
IRAQI PREMIER ORDERS SECURITY SERVICES NOT TO SHOOT UNARMED PROTESTERS

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16.07.2018

Iraqi News (15 July 2018)

by Mohammed Ebraheem

Baghdad (Iraqinews.com) □Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has called on security forces to be on high alert and not to open fire at unarmed demonstrators, who have been staging rallies in Iraqs southern provinces since last week, demanding enhanced services and job opportunities.

The state-run TV quoted Abadi as saying in an address to the nation that the Iraqi people have the right to stage peaceful rallies, but he warned that taking the protests out of their contexts could pull the country backwards.

Abadi termed those who seek to create chaos in Iraq and assault security forces as a group of vandals, who try to exploit the demands of citizens to jeopardize the country.

The premier further directed the security services not to use weapons to confront unarmed citizens.

Iraqi protesters have staged mass demonstrations against unemployment, corruption and poor services across southern Iraq since last week, prompting the government to impose a curfew in several provinces and put security forces on high alert.

The demonstrations started last Sunday in Basra province, but they later extended to other cities, including Amara, Nasiriya, Karbala and the Shiite holy city of Najaf. There were also protests in parts of the capital, Baghdad.

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