

Social Listening:

Muhsin Al-Mandalawi

August 2025



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“When the Acting Speaker of Parliament is himself the Chairman of the Board of a private university and a hospital, who writes the laws? And who benefits from them? This isn’t a conflict of interest, this is a monopoly on power and money.”

Legal_Iraq_Forum (Facebook) July 2025

“Five currency exchange companies owned by Al-Mandalawi. How many dollars were smuggled to Iran and Syria through these fronts? These companies are not for trade, but for breaking sanctions and serving the Axis.”

EconomicCrimeIRQ (Telegram) July 2025

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OVERVIEW



Over the past two decades, public perception in Iraq has been shaped significantly by persistent corruption, political instability, and unmet expectations from government institutions. Iraq's political landscape is marred by endemic corruption, with estimates suggesting that between \$150 and \$300 billion has been lost to corrupt practices since 2003. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) reflects this ongoing challenge, with Iraq scoring 26 out of 100 in 2024, ranking 140th out of 180 countries, a position that underscores the pervasive nature of corruption in the country.

The country's power-sharing system has entrenched political elites who exploit state resources for personal gain. Recent efforts by the Central Bank of Iraq and international partners have failed to reform the financial sector and curb illicit activities due to the deep-rooted nature of corruption. This has impacted public trust in the government, which has experienced a significant decline. In 2013, nearly half (47%) of Iraqis expressed confidence in their government. However, by 2022, this figure plummeted to 26%, indicating a significant erosion of trust in less than a decade. This decline is mirrored in perceptions of the parliament and political parties, with 83% and 94% of Iraqi citizens expressing distrust in these institutions.

The impact of negative public perception is evident in voter turnout in national elections, which has been on a downward trend. In 2021 only 41% of Iraqi citizens participated in elections, reflecting widespread disillusionment with the political process. In addition, mass protests, such as those during the Tishreen Movement highlight the public's demand for systemic reforms and accountability.

Shifts in public sentiments have profound implications for individual political figures, political parties and coalitions. Allegations of corruption and misuse of power not only tarnish personal reputations but also exacerbate public cynicism toward the broader political system. As Iraq approaches the upcoming Parliamentary elections, understanding and addressing these perceptions is critical to forecasting the election outcome and fostering a more transparent and accountable governance framework.

“Billions in wealth with no transparent source...this is classic Iraqi political corruption. His professional record as a “Businessman” does not justify this plunder.”

Iraqi_Observer_24 (X/Twitter) June 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ENODO Global is producing a series of analytical reports that measure public perceptions of key political figures and political parties as Iraq prepares for its upcoming parliamentary elections. These reports are designed to reveal public attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions based on the actions and reputations of influential leaders. By combining social media analysis, local and regional news monitoring, and other open-source information, ENODO seeks to uncover the underlying narratives that shape public opinion and influence electoral outcomes.

The first report examined Ammar al-Hakim and the National Wisdom Movement, while our second report examines allegations of financial corruption surrounding Muhsin al-Mandalawi, the First Deputy Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives. The investigation focuses on his purported influence over the Ministry of Higher Education, ownership of multiple currency exchange companies, use of private jets, possession of luxury items, and alleged practices of buying loyalty from independent MPs. These activities are analyzed within the broader context of systemic corruption in Iraq, as documented by various sources.

“How does a deputy speaker of parliament own universities and hospitals worth billions of dollars while Iraq’s infrastructure collapses? This wealth came from the people’s sustenance.”

Baghdad_Insider (Telegram) June 2025



PROFILE: BUSINESSMAN / POLITICIAN

Al-Mandalawi is a self-declared billionaire with a vast commercial empire of unexplained wealth who exemplifies the typical Iraqi businessman-politician. Born in Mandali, Diyala Governorate, al-Mandalawi leveraged his dual Feyli Kurdish and Shia Muslim identity to build a business empire of unexplained proportions. His educational background includes a diploma from Baghdad Institute of Technology (1988) and a bachelor's degree from Al-Farahidi University, the same institution he now serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors. His professional designation as "Businessman" masks his reported billionaire status with commercial enterprises valued at several billion dollars and reveals the dramatic wealth accumulation during his parliamentary career that lacks any explanation.

