



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)  
LEGAL AID BOARD

## **Iraq - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Friday 17 January 2014**

### **Treatment of Shia in Baghdad**

In a report published by *BBC News* in January 2014, it is stated:

“The car bomb attacks that shook Baghdad started at about 10:30 (07:30) and continued for about an hour, striking busy markets in mostly in predominantly Shia districts of the capital but also in mixed areas” (BBC News (15 January 2014) *Dozens killed in Iraq bomb attacks*).

A report issued in January 2014 by *The Guardian* notes:

“Al-Qaida loyalists are pursuing a relentless campaign of attacks, mostly aimed at security forces, Shia civilians and Sunnis seen as loyal to the Shia-led government. The violence has dismayed leaders of Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region...At least eight bombs struck the Iraqi capital, mostly in Shia districts, killing 40 people and wounding 88, police and medics said. A car bomb in Dujail, a Shia town 31 miles north of Baghdad, killed three people and wounded seven” (The Guardian (15 January 2014) *Iraq bombings kill dozens as PM warns of 'evil statelet' attempts*).

In December 2013 *BBC News* notes that:

“Iraq has suffered one of its bloodiest days in recent months with a wave of attacks killing more than 70 people, many of them pilgrims. The deadliest single attack came in the evening when two car bombs targeting Shia pilgrims killed at least 20 in Rashid, a southern suburb of Baghdad” (BBC News (16 December 2013) *Iraq violence: More than 70 people killed in attacks*).

In December 2013 the *Germany: Federal Office for Migration and Asylum* commenting on Baghdad states that:

“Residential districts that have a large Shia Muslim population are the frequent target of attacks” (Germany: Federal Office for Migration and Asylum (9 December 2013) *Information Centre Asylum and Migration Briefing Notes (9 December 2013)*, p.1).

### **What component of the army is Sunni**

An article published in *The Economist* issued in January 2014 notes the:

“...Shia-dominated army...” (The Economist (11 January 2014) *The jihadists may have gone too far*).

In December 2013, a report published by the *Congressional Research Service* notes:

“The ISF, which is largely Shiite...” (Congressional Research Service (17 December 2013) *Iraq: Politics, Governance, and Human Rights*, p.13).

ISF is an acronym for Iraqi Security Force.

A report issued in August 2013 by the *International Crisis Group* points out that:

“Although Crisis Group is not in a position to assess the ethnic and sectarian balance within the army, most of the defence ministry’s leadership was Shiite in 2011 (heads of operations commands and the ground forces; general inspector; operations commanders and division heads). A majority had served as former army officers, been reintegrated via procedures laid out in the Justice and Accountability Law and then been elevated to the highest ranks. That said, the army leadership is not exclusively Shiite, as it includes Sunni personnel who generally serve in Sunni-Arab-populated provinces” (International Crisis Group (14 August 2013) *Make or Break: Iraq’s Sunnis and the State*, p.8/footnote 34).

## References

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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.

#### Sources Consulted

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European Country of Origin Information Network  
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