

1 Jun 3: Head of the Popular Mobilization Forces Orders Militias to Adopt Unmet Reforms. Faleh al-Fayyadh, the chairman of the Popular Mobilization Commission (PMC) that oversees Iraq's militia umbrella group the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), issued a memorandum dictating guidelines to PMF groups. The memorandum restates decisions that have already been issued in previous decrees but which the PMF has not implemented; these include removing militia names and adopting only numbered unit names, incorporating the tribal mobilization forces into the PMF, preventing PMF members from holding political offices, establishing more formal legal standing for the group, closing some militia offices in cities, and clarifying the chain of command.

2 Jun 3: Quds Force Commander Ghaani and Iranian Officials Arrive in Baghdad ahead of US-Iraqi Strategic Dialogue. The Iraqi news outlet Shafaq reported that Ismail al-Ghaani, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) - Quds Force, arrived in Baghdad at the head of an Iranian delegation. The delegation also included Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian and unspecified other officials. An anonymous political source said that Ghaani brought the delegation to Baghdad to establish a more cohesive position on the US-Iraq Strategic Dialogue scheduled to begin June 11, likely among Iran's close political allies and proxy militia network.

3 Jun 3: Shi'a Blocs Opposed to Cooperation with Gulf States Call for Prosecuting Saudi Arabia as a Sponsor of Sunni Terrorism. Some Shi'a political parties in Iraq's parliament, including the State of Law Coalition led by former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and Conquest Alliance led by Iranian proxy leader Hadi al-Ameri, support drafting a bill to prosecute Saudi Arabia as a state sponsor of terrorism. Blocs have not formally drafted a bill nor have they specified what legal mechanism they seek to use for prosecution. Saad al-Muttalbi, a member of parliament (MP) for the State of Law Coalition, asserted the goal should be to "restore respect to Iraq and compensate the victims of suicide attacks." The move is likely a reaction to outreach by current Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi to Gulf states, including his dispatching of Finance Minister Ali Allawi to Saudi Arabia on May 22 to improve Saudi-Iraqi ties and solicit Saudi investment in Iraq. Allawi is a confidant to Kadhimi and often acts in roles beyond his formal position as finance minister.

4 Jun 3: Iranian Ally Threatens Prime Minister Kadhimi, Insisting on the Removal of US Forces. Saad al-Saadi, an MP for the Iran-aligned Conquest Alliance bloc, told the Iraqi outlet Shafaq that his bloc will participate in the US-Iraqi Strategic Dialogue. Saadi argued that Prime Minister Kadhimi must implement a non-binding resolution passed in Parliament in January to expel foreign troops from Iraq. Saadi threatened that "all options" are available to respond to Kadhimi if he fails to expel US forces. Saadi threatened to withdraw parliamentary confidence in Kadhimi and referenced the "resistance factions," more commonly known as Iraq's proxy militia network in Iraq. Saadi referred to the resistance factions as being capable of using force to achieve their goals but did not specify a target.

5 Jun 3-4: Iran Pushes for Two-year Energy Agreement with Iraq amid Effort to Increase Cooperation between Iraq and Gulf Neighbors. Reza Ardakanian, Iran's Energy Minister, announced on June 4 that Iran signed a two-year contract with Iraq to export electricity to Iraq. Ardakanian met with Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi and President Barham Salih on June 3, arriving in the delegation that also reportedly included Quds Force Commander Ghaani. Previous iterations of this export agreement were always limited to one-year contracts. The US hoped to deter such an agreement, as reversing Iraqi dependence on Iranian energy is a long-standing US policy objective. Iraq's Ministry of Electricity has not technically adopted the deal, instead issuing a statement that the agreement needs the Iraqi prime minister's confirmation and further "discussion between the Electricity Ministry and Kadhimi." The Iranian outlet IRNA also claimed that Iraq paid \$400 million in debt payments for its Iranian energy imports, half of the approximately \$800 million owed.

6 Jun 6: Key Iranian Political Proxy Resigns Parliamentary Seat, Sparking Rumors He Will Take Over Formal Authority of the PMF. Conquest Alliance and Badr Organization leader Hadi al-Ameri officially resigned from his parliamentary seat. Ameri identified Abdul Karim Yunis (also known as Abu Mariam al-Ansari) to replace him. Ansari is also a Badr Organization member and served as its assistant secretary general starting in 2007. Anonymous sources told Iraqi media that Ameri resigned in order to replace Faleh al-Fayyadh as the head of the PMC, which oversees the PMF. However, the PMC issued a statement denying the rumors, stating there are no leadership changes planned.

