Name: Badr Organization

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

Ideologies and Affiliations:
- Iranian-sponsored
- Islam
- 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:
- Badr Brigade
- Badr Brigades
- Badr Corps
- Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development
- Badr Organisation in Iraq
- Martyr Mohamed Baqir al-Sadr Forces
- Martyr Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr Forces
- Munathamat Badr
- Quwet Shahid Baqir Sadr (BOQBSB)

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. Reuters notes that the group’s military wing is considered “perhaps the single most powerful Shi’ite paramilitary group” fighting in Iraq. One Iraqi, in 2015, official described the Badr Organization as “easily” the most powerful force in Iraq, stronger even than Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi. Given the group’s deep ties to Iran and its political and military preeminence, analysts have compared the Badr...
The Badr Organization has directly attacked American forces in Iraq, and U.S. officials have warned that the group would resume its attacks on U.S. interests after the military defeat of ISIS in Iraq. The Badr Organization emerged during Iraq's civil war. The group is implicated in the torture and murder of thousands of Sunni Muslims.

Today, the Badr Organization is the most powerful militia within the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), an alliance of predominantly Shiite militia groups in Iraq that often fights alongside the Iraqi army. Reuters reported that in the March 2015 fight for Tikrit, Badr militiamen and regular army drove identical tanks with only an army logo differentiating the two forces. Some units in Iraq’s army, including Iraq’s 5th and 20th Battalions, have reportedly answered to Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri. As of early 2017, the Badr Organization claims to command between 10,000 and 50,000 militants. Washington Institute for Near East Policy fellow Michael Knights assessed Badr’s strength to be between 18,000 and 22,000 fighters as of August 2019. As ISIS lost traction in Iraq, Reuters described the Badr Organization’s role in Iraq as “ascendant.”

The Badr Organization constitutes an active political force in Iraq in addition to operating as a militia. From 2011 to 2014, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri served as Iraq’s transportation minister. From October 2014 to July 2016, another Badr member, Mohammed Ghabban, served as Iraq’s interior minister. As of late 2016, the Badr Organization held 22 seats in Iraq’s parliament. The group has long been criticized for its hold over Iraq’s Interior Ministry. In January 2018, the Badr Organization, Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH), and Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), joined with other PMF units to form the Fatah Alliance political party ahead of Iraq’s May 2018 elections. The alliance won 47 parliamentary seats in the election, of which 21 belong to Badr, and in June it allied with Muqtada al-Sadr’s Sairoon Alliance after Sadr’s party won the Iraq elections.

The Badr Organization currently leads the second largest political bloc in the Iraqi parliament. On July 13, 2018, Iraqi protesters in the country’s south attacked the political offices of Badr and other Iran-backed groups as they called for Iran to withdraw from Iraq. Although the Badr Organization’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 Washington Post. This is particularly true in Iraq’s Diyala province, where Amiri has been leading military operations. According to one Human Rights Watch employee, “We’ve documented widespread burning and destruction of homes. That’s something we’ve recorded in literally every place where militias are leading the fight against ISIS. In some instances, we have documented them carrying out summary executions of people… the [militias] that we’ve documented the most abuses by are definitely Badr Organization.” During the fight to retake Mosul beginning in late 2016, Human Rights Watch urged that Iraq ban abusive Shiite militias from partaking in the operation. More recently, the group has also recruited former ISIS members in the Diyala province, who are used to stoke anti-Kurdish violence in the areas under its control.

The Badr Organization emerged during Iraq’s civil war. The group is implicated in the torture and murder of thousands of Sunni Muslims. The Badr Organization has directly attacked American forces in Iraq, and U.S. officials have warned that the group would resume its attacks on U.S. interests after the military defeat of ISIS in Iraq. In November 2017, Amiri called on U.S. forces to leave Iraq, warning that his group.