While al-Mandalawi's unexplained fortune has raised serious questions, it is his personal lifestyle that most clearly underscores his political elitism, which distances him from the hardships of ordinary Iraqis. His family reportedly resides in Dubai, enjoying the comforts and safety abroad, while he remains detached from the challenges faced by Iraqi citizens. He has also secured commercial passports and Saint Lucia citizenship for himself and his family, which is widely regarded as inappropriate for a political leader of his standing and perceived as an affront to the Iraqi state. Moreover, although no publicly available documentation exists, reports suggest that he has taken possession of Uday Saddam Hussein's former palace in Baghdad's Green Zone, where he currently resides. The estate is said to span seven dunams, includes swimming pools, sports facilities, and private recreational amenities.

Al-Mandalawi's career trajectory and rapid political ascent from winning 5,385 votes in 2021 to becoming Acting Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament demonstrates how financial resources translate into political power within Iraq's corruption-prone system. It also raises fundamental questions about financial transparency and abuse of public office. His current position as the First Deputy Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, chairman of a private university and a private hospital, which is heavily regulated by the government creates profound and undeniable conflicts of interest.

Al-Mandalawi's position and wealth open numerous avenues for illicit enrichment through state contracts, land deals, and favorable legislation. He has exerted significant pressure to facilitate questionable deals, investments, and procurement contracts across several institutions, including the Ministry of Electricity, the General Pension Authority, the Ministry of Communications, the Baghdad Municipality, the Martyrs Foundation, the Doctors Syndicate, and the National Investment Commission. In addition to these activities, he has engaged in misrepresentation, false claims, and abuse of his position by portraying himself as closely connected to and influential within the judiciary.



In addition, as head of the Al-Asas Coalition, which is comprised of 22 civil parties, and a member of the Shiite Coordination Framework, a grouping of top politicians widely regarded as closely tied to Iran through financial incentives and parliamentary power abuse, al-Mandalawi epitomizes the intersection of wealth and political influence that defines his governance approach. Reports further indicate that he frequently communicates in Farsi with his security personnel and family members, while showing disregard for Arabic. This conduct has not only caused concern but also reinforces suspicion regarding his affiliations, strengthening the perception that his political rise is rooted less in national service and more in foreign alignment and personal enrichment.

A central element of al-Mandalawi’s profile is his immense and ambiguous personal wealth. He is publicly identified as a “billionaire” who “allegedly controls a large number of commercial enterprises in Iraq, with a gross value of several billion dollars”. However, there is limited information in the public domain that explains the origins of his vast fortune, which is a significant gap for a public figure whose professional background is simply listed as “Businessman.” Moreover, his known business holdings are concentrated in sectors that are heavily regulated by and dependent on the Iraqi government, creating inherent and significant conflicts of interest.

Al-Mandalawi serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Farahidi University, a private university in Baghdad that was established in 2013. The university’s ownership structure is unclear. While al-Mandalawi is Chairman, news releases also identify a Dr. Batoul Muwafiq Kazem as “Chairwoman of the Board of Directors” and Vice President of the board, suggesting a complex or shared governance structure. The university’s website mentions a financial department focused on “investing its human and material resources” and generating “self-revenues,” but provides no transparent financial data or details on its funding sources.

He is also the Chairman of the Board of Directors for the International Hospital for Specialized Surgery located in Baghdad. This entity has a remarkably small digital footprint. It does not appear in lists of major public or well-known private hospitals in Baghdad, and information beyond a location marker on the Waze app is virtually nonexistent. This lack of public information for what is a significant piece of infrastructure is a major red flag that raises critical questions about the hospital’s purpose, clientele, and funding.

In an interview, al-Mandalawi acknowledged having “personal business interests in Iraqi hotels, hospitals and cash transfer services”. In addition, UK corporate records show a “Mohsin Ali Akbar Namdar AL-MANDALAWI” was appointed as a director of a now-dissolved company named CAFE COSTA LIMITED in 2018, indicating potential international business activities. This concentration of assets raises serious questions about conflicts of interest and the systematic exploitation of political position for personal enrichment.



