Iraq Situation Report: July 1 - 7, 2020

1 J ul 1: Prime Minister Kadhimi and Iraqi Prime Minister with Five Senior Security Officials Meet to Discuss the Current Situation. Prime Minister Kadhimi and the Iraqi Prime Minister met to discuss the current situation and the ongoing operations against the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq. The meeting was held in Baghdad, and the two leaders discussed the ongoing operations against IS and the need for continued coordination and cooperation between the two countries.

2 Jul 1: Iraqi Finance Minister Promises IMF Loan and Saudi Investors to Economic Output as Recovery Continues. The Iraqi Finance Minister promised an IMF loan to the government as a way to boost economic output. The Minister also met with Saudi investors to discuss the possibility of investment in Iraq's economy.

3 Jul 2: The New Political Bloc of Prime Minister Kadhimi Announces a New Initiative to Win Over Sunni Senators. The new political bloc of Prime Minister Kadhimi announced a new initiative to win over Sunni senators in the parliament.

4 Jul 3: Kadhimi and Hakim Meet on Some Unspecified Date in the Previous Week to Work on a Resolution of the Animosity Caused by a June 26 CTS Raid on a Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) Headquarters in Southern Baghdad. KH is a US-designated terror group and Iranian proxy that was to resolve the animosity caused by a June 26 CTS raid on a Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) headquarters in Southern Baghdad. The meeting was held to discuss a resolution of the animosity caused by a June 26 CTS raid on a Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) headquarters in Southern Baghdad.

5 Jul 3: The US-led Anti-ISIS Coalition Plans to Increase Its Presence in Iraq by Deploying a Counter-Rocket Artillery and Mortar (C-RAM) System to Baghdad. The US-led Anti-ISIS Coalition plans to increase its presence in Iraq by deploying a Counter-Rocket Artillery and Mortar (C-RAM) system to Baghdad.

6 Jul 3-6: Turkey Continues to Expand Physical Presence in Rural Northern Iraq to Support its Military Operations. Turkey has continued to expand its physical presence in rural northern Iraq to support its military operations.

7 Jul 3: The US-led Anti-ISIS Coalition Plans to Increase Its Presence in Iraq by Deploying a Counter-Rocket Artillery and Mortar (C-RAM) System to Baghdad. The US-led Anti-ISIS Coalition plans to increase its presence in Iraq by deploying a Counter-Rocket Artillery and Mortar (C-RAM) system to Baghdad.

8 Jul 4: Prime Minister Kadhimi Denies Key Iranianaryl Weapon Systems for Security Forces but Suggests Compromise Replacements, Prime Minister Kadhimi appointed the former commander of the CTS, Abdul Ghani al-Asadi, as head of the Iraqi National Security Agency and appointed an American military organization to work on a joint project to enhance the country’s military capabilities. Kadhimi dismissed Iranian arms for security personnel, which served as an immediate trigger for the current tensions between Baghdad and Tehran.

9 Jul 4-5: Iraqi-US C-RAM Air Defense System to Defend Embassies. An anonymous Iraqi security source confirmed to AFP that the US Embassy in Baghdad tested a new counter-rocket, artillery and mortar defense system (C-RAM) on July 4. The test was conducted under the supervision of a US military advisor group (MAG) and aimed to test the system’s effectiveness in defending against rocket attacks.

10 Jul 5: Likely Iranian Provocative Fire One Rocket at the US Embassy in Baghdad, Injuring a Child. Iraq’s Security Media Cell (SMC), an official Iraqi media news body, reported that a Kata’ib Hezbollah rocket landed in a residential home, resulting in minor injuries.

11 Jul 5: Iraqi Prime Minister’s Under Secretary to the Interior, General Kenneth McKenzie, confirmed that CENTCOM had learned on July 4 that Iran had fired six rockets at a US airbase in Iraq. McKenzie later confirmed that the US Embassy’s security was “muted” and that no injuries were reported. McKenzie described the test as “provocative” and a “violation of international law.”

12 Jul 5: Kadhimi Announced 150% Increase in Oil Production as the Country Battles the Economic Impact of COVID-19. Prime Minister Kadhimi announced a 150% increase in oil production as the country battles the economic impact of COVID-19.

13 Jul 5: Assassination of Prominent Analyst Draws Large Scale Condemnations across Iraq’s Political Landscape. The assassination of a prominent analyst in Iraq drew large scale condemnations across the political landscape.

14 Jul 6-7: CENTCOM Commandant Anticipates Enduring US Presence in Iraq. CENTCOM Commandant Gen. McKenzie met with Prime Minister Kadhimi in Baghdad for the first time in three years. McKenzie expressed confidence to reporters that the US government and the US-led Coalition in Iraq plan to maintain a presence in the country.


Key Takeaway: Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH), a key Iranian proxy militia and US-designated terrorist group, is retaliating against Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi for launching a coordinated campaign to take down the group. The campaign is expected to build upon Baghdad’s Green Zone to reach the Embassy of Saudi Arabia after the Saudi newspaper al-Sharq al-Awsat published a cartoon perceived as critical of Iraq’s highest state authority. The campaign is expected to take aim at KH’s finances and military capabilities. The campaign is expected to take aim at KH’s finances and military capabilities.

To learn more about the situation in Iraq, please visit the Institute for the Study of War’s website or subscribe to our newsletter.

©2020 by the Institute for the Study of War