**Badr Organization**

Organized in Iraq to Hezbollah in Lebanon. The militia stands accused of gross human rights violations by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Formed in 1983 under the name “the Badr Brigades,” 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. In 2009, the U.S. government designated then-current leader of Badr Jamal Jaafar Ibrahimi, a.k.a Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. Ibrahimi died in a January 3, 2020, U.S. drone strike in Iraq that also killed Qasem Soleimani, commander of Iran’s Quds Force. Badr and other Iranian-sponsored Iraqi militias vowed revenge on the United States.

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 “the Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development” 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. During this period, Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri personally stands accused of ordering attacks on up to 2,000 Sunnis. According to a leaked cable from the U.S. State Department, “One of [Amiri’s] preferred methods of killing allegedly involved using a power drill to pierce the skulls of his adversaries.”

In 2007, the Badr Organization’s political wing rebranded, changing its name from the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) to the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) as part of an effort to de-emphasize the party’s ties to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 2012, the Badr Organization branched off from ISCI, operating as a political party of its own in addition to its capacity as a militia. As ISIS gained control over large swaths of territory in 2013 and 2014, the Badr Organization overtly mobilized, recruited, and fought ISIS alongside other Shiite militias and the Iraqi army.

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would not allow a single American to remain.\(^{40}\)

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’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.\(^{41}\) 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.\(^{42}\)

U.S. officials want the Iraqi government to do more to rein in Iranian-allied militias that have grown in power since they helped win the war against ISIS, including preventing them from using Iraqi territory as a launchpad for attacks against the American military or its allies. According to Mahdi’s decree, all PMF factions must abandon their old names and receive new names in compliance with the regulations of the Iraqi army. 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.\(^{43}\) Abdul Mahdi issued a new decree in September 2019 that restructured the PMF’s leadership.\(^{44}\) In June 2020, the Republican Study Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives recommended designating the Badr Organization and its leader, Hadi al-Amiri, as terrorists. The recommendation also included other PMF factions Kataib al-Imam Ali, Kataib Sayyid al-Shuhada, Liwa Abu al-Fadhal al-Abbas, and Junud al-Islam.\(^{45}\)

**Doctrine:**

For years, the Badr Organization served as the military wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), a political party committed to bringing Iran’s revolutionary brand of Shiite Islamism to Iraq.\(^{46}\) However, when SCIRI reemerged in Iraq in March 2003, the group insisted that it was not pushing for an Iranian-style government, despite the group’s name and ongoing ties to Tehran.\(^{47}\)

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.\(^{48}\) The following year, Badr split from SCIRI—now called the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCRI)—in order to maintain its ties to Iran.\(^{49}\) 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.”\(^{50}\)

With the fight against ISIS in Iraq and the rapid growth of the PMF, Badr experienced a surge of support and influence.\(^{51}\) 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.\(^{52}\)

Still, Amiri rebuked calls by Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi for the PMF to abandon its heavy weapons and join the Iraqi Army.\(^{53}\) Amiri pledged in April 2018 to personally “take up arms” to defend Iraq from “any danger” regardless of any political position he may hold.\(^{54}\) 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.”\(^{55}\)

In January 2018, Badr formed the Fatah Alliance, a political bloc of Iran-backed PMF factions including Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) and Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) and led by Badr’s Amiri.\(^{56}\) After Fatah received second place in Iraq’s May 2018 parliamentary elections, a Fatah leader named Karim al-Nuri signaled that the party would not seek to change Iraq’s post-2003 policy of working with both Iran and the United States.\(^{57}\) In June 2020, Fatah Alliance member Fadhil Fatlawi told Iranian media that the Iraqi parliament was committed to expelling U.S. forces from Iraq.\(^{58}\)

**Organizational Structure:**

Hadi al-Amiri leads the Badr Organization’s military and political wings, but his influence extends beyond the group’s confines. Amiri was given
Badr Organization

command over Iraq’s army and police in Diyala province. An August 2019 assessment of Badr Organization’s main areas of operations placed the group throughout the bulk of Diyala province, from the eastern suburbs of Baghdad to Iran and from Zurbatiyah in the south to Tikrit in the north. Then Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi had also reportedly entrusted Amiri with control over the Iraqi Army’s 20th Brigade, according to the brigade’s commander, General Ali al-Wazir. Badr also 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 Diyala. One Human Rights Watch employee said that Amiri “is an extremely powerful figure and he’s essentially acting with total impunity now. It’s not really the government leading the militias; it’s the other way around.”