7 Jun 6: Prime Minister Kadhimi Successfully Seats the Remainder of his Cabinet through Parliamentary Vote. Iraq's parliament, the Council of Representatives (CoR), voted to approve appointees for all seven of the remaining unfilled seats in Prime Minister Kadhimi's cabinet. The filled positions represent the Immigration and Displacement, Trade, Agriculture, Justice, Culture, Foreign Affairs, and Oil ministries. Kadhimi appointed some allies to the vacancies, but also traded political favor to ensure the approval of the cabinet. The CoR approved the appointment of Basra Oil Company Director Ihsan Abdul Jabbar Ismail to be minister of oil, thereby allowing Kadhimi to deliver on a promise to appoint a Basra native to the role. However, Kadhimi originally nominated Fares Harram, a poet and civil rights activist, as minister of culture. Harram's name was removed in favor of Hassan Nazim. Harram told the Arab Weekly that Iranian proxy militia Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), a US-designated terror group, exerted pressure on political blocs to reject his appointment.

8 Jun 7: Prime Minister Kadhimi Appoints Pragmatic Judge to Chief of Staff Position Previously Dominated by Iranian Proxy. Prime Minister Kadhimi appointed Raed al-Juhi to be his chief of staff in the Office of the Prime Minister. Juhi succeeds key Iranian proxy figure Mohammed al-Hashimi, more commonly known as Abu Jihad, who served as the chief of staff during the previous administration of Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mehdi. Anonymous sources previously indicated that Juhi is close to State of Law leader and former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. Juhi has also served most recently as the inspector general of the Ministry of Finance and before that in multiple roles in the Iraqi judiciary. Juhi is best known for his service as the chief investigative judge in the trial of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

9 Jun 7: Prime Minister Kadhimi Reshuffles Key Army Positions. Prime Minister Kadhimi assigned multiple new personnel to key military positions. Kadhimi assigned Lt. Gen Abdul Amir Rashid Yarallah as chief of staff of the Iraqi Army, succeeding new Minister of Interior Othman al-Ghanimi. Yarallah worked closely with the United States as the operation commander during the Battle of Mosul in 2016-17; Iranian proxy militia Kata'ib Hezbollah has called him an "agent of America." Kadhimi also assigned Lt. Gen Abdul Amir al-Zaidi as the Iraqi Army deputy chief of staff for operations, Lt. Gen. Basim al-Tai as the Iraqi Army deputy chief of staff for administrative affairs, and Lt. Gen. Abdul Amir al-Shammari as the deputy commander of joint operations.

10 Jun 7: Iranian Proxy Ashab al-Kahf Claims It will Resume Attacks on US Forces. Shi'a militia group Ashab al-Kahf (AK), one of the purportedly new Iranian proxy "shadow militias" that have announced their presence since the January 3 death of Qassem Soleimani, issued a statement warning American forces and their associates within Iraq that the "barriers" that previously prevented AK's attacks "[have] now disappeared." The group demanded that all Iraqi logistics and security companies stop working with the "enemy" and threatened to stop them with force.

11 Jun 7-8: Protests Swell Across Southern Iraq as Fears of Widespread Salary Cuts Grow, Local Security Forces Respond with Violence Against Demonstrators. Hundreds of demonstrators Najaf, Najaf Province; Samawah, Muthanna Province; Diwaniyah, Qadisiyah Province; and Nasiriyah, Dhi Qar Province, escalated protest tactics which prompted security forces to respond with excessive force. Police in Najaf fired on protesters with tear gas and live ammunition as protesters attempted to set the Najaf Provincial Building on fire. Protesters demanded the resignation of provincial officials in multiple provinces. Tribal leaders in Najaf responded by attempting to persuade some provincial government officials to resign. Protesters also gathered in Baghdad and Babil Provinces but remained peaceful as they demanded the government not cut salaries as part of austerity measures intended to weather Iraq's COVID-19 and financial crises.

12 Jun 8: New Iraqi Foreign Minister Hosts US Ambassador Two Days before Strategic Dialogue. Fuad Hussein, the newly appointed foreign minister, held a meeting with Matthew Tueller, the US ambassador to Iraq. Hussein stressed his desire for a strong US-Iraqi relationship. Tueller conveyed his desire to hold a productive Strategic Dialogue, planned to start on June 11, between the two governments.

