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## **SADR WARNS IRAQ PM AGAINST FORMING 'DEEP STATE'**

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Asharq Al-Awsat (18 August 2019)

Baghdad - Hamza Mustafa

Leader of the Sadrist movement, Moqtada al-Sadr warned on Saturday Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi against building a deep state in the country.

Continuing along this path is unacceptable by the religious authorities and the people, he warned.

In a statement, Sadr offered the premier fraternal advice that include popular demands voiced by the religious authority and people.

Sadr summarized his advice in four points. The first is a total commitment to independence in work and avoiding siding with one party and not the other. Any deviation from this point would pave the way for a new deep state.

In his second point, he noted that the services file remained unresolved, urging Abdul Mahdi to urgently tackle this issue.

The third point concerns the activation of efforts to combat corruption.

No progress has been made in this issue, Sadr remarked. Silence is almost an authorization of corruption.

In his final point, he urged the prime minister to preserve the dignity of the state and its institutions and the independence of Iraqi decision-making power.

Do not hesitate to punish those who undermine the security services and punish those with foreign affiliations, he demanded.

The cleric made his warnings after Israel was blamed for massive blasts earlier this week at a weapons depot in the al-Saqr military base south of Baghdad.

Leading members of the Reform and Construction alliance Haidar al-Malla told Asharq Al-Awsat that Sadrs message to Abdul Mahdi was advisory in tone and offered the premier guidance, rather than include clear constitutional and legal mechanisms.

If Sadr believes that the government is incapable of respecting the pledges mentioned above, then he should take a clear stance, withdraw his support for this cabinet and become an opposition party, he added.

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1861431/sadr-warns-iraq-pm-against-forming-deep-state>

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