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## **IRAQ'S SADR HINTS AT 'MILLION MAN DAY OF RAGE'**

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Asharq Al-Awsat (30 August 2018)

Baghdad - Hamza Mustafa

Iraq's political crisis is set to grow after the blocs that have won most seats in the parliament failed to create the largest legislative bloc capable of forming a new government.

The inaugural session of the 329-seat chamber would be chaired by its oldest member, President Fuad Massum said this week in a decree calling for the sitting to take place on September 3.

As the parliament plans to meet, cleric Moqtada Sadr called on Wednesday for a peaceful day of rage to rebuild a new Iraq.

Dozens of Iraqis protested near the entrance to the green zone in Baghdad over what they say are US plans to keep Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi in his post for a second term.

They said Brett McGurk, the US special envoy for the coalition against ISIS, has been interfering in the negotiations aimed at forming the biggest parliamentary bloc.

No to America, the protesters chanted as they pledged not to remain silent to the US embassy's interference in the Iraqi government formation process.

Addressing his followers in a statement, Sadr urged them to hold a million man march against the corrupt.

Say no to sectarianism, no to corruption, no to division of shares, no to terrorism and no to occupation, he said.

Iraq needs a peaceful day of rage to set the stage for building a new Iraq away from corruption and oppression, Sadr added.

His foes considered his statement a call for street protests if the government was not formed anytime soon.

A political source told Asharq Al-Awsat that the slogans used in Sadr's statement mainly with regard to occupation, is a hint to the US, which has been seeking to keep Abadi in power.

Political analysts believe that tension ahead of the parliamentary session, along with US and Iranian pressure on the formation of the largest legislative bloc, are a reflection that Iraqs political crisis has not abated and is set to become worse.

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1378061/iraq%E2%80%99s-sadr-hints-%E2%80%98million-man-day-rage%E2%80%99>

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