The Amit Terrorism and Intelligence Research Institute
At the Israeli Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center

Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

November 11–18, 2026

Editor: Dr. Raz Zimmt



Key Trends

► Iran reiterated its commitment to Lebanon and Hezbollah as part of its demands from the United States in the negotiations to end the war.

► Tensions are rising between the Iraqi government and the most powerful pro-Iranian militia in the country.

► The Houthis continued to seize territory in the Red Sea area.

Highlights[1]

- The Iranian Foreign Minister criticized international indifference to the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip.
- The Iranian Majles Speaker spoke with his Lebanese counterpart and stressed Iran's demand for a ceasefire in Lebanon as part of the negotiations with the United States to end the war.
- The Qods Force commander visited Baghdad amid the Iraqi Prime Minister's demand that Kata'ib Hezbollah vacate its main base as part of an investigation into oil theft. The militia declared that it will not comply with the ultimatum and will not give up its weapons.
- Amid concern over a possible resumption of the regional war, the Iranian President met with the President of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq. At the same time, the Iranian Ambassador in Baghdad met with the Iraqi President.
- The Houthis seized more territory near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait after the Saudi-backed Yemeni forces withdrew to defend the city of Aden.

Iranian Involvement in the Palestinian Arena

- Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi referred to the situation in the Gaza Strip in a post: "The disastrous situation in Gaza is no longer making headlines in Western media. A Silent Genocide is going on with almost zero attention. It is shameful." He added that this indicates that Israel has succeeded in one aspect of its effort to start wars in order to divert attention from its failures (Araghchi's X account, November 12, 2026).

[1] The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

Iranian Involvement in Lebanon

- Iranian Majles Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf spoke with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and discussed developments in the international arena and relations between the two countries. Qalibaf highlighted Berri's central role in preserving the cohesion of Lebanese society and said that the Islamic Republic is paying special attention to the Lebanese issue as it advances its demands and conditions in the negotiations. He stressed that, from Iran's perspective, calm will not return to the region without an end to the war in Lebanon and the realization of Lebanon's sovereignty over its territory. Berri referred to UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and stressed the need for the withdrawal of the "occupation forces" from Lebanese territory (Tasnim, November 16, 2026).
- Majles Speaker Qalibaf said that Iran's position regarding Lebanon and Hezbollah in the negotiations to end the war is that Iran and the "Resistance Front" constitute one front and one body. According to him, when a Muslim country is subjected to aggression by the "Zionist regime," everyone must help it. He added that the relations between Iran and the Lebanese people – the Shiites and the Christians in Lebanon – are based on religious and human ties, and that it is Iran's duty to defend them. Qalibaf noted that during the recent war, the Lebanese people and the Shiites in Lebanon suffered casualties on a scale comparable to Iran's and defended themselves. Therefore, Iran is also defending them, and this is its humanitarian and Islamic duty (Al Jazeera, November 11, 2026).



The Majles Speaker in an interview with Al Jazeera (Tasnim, November 11, 2026)

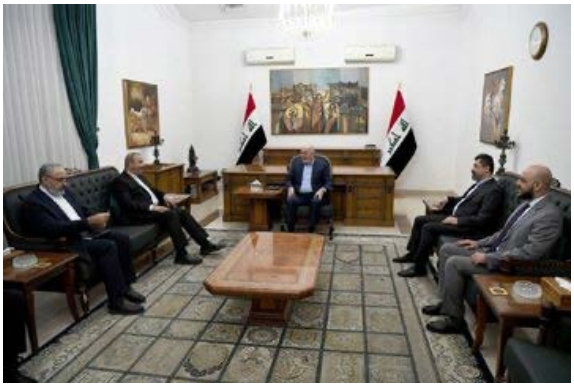
Iranian Involvement in Iraq

- Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian met with Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference in Turkey. The two sides discussed key regional and international issues and stressed the importance of diplomacy, dialogue, and multilateral cooperation in addressing shared global challenges (IRNA, November 12, 2026).



Meeting between the Iranian President and the President of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq (IRNA, November 12, 2026)

- Iranian Ambassador to Iraq Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadeq met with Iraqi President Nizar Amedi. A statement from the Iraqi President's office said that Amedi stressed the importance of strengthening bilateral relations and expanding areas of cooperation to advance common interests. He also stressed the need to continue contacts regarding developments in the region and to work to maintain regional stability and promote understanding among the countries of the region. The Iranian Ambassador praised the strength of relations between Iran and Iraq and expressed his country's desire to continue strengthening cooperation with Iraq in various fields. He stressed the importance of continued contacts and coordination to address the challenges in the region (ISNA, November 15, 2026).



