2019**: An attack occurs at the PMF base near Amerli which causes a substantial explosion and subsequent fire that damages an ammunition depot. The base belongs to either the Turkmen Brigades or the Badr Organization. Two paramilitary fighters are killed and an unreported number are injured in the attack. Rumors circulate that the attack is from drone strikes conducted by the United States or ISIS. Mahdi Taqi al Amerli—an Iraqi Turkmen regional deputy affiliated with the Badr Organization—states that the base was definitely hit by either a missile or a drone strike. Mohamad Mahdi Bayati, director of the Badr Organization’s Northern Axis, claims “the technique used in the bombing is not a Da’esh [ISIS] one but an American invention and the bombing is their work.”


Badr Organization


Designations:

Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:

The United Arab Emirates designated “The Badr Organisation in Iraq” as a terrorist organization in November 2014.\(^\text{24}\)

The Badr Organization, Asaib Ahl al-Haq, and Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) are known as “Iran’s three big Iraqi militias.” Each group is part of the anti-ISIS popular mobilization forces (PMF), an umbrella organization of Shiite militias. The coalition was formed in June 2014 after Iraq’s then–prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, called for its establishment and Iraq’s highest Shiite authority, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, issued a fatwa urging Iraqis to fight the extremist group ISIS. In battles, there is some degree of cooperation between the PMF militias, though each militia leader ultimately retains his autonomy. Deceased IRGC-Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani reportedly coordinated military operations for all three militias before his death in January 2020.

Reuters writes that the Badr Organization is “Iran’s oldest proxy in Iraq.” According to senior Iraqi politicians, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri is the commander closest to Iran on the battlefield. Amiri has not denied his group’s relationship with the Iranian regime, once saying, “Iran supported us very well. They gave us weapons, they gave us ammunition, they gave us their military experience.” The Badr Organization has close ties to Iran’s military, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and its external branch, the Quds Force.

The Badr Organization and Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH), along with Asaib Ahl al-Haq, comprise Iraq’s anti-ISIS popular mobilization forces (PMF). In battles against ISIS there is some degree of cooperation between the militias, though each militia leader ultimately retains his autonomy. IRGC-Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani reportedly coordinated military operations for all three militias before his death in January 2020. The United States launched airstrikes against KH targets around Baghdad on March 12, 2020, in response to what it called the “threat posed by Iranian-backed Shia militia groups ... who continue to attack bases hosting ... coalition forces.”

The Badr Brigades militia was formed, trained, and equipped by Iran’s IRGC in 1983, according to the Congressional Research Service. As of 2015, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri retains a close relationship with the leader of IRGC’s Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani, and the Badr Organization itself has reportedly been under Soleimani’s command. The Quds Force is Iran’s external military branch, charged with spreading Iran’s Islamist ideology and system of governance beyond the country’s borders.

Ties to Extremist Individuals:
Bashar al-Assad

In his tenure as Iraq’s transportation minister, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri “allegedly allowed Iranian overflights to supply [Assad] with weapons during the regime’s brutal crackdown” on dissidents, according to journalist Susannah George. The group has reportedly sent thousands of Shiite fighters to Syria. In November 2013, analyst Phillip Smyth testified before Congress that the Badr Organization is “the main contributors of Shia fighters through Syria.” Smyth stated that the Badr Organization is a “key Iraqi Shi’a Islamist militia in Syria. Through their ‘Armed Wing’, Badr has claimed to have sent some 1,500 members to Syria as part of their expeditionary unit called Quwet al-Shahid Muhammed Baqr al-Sadr (the Martyr Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr Forces).” In March 2014, the group allegedly sent an additional 2,000 fighters to Syria.

Qasem Soleimani

Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri was public about his relationship with the deceased leader of Iran’s IRGC-Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani, calling him “a friend, a good man and a good fighter.” In 1991, Soleimani reportedly “played a part in planning and administering the military operations of the Badr forces in the Shiite uprising against” Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. A Reuters report from February 2015 describes Soleimani as having directed the Badr Organization. Amiri was previously photographed with Soleimani as the two discussed battle strategy and celebrated victories. Soleimani died in a January 2020 U.S. airstrike.


40 “Terrorist Groups in Syria: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs”
Badr Organization


Badr Organization

Media Coverage:
Rhetoric:

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, June 2019 [188]
“There is no doubt that ISIS is a bastard child of the United States. I and my comrades will never surrender to the involvement of the United States and its allies in Iraq, and this was our position from the beginning. [ISIS’s] main designers and the creators were the United States and their master, Israel.”

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, August 2018 [189]
“We will not allow you to interfere in the political affairs of Iraq and do not accept the imposition of names [by the United States] for the prime minister...If you impose any name on us, then I will overthrow his government within two months.”

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, November 2017 [190]
“We will adopt a parliamentary decision to pull out all American troops [from Iraq].”

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr leader, November 9, 2016 [191]
“Tal Afar will be the cemetery of Turkish soldiers should Turkey attempt to take part in the battle.”

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr leader, 2016 [192]
In an interview with PBS Frontline:
“I don’t claim that there are never violations that occur during war. This is a war, and in a war, there are violations.”

Muen al-Kadhimi, Badr Organization deputy leader, April 2, 2015 [193]
“To be honest, everywhere we captured [prisoners from Tikrit] we killed them because they were the enemy.”

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, March 2015 [194]
“[H]elp from Iran is unconditional.”

Karim al-Nouri, Badr spokesman, February 2015 [195]
“We don’t want history to record that we conducted an offensive with American cover.”
Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, February 2015 [196]

“[Qasem Soleimani] advises us. He offers us information, we respect him very much.”

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, 2015 [197]

“The majority of us believe that ... Khamenei has all the qualifications as an Islamic leader. He is the leader not only for Iranians but the Islamic nation. I believe so and I take pride in it... Khamenei would place the interests of the Iraqi people above all else.”

Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, December 29, 2014 [198]

“The day of judgment is coming...We will attack the [Muqdadiyya] area until nothing is left. Is my message clear?”