“Audio leak from Al-Farahidi University: promises of grades and passing for students in exchange for voting for Al-Mandalawi’s bloc. They have turned education into a market for buying votes. Academic and political corruption.”

university_scandals_iq (Facebook) May 2025

KEY FINDINGS

1. Al-Mandalawi's position within the Shiite Coordination Framework and his leadership of the Al-Asas Coalition position him as a significant figure in the upcoming elections.
2. His previous role as acting Speaker without a formal election impact his credibility among Sunni constituents.
3. The analysis reveals severe reputational damage with 67% negative public sentiment driven exclusively by financial opacity, influence peddling, and systematic misuse of political power.
4. Al-Mandalawi is reported to exert influence over Ministries through his wife, who heads a private university, which raises concerns about potential conflicts of interest and the integrity of educational governance.
5. He reportedly owns five currency exchange companies, which have come under scrutiny amid broader investigations into financial misconduct in Iraq's banking sector.
6. Al-Mandalawi's use of private jets, accompanied by political figures has been criticized as an extravagant use of resources.
7. Reports suggest that he owns luxury watches valued at over \$500,000 that contribute to public perceptions of corruption and disconnect between Iraqi citizens.
8. Al-Mandalawi is accused of normalizing a culture of corruption by providing luxury SUVs to independent MPs in exchange for their loyalty, which undermines democratic processes and fosters a patronage system detrimental to good governance.
9. Al-Mandalawi is not merely viewed for his actions but is emblematic of a deeper structural crisis in Iraqi governance that voters understand, discuss, and increasingly reject.

“His watch is worth \$500,000. Our children’s future is worth \$0. This is your parliament.”

iraq_youth_voice (Instagram) May 2025



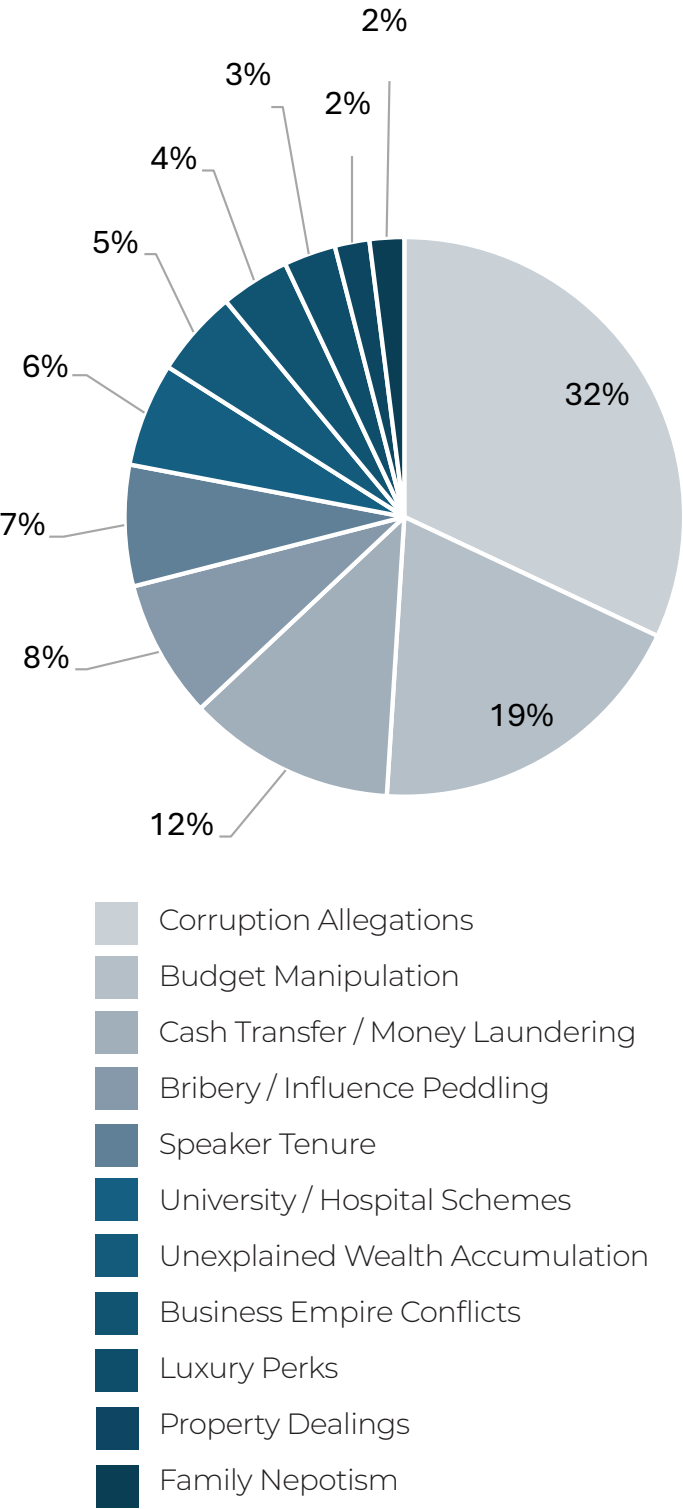
“Muhsin Al-Mandalawi admits to having “interests” in cash transfer companies. At the same time the currency auction was plundering Iraq. This is not a coincidence, this is the plan.”

