

# Back into the Shadows? The Future of Kata'ib Hezbollah and Iran's Other Proxies in Iraq

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## History may be repeating itself as Tehran develops new, smaller, and more secure Iraqi cells reminiscent of the formation of KH itself.

**T**he following is an excerpt from an article originally published *in the CTC Sentinel* (<https://ctc.usma.edu/back-into-the-shadows-the-future-of-kataib-hezbollah-and-irans-other-proxies-in-iraq/>). To read the full article, download the PDF above.

Kata'ib Hezbollah was Iran's most favored militant group in Iraq from its formation in the mid-2000s until the death of its founder Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis on January 3, 2020. Yet, the activities and influence of al-Muhandis and KH were not synonymous, as has been shown since his death. KH is still the engine room of anti-U.S. attacks in Iraq, but it is less politically agile and operates in a more hostile counterterrorism environment where deniability and secrecy have become more important again. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force is also leaning on a more diversified model in Iraq, drawing on non-KH factions like Saraya al-Jihad and Saraya al-Ashura, and engaging more directly with Iraq's minorities, including Sunni communities and the Shi'a Kurdish Faylis and Turkmen...

*Michael Knights is The Washington Institute's Bernstein Fellow and coauthor of its March 2020 study [Honored, Not Contained: The Future of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/honored-not-contained-the-future-of-iraqs-popular-mobilization-forces) (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/honored-not-contained-the-future-of-iraqs-popular-mobilization-forces>).* ❖

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