



has written more than ten times on social media in recent months, which equates to “neither Iran nor America.” Another popular slogan is “no to dependency,” which [refers \(https://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%84-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%91-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9\)](https://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%84-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%91-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9) to armed factions loyal to Iran. Considering this tense environment, Iran considers it a much safer bet to let the internal Iraqi conflict play out without exerting much of its own influence on the situation.

Moreover, Tehran can still use al-Sadr as a source of strength in Iraq, especially should the Shiites face a common external threat. Even al-Sadr’s campaign for Iraqi nationalism is not necessarily a closed door for Iran. Rather than being anti-Iranian, the narrative can be reframed as a mere transformation of Iran’s role in Iraq—a transformation that actually makes al-Sadr Iran’s partner rather than its subordinate.

### Outlook on the International Stage

The events in Iraq pose a host of challenges for U.S. policy, especially with regard to oil supplies and the United States-Iran nuclear talks. Despite the recent warnings issued by the White House calling for the Iraqi parties to engage in dialogue, President Joe Biden’s administration may actually be facing a dual risk regarding the Iraq situation. Firstly, chaos in Iraq has caused significant fluctuations in Iraqi oil supplies that may jeopardize Biden’s efforts to calm the U.S. crude oil market ahead of midterm elections this coming November.

More importantly, al-Sadr’s stumbles may strengthen Iran globally at a crucial geopolitical moment vis-à-vis the Iran-United States relationship. In the short term, the political situation in Iraq can increase Iran’s regional influence if a strong Coordination Framework government is formed that takes away al-Sadr’s leverage. In the long term, this can embolden Iran to take a more aggressive approach in nuclear talks with the United States. As it stands, Iran is in no hurry as it awaits the outcome of the nuclear talks, likely with the knowledge that they can use the Iraq situation against the United States and its allies should the talks continue to falter. Political chaos in Iraq would lead to the halting of Iraqi oil flows to the global market, which would raise oil prices—providing Iran with the perfect opportunity to export large quantities of oil currently restricted under U.S. sanctions in order to satisfy global demand. Naturally, the United States fears this scenario could play out, especially as the Iraqi Shiites remain disjointed ❖

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