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Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

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**General information on the Al Badr organisation
How does Al Badr treat ex Ba'ath Party members;**

A report on the Badr Organization from the *Asia Times* states:

"It is widely believed that on the eve of the invasion of Iraq the Badr Corps controlled around 10,000-15,000 fighters, 3,000 of whom were professionally trained (many of these being Iraqi Army defectors and former prisoners of war). However, the core of the Badr fighting forces was composed of about 1,500 ideologically-committed combatants who had spent nearly two decades working alongside the IRGC.

Immediately after the fall of Baghdad, the Badr Corps moved into Iraq from the central sector, independent of SCIRI personnel who entered Iraq mostly from the south. The Badr established an initial presence in Diyala province, arguably Iraq's most strategic region, given its proximity to Iran and its mixed Shi'ite and Sunni population.

The US authorities applied great pressure on the Badr Corps to disarm in the early months of the occupation. Consequently the Badr Corps was renamed the Badr Organization, but it did not fully disarm. In any case, the disarmament process was reversed after the assassination of the SCIRI's founding leader, Ayatollah Baqir al-Hakim, in August 2003, after which the Americans readily accepted that the SCIRI needed an armed component to protect its assets in the deteriorating security situation." (Asia Times (10 December 2005) *Badr's spreading web*)

The report goes on to say

"Badr's intelligence apparatus is currently focused on gathering information on six primary objectives, in the following order of importance: 1) former regime elements (particularly committed members of the Ba'ath Party, former intelligence officers, Ba'athist academics and anybody who still actively supports Saddam); 2) insurgents (both indigenous and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi-led Salafi-jihadis); 3) the Sunni clerical establishment (the Association of Muslim Scholars being the primary target); 4) Arab Sunni-based political parties and personalities (the Iraqi Islamic Party is a major target for penetration); 5) the new Iraqi intelligence service; 6) American forces and facilities in Iraq (detailed information on American military bases, troop movements and tactics are collected on a daily basis)." (Ibid)

A report on security in Iraq from the *Congressional Research Service* states:

"Badr Brigades. Most Badr militiamen have now folded into the ISF, particularly the National Police and other police commando units. The Badr Brigades were originally recruited, trained, and equipped by Iran's hardline force, the Revolutionary Guard, during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, in which Badr guerrillas conducted forays from Iran into southern Iraq to attack Saddam regime targets. Badr fighters were recruited from the ranks of Iraqi prisoners of war held in Iran. However, many Iraqi Shiites viewed ISCI as an Iranian puppet and Badr operations in southern Iraq during the 1980s and 1990s did not shake Saddam's grip on power. This militia is led by Hadi al-Amiri (a member of the COR from the "Badr Organization" of the UIA). In late 2005, U.S. forces uncovered militiarun detention facilities ("Site 4") and arrested those Badr Brigade and related Iraqi police running them." (Congressional Research Service (7 May 2009) *Iraq: "Post-Saddam Governance and Security"*)

This report goes on to describe the political arm of the Badr organisation

"Supreme Islamic Council of (ISCI) Best-organized and most pro-Iranian Shiite Islamist party and generally allied with Da'wa Party in UIA. It was established in 1982 by Tehran to centralize Shiite Islamist movements in Iraq. First leader, Mohammad Baqr Al Hakim, killed by bomb in Najaf in August 2003. Current leader is his younger brother, Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim, a lower ranking Shiite cleric and a member of parliament (UIA slate), but he holds no government position. Hakim currently undergoing lung cancer treatment, instilling uncertainty in ISCI leadership. One of his top aides, Bayan Jabr, is now Finance Minister, and another, Adel Abd al-Mahdi, is a deputy president. Controls "Badr Brigades" militia. Son, Ammar al-Hakim, is a key ISCI figure as well and is said to be favored to take over ISCI should his father's condition become fatal. As part of UIA, ISCI has 29 members in parliament. Supports formation of Shiite "region" composed of nine southern provinces and dominates provincial councils on seven of those provinces. Supports draft oil law to develop the oil sector, and broad defense pact with the United States. Did unexpectedly poorly in the provincial elections; lost badly in Baghdad and Basra." (Ibid)

A 2005 report from *the Telegraph* states:

"One of the pilots assassinated was Ismael Saeed Fares, 48, known as "the Hawk of Baghdad" because of his legendary exploits. A series of daring raids at the end of the eight-year war with Iran earned him a string of medals and the admiration of millions.