Meeting between the Iranian Ambassador in Baghdad and the Iraqi President (ISNA, November 15, 2026)

The Pro-Iranian Militias in Iraq

Confrontation between the Iraqi government and Kata'ib Hezbollah

- On November 12, 2026, Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi ordered the establishment of a special commission of inquiry to examine suspicions of oil smuggling in the Jurf al-Sakhar area south of Baghdad, a stronghold of Kata'ib Hezbollah, the most powerful pro-Iranian militia in the country. "Sources" said there was information that the militia had tapped into oil pipelines, stored oil, and smuggled it in exchange for hundreds of thousands of dollars. After a search in Jurf al-Sakhar, the commission reported that several "sites" linked to oil smuggling operations had been found and that the investigation was continuing in several governorates of the country. Al-Zaidi also issued an ultimatum requiring Kata'ib Hezbollah to withdraw from Jurf al-Sakhar by Friday, November 20, 2026, before Iraqi security forces move in (Iraqi and Arab media, November 13–18, 2026).
- In response, Kata'ib Hezbollah said that these accusations were an attempt to blackmail the militia into handing its weapons over to the state and that in fact no evidence of any oil smuggling had been found. The militia also made it clear that it has no intention of handing over its weapons (Kata'ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, November 15, 2026). Senior militia official Abu Talib al-Saidi stressed that the militia will not leave Jurf al-Sakhar despite the Prime Minister's demand. He declared: "I can state with certainty, and say it categorically, that the dream they are dreaming, that the Kata'ib withdraw from Jurf al-Sakhar, will not come true, even over our bodies, our blood, our legacy, our wounded and our martyrs" (AFP, November 17, 2026).



Kata'ib Hezbollah operatives at the entrance to Jurf al-Sakhar
(Tamara Alkhazraji's X account, November 13, 2026)

- "Iraqi sources" said that Qods Force Commander Esmail Qaani arrived in Baghdad for talks with senior officials in the Iraqi government and the pro-Iranian Shiite militias. According to the report, the visit was intended to defuse the tensions and disagreements between the Iraqi government and Kata'ib Hezbollah (Al Arabiya, November 17, 2026). Another report claimed that at Qaani's meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi, understandings were reached paving the way for Kata'ib

Hezbollah to leave the base in the Jurf al-Sakhar area and for government forces to enter it, to prevent a military confrontation (Alhurra, November 17, 2026).

Militia activity as part of the "unity of the arenas"

- Kata'ib Hezbollah issued a statement outlining several principles guiding its activities, including defending Iran and preventing its isolation, defending "the Palestinian cause" and al-Aqsa Mosque, supporting the "brothers" in Yemen and Lebanon, and opposing concessions regarding the weapons in the militia's possession. The militia also warned that Prime Minister al-Zaidi would bear responsibility for any attack against the headquarters of the "Islamic Resistance" or the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), since, according to the militia, he shared security information with the United States, which passed it on to Israel to use for strikes in Iraq (Kata'ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, November 11, 2026).

The Houthis in Yemen

- The Houthi Foreign Ministry attacked the international community and international institutions for their silence in the face of "the crimes of the Zionist enemy" in the Gaza Strip. According to the ministry, this silence constitutes "complicity in these crimes." It also said that the US administration is granting Israel legitimacy to carry out these acts, including attacks on hospitals. The ministry called on the Muslim nation to cooperate and join forces to compel Israel to cease its activities in the Gaza Strip (Houthi Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, November 13, 2026).
- Over the past week, Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree issued statements claiming responsibility for at least 14 "operations" against various targets in Saudi territory, including airports, energy infrastructure, economic assets, and military targets. According to Saree, the attacks were carried out with a large number of ballistic missiles and drones (Yahya Saree's Telegram channel, November 11–18, 2026). In contrast, Saudi-led coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki said that coalition forces had intercepted four ballistic missiles, 18 drones, and four cruise missiles launched by the Houthis at various targets in Saudi Arabia. Al-Maliki also reported that the Houthis had carried out several attacks in the area of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, allegations denied by the Houthis (Saudi-led coalition X account, November 11–18, 2026).
- On November 15, 2026, it was reported that the forces of the internationally recognized Yemeni government had announced that they were withdrawing from areas near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait to prepare for the defense of Aden, the capital of the anti-Houthi government (Arab media, November 15, 2026). In this context, Yahya Saree said that the Houthi forces had carried out an extensive operation in southwestern Yemen, during which they took control of 7,100 square kilometers,

destroyed 12 enemy divisions, put hundreds of vehicles out of commission, and seized a large quantity of weapons, ammunition, and other equipment (Yahya Saree's Telegram channel, November 17, 2026).

- Majles Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf rejected claims that Iran is assisting the Houthis in Yemen. He noted that no one should interfere in Yemen's internal affairs and that the Yemenis must reach agreements among themselves. He added that if Saudi Arabia and the Houthis ask for Iran's help in resolving the disputes between them, Tehran will be ready to assist (Al Jazeera, November 11, 2026).

The Militias in Syria

- The Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Possessors of Might (Uli al-Ba's, UAB) issued a "final warning to traitors and collaborators" with "the Israeli enemy" in southern Syria, claiming it has "conclusive evidence" of such activity. The militia threatened that anyone involved would henceforth be considered a legitimate target for "the guns of the resistance" and that their identity would be publicly exposed. Finally, the militia warned that this was the last opportunity for these elements to sever their ties with Israel before it was too late (Islamic Resistance Front in Syria Telegram channel, November 12, 2026).