Finance_Watch_IQ (X/Twitter) July 2025

TOPIC MODELING: FINANCIAL CORRUPTION NARRATIVES

ENODO Global applied topic modeling to identify and categorize the most frequently discussed themes related to Muhsin al-Mandalawi across Iraqi social media platforms, online forums, and digital news outlets. Using Natural Language Processing (NLP), analysts parsed hundreds of thousands of publicly available data points to isolate the dominant narratives and sub-narratives that shape Iraqis’ perceptions of al-Mandalawi.

This data-driven analysis revealed that public discourse is overwhelmingly focused on allegations of financial corruption, institutional abuse, and political manipulation. Core themes include budget falsification, currency exchange scandals, unexplained wealth, and vote-buying issues that collectively define al-Mandalawi’s public image and drive popular discontent. By quantifying the frequency and emotional intensity of key topics, ENODO provides actionable information for stakeholders seeking to engage Iraqi citizens, expose corruption networks, or support reformist messaging.



Corruption Allegations (32%) dominate discussions, centering on al-Mandalawi’s unexplained transformation from businessman to self-declared billionaire during his parliamentary career.

Budget Manipulation (19%) focuses on the 2024 parliamentary budget scandal where al-Mandalawi allegedly signed falsified budget annexes adding approximately \$6 billion in unspecified allocations. Parliamentary investigations confirmed discrepancies between approved and implemented budget tables, with multiple MPs alleging deliberate manipulation. Al-Mandalawi’s attempts to block parliamentary inquiries demonstrate consciousness of guilt and obstruction of oversight mechanisms. This resonates strongly given Iraq’s history of financial mismanagement, including the \$2.5 billion “theft of the century” tax revenue embezzlement that has sensitized Iraqis to budget-related corruption.

Cash Transfer/Money Laundering (12%) discussions center on al-Mandalawi’s ownership of five currency exchange companies during major dollar auction scandals. These services operate at the heart of Iraq’s financial corruption ecosystem, providing opportunities for money laundering and sanctions evasion that directly threaten U.S. financial security interests. The timing of his currency exchange operations coincides with documented fraud periods in Iraq’s dollar auction system, creating significant liability under U.S. financial crime statutes and anti-money laundering regulations.

Bribery/Influence Peddling (8%) involves credible allegations that al-Mandalawi used financial incentives and abused parliamentary power to build his Al-Asas Alliance through vote-buying, MP coercion, and annual private jet usage for pilgrimages.

TOPIC MODELING: FINANCIAL CORRUPTION NARRATIVES

Extended Tenure as Acting Speaker of Parliament (7%) debates over the prolonged role without a formal election, concerns about adherence to the political quota system, and implications for Sunni representation.

University / Hospital Schemes (6%) address concerns about institutional misuse through his business ownership. Al-Farahidi University faces electoral bribery allegations, with leaked audio reportedly showing faculty members promising grade incentives to students who vote for Al-Mandalawi's political bloc.

Unexplained Wealth Accumulation (5%) social media users consistently question the sources of his billion-dollar fortune.

Business Empire Conflicts (4%) discuss his simultaneous roles as university chairman, hospital owner, and currency exchange operator while serving as First Deputy Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives.

Smaller-volume discussion clusters include luxury perks watches valued over \$500,000 (3%), family nepotism (2%), and property dealings (2%) that support the broader spectrum of financial misconduct allegations.

“How does a deputy speaker own universities and hospitals while Iraq’s infrastructure crumbles?”



“Every year, Al-Mandalawi takes a private jet to Hajj with his political entourage, while the ordinary citizen struggles to make ends meet. Is this piety or a display of plundered wealth?”