In his capacity as leader of the Badr Organization’s militia, Amiri claimed that he presented the group’s military plans to Abadi for approval. However, in April 2015, Abadi ordered that all Popular Mobilization Force (PMF) militias, including the Badr Organization, be placed under his office’s direct command.

Although Amiri appeared to act without much Iraqi government oversight, reports suggested he answered to the leader of Iran’s IRGC-Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani. In the 2015 fight to retake Tikrit from ISIS militants, Soleimani “was directing operations on the eastern flank from a village about 55km (35 miles) from Tikrit,” according to a Reuters report. Another Reuters report noted that “Soleimani also directed Iranian-trained Shi’ite militias—including the Badr Brigade.” RAND Corporation analyst Alireza Nader has written that the Badr Organization “appear[s] to be taking direct orders from Tehran.” 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. Amiri has continued working directly alongside the IRGC since returning to Iraq, including working side-by-side with Soleimani during the battle for Mosul. 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 “proxy” aiding terrorists.

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. 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. In October 2014, Prime Minister Abadi appointed a Badr member, Mohammed Ghabban, as interior minister. At the time of Ghabban’s appointment, the Washington Post’s Loveday Morris wrote that “there is little doubt that Hadi al-Amiri, head of the [Badr Organization] party and its military wing, will wield the real power in the ministry.”

Ghabban announced his resignation from the post in July 2016 but was replaced by another Badr member, Qasim al-Araji, in January 2017. Araji, a former member of the Quds Force, was twice arrested by U.S. forces for working with the anti-American insurgency during the U.S. war in Iraq. Prior to joining the Badr parliamentary bloc, Araji had been involved in smuggling and distributing explosives that were intended for use against U.S. forces, according to leaked documents.

In January 2018, Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH), Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), and the Badr Organization joined with other PMF units to form the Fateh Alliance political party in preparation for Iraq’s May 2018 elections. Prior to the elections, Qais al-Khazali, secretary-general of AAH, claimed that “the next prime minister will be someone chosen by the Fateh Alliance or selected in accordance with conditions set by the Fateh Alliance.” In May, the alliance exceeded expectations, winning 47 parliamentary seats in the election. The following month, Iraq’s parliament ordered a manual recount of the 11 million votes amid claims of fraud. Notwithstanding, on June 11, the Fateh 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. However, while Fateh as a whole made large electoral gains, Badr won only 22 parliamentary seats, the same number of seats it won in 2014.

On June 1, 2020, Amiri resigned from parliament and as leader of the Fateh Alliance. He gave no reason for his resignation, but Iraqi sources suspected he was vying for the leadership of the PMF. Amiri was replaced in the parliament by his deputy, Abdulkarim Younis Elan.

Financing:
The Badr Organization is backed by Iran, and Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri has confirmed that his group receives support from Iran.  

Recruitment and Training:

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.

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.

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Badr Organization


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

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

Karim al-Nouri
Former spokesman

Ali al-Allaq
Senior member

Kareem Alewi al-Mohamadawi
Spokesman

Jaafar al-Quraishi
Media spokesman
**Badr Organization**

- **Haji Jawdat**
  Media officer

- **Hassan al-Kaabi**
  Badr parliamentary bloc leader

- **Mohamad Mahdi Bayati**
  Leader of Badr’s Northern Axis

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

History:

- On December 3, U.S. Representative Joe Wilson introduces a bill in the House of Representatives to designate the Badr Organization as a terrorist group.


