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**EXCLUSIVE: IRAN-BACKED MILITIAS DEPLOYED SNIPERS IN IRAQ PROTESTS - SOURCES**

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Reuters (17 October 2019)

Iran-backed militias deployed snipers on Baghdad rooftops during Iraqs deadliest anti-government protests in years, two Iraqi security officials told Reuters.

The deployment of militia fighters, which has not been previously reported, underscores the chaotic nature of Iraqi politics amid mass protests that led to more than 100 deaths and 6,000 injuries during the week starting Oct. 1. Such militias have become a fixture here with Irans rising influence. They sometimes operate in conjunction with Iraqi security forces but they retain their own command structures.

The Iraqi security sources told Reuters that the leaders of Iran-aligned militias decided on their own to help put down the mass protests against the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi, whose one-year-old administration is backed by powerful Iran-backed armed groups and political factions.

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