



Factsheet

Badush Central Prison Attack (June 2014)

Launch of investigation: August 2020

SCOPE OF INVESTIGATION

The investigation focused on the attack by ISIL (Da'esh) on the Badush Central Prison on the morning of 10 June 2014 and the subsequent execution of Shi'a prisoners at different locations around the prison.

DESCRIPTION OF VICTIM GROUP

Most prisoners who were gathered and executed by ISIL (Da'esh) were Shi'as from different regions of Iraq, in addition to Christian prisoners as well as Sunni prisoners who helped or covered for the Shi'as. The Shi'as represent one of the two major branches of the Islamic religion. The Shi'a branch differentiates itself from the Sunni branch in that its members believe that the leadership of the Muslim community after Prophet Mohammad belongs to Ali ibn Abi Talib, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law and his successors. The word "Shi'ite" itself, means "supporter/follower", in the Arabic language. Shi'as have their own interpretation of Islamic history and theology as well as their own holy days of remembrance and holy sites. Shi'as form most of the population in Iraq.

MAIN LOCATIONS/AREAS

Badush Central Prison and surrounding areas including Badush Valley, Badush Cement Factory, Bawabat el-Sham and Ayn el-Jahesh.

MAIN INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITIES

As part of its work, the Investigative Team screened and/or interviewed more than 160 witnesses, including survivors, escapees, prison guards and relatives. It also collected documentary evidence, including more than 370 judicial statements, 70 photos and a significant amount of open-source information, including social media posts. In 2024, the Investigative Team prepared, in collaboration with SITU, a [video](#) describing how the attack unfolded.

COOPERATION

The Investigative Team substantially benefitted from its cooperation with the Iraqi Judicial authorities which provided extensive and relevant documents such as statements from the Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, the work undertaken by the Mass Graves Directorate and the Medico-Legal Directorate were incorporated in the Investigative Team's factual findings related to the Badush Central Prison attack and the subsequent execution of prisoners.

A confidential report on the Badush Central Prison massacre was shared with the Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council in September 2024.



OVERVIEW OF FACTUAL FINDINGS

On 10 June 2014, ISIL (Da'esh) forces attacked the Badush Central Prison near Mosul, which contained approximately 3,000 prisoners. The attack occurred in the early hours of the morning and followed a sustained and successful take-over of Mosul city. The capture of the prison was nearly effortless due to a significant portion of the prison guards and staff in charge of guarding the prison abandoning their posts following an advance notice of the ISIL (Da'esh)'s impending attack on the prison. ISIL (Da'esh) took control of the main watch towers and doors, and opened the halls of the prison, one after another by breaking the door locks. Following the capture, ISIL (Da'esh) freed most of the Sunni prisoners. Shi'a prisoners were, however, either killed or returned to their cells. On the same day, ISIL (Da'esh) took around 1,000-1,500 prisoners to several locations around the prison, where it again separated them based solely on their religion. ISIL (Da'esh) members then executed approximately 1,000 predominantly Shi'a prisoners. Some escaped prisoners were captured by ISIL (Da'esh) up to ten days later and killed.

Many of the other prisoners with extremist backgrounds went on to join ISIL (Da'esh). Significant planning and preparation preceded the attack, which was ultimately commanded by a select number of key ISIL (Da'esh) leadership figures. Evidence indicates that ISIL (Da'esh) planned to use the attack as an opportunity to fill its ranks with additional members.

OVERVIEW OF PRELIMINARY LEGAL FINDINGS

There are reasonable grounds to believe that: ISIL (Da'esh) maintained a genocidal policy against Shi'as of Iraq, mainly by targeting and killing adult male members of that group, and ISIL (Da'esh) members participating in the Badush killing operation possessed **genocidal intent** in relation to approximately 1,000 adult Shi'a male prisoners executed on and in the days after 10 June 2014. To reach a finding that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Badush killing operation may amount to genocide, other instances of ISIL (Da'esh) killings against Shi'as, within the territory controlled by the armed group and in the context of an ISIL (Da'esh) genocidal policy towards the Shi'as of Iraq, must be corroborated and examined together. Such instances include the massacre at the Tikrit Air Academy as well as the crimes committed against Shi'a Turkmen and Shi'a members of the Shabak community.

Further, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the same acts may also amount to the **crimes against humanity** of murder, extermination, torture and other inhumane acts, enforced disappearance and persecution, and to the **war crimes** of murder, cruel treatment, torture and outrages upon personal dignity.

RELEVANT PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

[Factual and legal assessment of acts committed by ISIL \(Da'esh\) in Iraq during the attack on Badush Central Prison on 10 June 2014 \(September 2024\)](#)