- In late September, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo calls upon the Iraqi government to act against Iranian-sponsored militias or else the United States will close its embassy in Baghdad.


- July 16, 2019: Joan Polaschik, 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. Polaschik,” United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, July 16, 2019, https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/071619_Polaschik_Testimony.pdf.

- 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
Badr Organization


• **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-Amir, use violence to deter protesters, and a number of demonstrators are jailed for days. The protests failed to get coverage in local Iraq 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.


• **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 Arabiya has obtained reports on counterfeit funds seized at airports that correlates to the activity the senior official claims occurred. Source: “Senior Former Hashid Al-Sha'bi Official To Saudi Alarabya.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 Media Research Institute, March 28, 2019, https://www.memri.org/reports/senior-former-hashid-al-shabi-official-saudi-alarabyanit-iraqi-central-bank-governor#_edn1.

• **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: Hamez Hudad, “BADR: THE LATEST SPLINTERING OF A MAJORITY PARTY IN IRAQ,” 1001 Iraq Thoughts, March 1, 2019, http://1001iraqithoughts.com/2019/03/01/badr-the-latest-splintering-of-a-majority-party-in-iraq/.


• **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 Fateh 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, “Mortars 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-iran.html#txzzS1xpxo8DX.


• **June 12, 2018:** Badr’s Fateh Alliance enters a coalition agreement with Muqtada al-Sadr’s Saeroon Alliance after Sadr’s party wins the Iraq elections. However, a leader within Fateh 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-sadroon-fateh-hadi-amiri-iran.html.


• **Several PMF militias join Badr to form the Fateh 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/io/iraqi-hezbollah-calls-baghdad-government-set-us-exit-timeline.

• **Badr Organization leader Hadi al-Amiri states that the group might be willing to disarm or separate its political and militant activities while participating in Iraqi politics.** Amiri is reportedly in the process of establishing a new political alliance called Mujahideen that may run in Iraq’s March 2018 general elections. Source: Tamer El-Badr Organization leader Hadi al-Amiri states that the group might be willing to disarm or separate its political and militant activities while participating in Iraqi politics, May 21, 2018, https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/12/3/badr-organisation-militia-to-form-party-for-iraq-elections.

• **January 30, 2017:** Badr commander Qasim al-Araji is confirmed as Iraq’s Minister of Interior, replacing former interior minister Mohammed...
The United Arab Emirates adds the Badr Organization to its list of designated terrorist organizations.

The Badr Organization participates in the operation to retake Mosul from ISIS militants.

The Badr Organization engages in a series of abductions and killings targeting Sunni onlookers throughout the month, which Human Rights Watch characterizes as “serious violations of international humanitarian law.”

April 7, 2015: After Iraqi and Shiite paramilitary forces take back Tikrit from ISIS forces, Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi orders that all popular mobilization forces be placed under his direct command.

The Badr Organization claims to have regained control of over half of Iraq's Baiji refinery from ISIS.


Iraq’s powerful Interior Minister, now leading fight against ISIS, was held twice by U.S. Forces After 2003.” Newsweek, http://www.newsweek.com/trained-iran-and-arrested-smuggling-explosives-iraq-interior-minister-was-us-596161.


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Badr Organization


- **October 18, 2014:** Iraq’s parliament votes to elect Mohammed Ghabban, a Badr member, as interior minister.


- **October 14, 2014:** ISIS claims credit for a suicide bombing attack in Baghdad that kills Iraqi MP and senior Badr commander Ahmed al-Khaifi.


- **September 1, 2014:** Anti-ISIS forces, including the Badr Organization, retake Amerli from ISIS control.


- **August 21, 2014 - August 31, 2014:** The Badr Organization fighting forces to retake the Shiite town of Amerli in northern Iraq.