13 Jun 8: Likely Iranian Proxy Militants Strike near US Facility for the First Time Since Early May. Unidentified militants fired a rocket targeting the periphery of the Baghdad International Airport, west of central Baghdad. The Iraqi Joint Operations Command confirmed that the rocket launcher was positioned in Arab Khodeir, a neighborhood 5 km south of the airport. No group claimed responsibility for the attack. Unidentified militants, likely members of an Iranian proxy militia, last fired three Katyusha rockets at a US-Iraqi military installation at the Baghdad International Airport on May 6. Neither attack caused damage or casualties. Unidentified militants also fired a rocket that landed near the British Embassy in Baghdad's Green Zone on May 17 after a dispute surrounding the raising of the Pride flag.

14 Jun 8: US Air Force C-130H Overshoots Runway, Resulting in Four Injuries at Taji Air Base. The Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve's Public Affairs Office announced that a US Air Force C-130H Hercules struck a wall upon landing at Taji Air Base, 30 km north of Baghdad, resulting in a small fire, structural damage, and four injuries. The injured service members sustained non-life-threatening injuries and are being treated at the base's medical facility. US officials reported that the hard landing was the result of a technical failure, not an attack. The Iranian proxy and new "shadow militia" group Usbat al-Thairen circulated a photo of the crashed aircraft with its logo superimposed as a watermark but stopped short of claiming the group had some role in the accident.

15 Jun 9: New Shi'a Alliance Developing in Parliament to Counter Moqtada al-Sadr and Support Prime Minister Kadhimi. Ammar al-Hakim, the leader of the Wisdom Trend bloc, and Haider al-Abadi, the leader of the Victory Alliance bloc, are reportedly in negotiations to form a new Shi'a political bloc. Anonymous sources claim Hakim and Abadi's alliance could control 45-50 seats in the CoR. Hakim and Abadi reportedly intend to form the bloc to provide political cover to execute reformist legislation on behalf of Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi and to marginalize nationalist Shi'a cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. Anonymous sources report that Abadi and Hakim also hold the tentative support of CoR speaker Mohammed al-Halbousi, who leads the largest Sunni bloc in Parliament, as well as Masoud Barzani, the former Kurdistan President and Kurdistan Democratic Party leader.

16 Jun 9: Kadhimi Orders New Arrest Warrants for Security Force Members, Including the Commander Responsible for Notorious November Crackdown. Hazem al-Kinani, the deputy governor of Dhi Qar Province, announced a new round of arrest warrants targeting officials allegedly responsible for violently suppressing protesters. Kinani revealed the warrants named Lt. Gen. Jamil al-Shammari. Shammari oversaw the killing of at least 20 protesters and the injuring of dozens more during his time as the head of the demonstration-response crisis cell in Dhi Qar in late November 2019. Shammari's arrest would represent the fulfillment of a major campaign promise of newly appointed Prime Minister Kadhimi, who has publicly promised to hold security forces accountable for targeting demonstrators. Kadhimi's predecessor failed to hold Shammari accountable.

17 Jun 9: US-designated Terrorist Closes Political Offices, Blaming COVID-19 and Conspiracies against Him. Qais al-Khazali, a US Specially Designated Global Terrorist and leader of the Iranian proxy militia and sanctioned terrorist group Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), announced the closure of his organization's offices across southern and central Iraq. Khazali cited COVID-19 and "foreign agendas" against AAH as the causes of the closure. Khazali argued that foreign powers are to blame for the deliberate burning of his party office, likely in reference to incidents of arson that targeted AAH in Maysan Province on May 26.



Major Cities	Demonstration	Possible Israeli Airstrikes	Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)
Iraqi Security Forces	Iranian Proxy Militias	Religious Figures	Iraqi Council of Representatives
			Iraqi Prime Minister and Cabinet

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Key Takeaway: Iraq's most important external partners, Iran and the United States, as well as Iraq's domestic politicians, are competing to consolidate their leverage ahead of the US-Iraq Strategic Dialogue set to begin on June 11. Iran dispatched its IRGC-Quds Force Commander and energy minister to solidify a key energy deal that the United States had hoped to deter by encouraging partnerships with Gulf States. Iran's proxies in Iraq responded by opposing the US-encouraged outreach to Saudi Arabia and attempting to form a parliamentary mechanism to demand the expulsion of US forces from the country. Meanwhile, Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi has strengthened his domestic position by filling key vacant security roles, passing a full cabinet, and forming an alliance in Parliament to support his actions in order to navigate the competing demands on his country in the Strategic Dialogue. The pursuit of leverage by all actors indicates each expects their stance in the Strategic Dialogue negotiations to be met with resistance.

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