They also earned him 24 bullets in his chest, fired at point-blank range by a gunman who struck as he sat with a neighbour in the garden of his home in north Baghdad earlier this year. Scores of others are believed to have been murdered, although precise figures are not available. There is no suggestion that Mr Fares was involved in the anti-Kurdish atrocities of the Anfal campaign.

The organised manner in which the murders have been carried out, each with multiple shots fired from an AK47, has fuelled suspicions that elements within Iraq's Iranian-linked government are behind them.

"Many of my father's friends have already left Iraq for Jordan because they received written death threats warning them to leave," said Mr Fares' son, Wisam, 21.

Victim's families suspect their names and addresses have been taken from old records at Iraq's ministry of defence. They claim that the killings are the work of the Badr Brigade, the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, one of the two main Shi'ite parties that dominate Iraq's new government. Although the brigade has officially disarmed, it has recently been blamed for the killing of scores of Sunni clerics in revenge for massacres of Shias carried out by Sunni-backed insurgents. "(The Telegraph (29 Oct 2005) *Iran 'sponsors assassination' of Sunni pilots who bombed Teheran*)

An April 2009 report from *Radio Free Europe* states:

"But a senior Iraqi intelligence source, who declined to be named, said there was evidence the bombs could be the work of the militant Badr Organization, the armed wing of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI).

The ISCI is allied to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's Al-Dawah party in parliament, but the two have become somewhat estranged.

Dawah trounced the ISCI in local elections in January after a campaign in which Maliki sought credit for increasing security and called for national unity. ISCI by contrast pushed overtly religious themes and called for an autonomous Shi'ite south.

Maliki's strong showing gave him some momentum ahead of a national election at the end of the year.

The intelligence source said the authorities had received intelligence 10 days earlier that Badr militants might set off bombs across Baghdad to send out a message that Maliki's government is not delivering on security as it claims.

But national security adviser Muwaffaq al-Rubayi, asked if the bombings could be the work of the Badr Organization instead of Al-Qaeda, replied: "All the...[finger]prints of Al-Qaeda were there."" (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (07 April 2009) *Iraq: "Baghdad Car Bomb Kills Nine In Shi'ite Area*)

An *International Crisis Group* report regarding the role of Shi'ite groups in Iraq states:

"If SCIRI/ISCI has so far failed in achieving respectability, it is because it has never quite managed to shake off its past as an Iran-bred group of exiles with a narrow sectarian agenda enforced by a potent militia. SCIRI claims with justification that it was established and inspired in response to the Iraqi regime's tyranny and crimes but perceptions forged during the hard years of the Iran-Iraq war, in which the party and its Badr militia fought alongside Iranian forces, have been slow to change; suspicion that SCIRI remains guided by a foreign hand even as it plants its roots in Iraqi soil has hobbled its ambition. "(International

Crisis Group (15 November 2007) *Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council*)

A 2005 report from the *Knight Ridder* news agency states:

"Shiite Muslim assassins are killing former members of Saddam Hussein's mostly Sunni Muslim regime with impunity in a wave of violence that, combined with the ongoing Sunni insurgency, threatens to escalate into civil war. The war between Shiite vigilantes and former Baath Party members is seldom investigated and largely overshadowed by the insurgency. The U.S. military is preoccupied with hunting down suicide bombers and foreign terrorists, and Iraq's new Shiite leaders have little interest in prosecuting those who kill their former oppressors or their enemies in the insurgency[...]

[...]The assassination squads are widely believed to be from the Badr Brigade, the armed wing of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the country's most influential Shiite political party and the biggest winner in the elections. "I believe they were Badr forces. They're assassinating all the well-known men," said Walid Rasheed, whose brother, a former Baathist named Falah Rasheed, was gunned down Monday outside his shop in Baghdad. "They just want to provoke strife among Iraqis." Officially, the Iran-backed Badr militia is now the Badr Organization, a political party whose leaders say it's disarmed. In reality, Badr fighters were so emboldened by their sect's victory at the polls that they're again roaming southern Shiite territories with weapons displayed, according to witnesses and Iraqi authorities" (Knight Ridder (25 February 2005) *Revenge killings of members of Saddam's former regime rise*)

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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