- **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 denudes 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 Dehghanpisheh, “Special Report: The fighters of Iraq who answer to Iran,” Reuters, November 12, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/12/us-mideast-crisis-militias-specialreport-idUSKCN0IW0ZA20141112; Maggie Fick, “Underage fighters drawn into Iranian sectarian war,” Reuters, July 11, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/11/us-iraq-security-teenagers-insight-idUSKBN0FG1UG20140711.

- **June 7, 2014:** The Badr Organization releases a statement threatening any group that damages shrines in the Iraqi city of Samarra.


- **Amer al-Qalamouni,** director of the Syrian opposition–affiliated Qalamoun media center, says that Badr “is taking the lead in the field 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 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).” 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.

- **July 28, 2013:** The Badr Organization announces the name of its military wing in Syria, “Quwet al-Shahid al-Sadr.”


- **July 21, 2013:** The Badr Organization announces its first casualty in Syria.


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


- **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.”

Badr Organization


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


- The Badr Brigades attack targets in southern Iraq.

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

- **1980s:** The Badr Brigades fight as a pro-Iranian militia during the Iran-Iraq War.\(^9^0\)
- **1990s:** The Badr Brigades attack targets in southern Iraq.\(^9^1\)
- **1991:** Badr Brigades forces cross the border from Iran into Iraq during the Shiite uprising, but are quickly crushed by the Iraqi army.\(^9^2\)
- **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.\(^9^3\)
- **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.”\(^9^4\)
- **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.”\(^9^5\)
- **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.”\(^9^6^\)
- **July 13, 2013:** Badr announces on Facebook that it has 1,500 militants operating in Syria.\(^9^7\)
- **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 Qwet al-Shahid Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr (the Martyr Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr Forces).”\(^9^8\)
- **July 2014:** Human Rights Watch accuses the Badr Organization of killing Sunni prisoners.\(^9^9\) Also in July, Badr 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.”\(^1^0^0\) 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.”\(^1^0^1\)
- **Late August 2014:** The Badr Organization fights to retake the Shiite town of Amerli in northern Iraq.\(^1^0^2\)
- **September 1, 2014:** Anti-ISIS forces, including the Badr Organization, take Amerli.\(^1^0^3\)
- **December 2014:** ISIS and the Badr Organization clash in the Iraqi town of Mukayshfah, on the highway between Samarra and then-ISIS-held Tikrit.\(^1^0^4\)
- **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?”\(^1^0^5\) In January, 72 civilians will be killed in Barwana, Muqdadiyya. Hadi al-Amiri and the Badr Organization are suspected of responsibility.\(^1^0^6\)
- **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.\(^1^0^7\) 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.\(^1^0^8\)
- **January 2016:** The Badr Organization engages in a series of abductions and killings targeting Sunnis throughout the month, which Human Rights Watch characterizes as “serious violations of international humanitarian law.”\(^1^0^9\)
- **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.\(^1^1^0\)
- **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.\(^1^1^1\)
- **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.
Badr Organization

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.”


Designations:

Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:
The United Arab Emirates designated “The Badr Organisation in Iraq” as a terrorist organization in November 2014.¹¹³

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Associations:

### Ties to Extremist Entities:

**Asaib Ahl al-Haq (AHH)**

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.

**Kata‘ib Hezbollah (KH)**

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.”

**Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)**

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 Baqir 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.

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BADR ORGANIZATION


Rhetoric:

**Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, June 2019**

“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.” 136

**Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, August 2018**

“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.” 137

**Hadi al-Amiri, Badr Organization leader, November 2017**

“We will adopt a parliamentary decision to pull out all American troops [from Iraq].” 138

**Hadi al-Amiri, Badr leader, November 9, 2016**

“Tal Afar will be the cemetery of Turkish soldiers should Turkey attempt to take part in the battle.” 139

**Hadi al-Amiri, Badr leader, 2016**

*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.” 140

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