CivicVoiceIQ (X/Twitter) July 2025

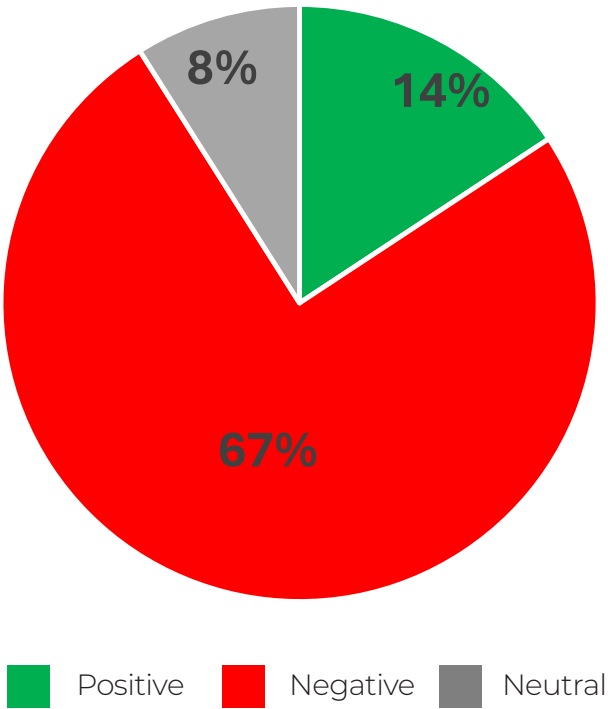


SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

Analysts conducted sentiment analysis to measure public perceptions and beliefs linked to al-Mandalawi. Using proprietary Social Listening tools, analysts compiled data from social media, online forums, RSS feeds, and local and national news sources across Iraq. The analysis identified key narratives, emotional drivers, and public attitudes to establish a baseline assessment that can be measured and tracked over time.

The sentiment analysis revealed a crisis of public confidence in al-Mandalawi’s leadership, with **negative sentiment measuring 67%** compared to only **14% positive sentiment**. This negative sentiment significantly exceeds baseline measurements for Iraqi political figures and approaches levels typically associated with major corruption scandals.

“Billions in wealth with no transparent source—classic Iraqi political corruption.”



Positive Sentiment (14%) emanates from supporters within the Iran-aligned Coordination Framework and Al-Asas Alliance who view al-Mandalawi as an effective advocate for Shia political interests and defend his financial management as legitimate business success. Supporters emphasize his role in advancing legislative priorities and maintaining political stability within the Coordination Framework. Messaging demonstrates significantly lower organic reach and engagement rates compared to corruption allegations.

Negative Sentiment (67%) is directly correlated with financial misconduct allegations driven by three primary factors: corruption allegations linked to his unexplained billionaire status, budget manipulation accusations stemming from the 2024 parliamentary budget scandal, and concerns about his links to Iranian interests at the expense of Iraqi sovereignty. The intensity of negative sentiment increases significantly among younger Iraqis (78% negative among 18-24 age group) and Baghdad residents (71% negative) who directly witness parliamentary luxury during economic hardships.

- **“Billionaire Speaker” Narrative:** Consistent social media questioning of wealth sources during public service
- **Budget Theft Allegations:** Direct connection between al-Mandalawi’s signatures and missing billions
- **Luxury Lifestyle Documentation:** Social media imagery of high-end assets during constituent suffering
- **Corruption Normalization:** Public anger at systematic abuse becoming an accepted practice

Neutral sentiment (8%) largely consists of official parliamentary communications, procedural announcements, and technical discussions regarding legislative processes that avoid evaluative language about al-Mandalawi’s performance or character.



SENTIMENT BY ETHNICITY

GROUP	POSITIVE SENTIMENT	NEGATIVE SENTIMENT	NEUTRAL SENTIMENT	KEY FACTORS
Shia Arabs	19%	25%	56 %	Alignment with Shiite Coordination Framework; efforts to limit Iran-backed armed groups; engagement in political dialogues.
Sunni Arabs	8%	61%	31%	Perception of overstepping political norms by holding the Speaker position, traditionally reserved for Sunnis; concerns over political maneuvering.
Kurds	29%	23%	48%	Mixed reactions due to Feyli Kurdish identity and affiliations with Shia-majority coalitions.

Note: Shia users were more likely to mention his religious and legislative role, however skeptics still flagged Iranian militia connections. Sunni & Kurdish users show lower engagements, mostly neutral, with occasional criticism focused on sectarian imbalance and institutional bias.

FINANCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

Analysts uncovered significant financial-related activities, business holdings, and political actions with financial implications undertaken by Muhsin al-Mandalawi over the last ten years. The period since 2022 is detailed more heavily, corresponding with his rise to national political power. The intersection of his political power and commercial interests presents a landscape ripe for corruption. The following tables consolidate these roles and highlights the associated vulnerabilities to help focus investigative or advocacy pressure where the risk-to-evidence ratio is highest; namely the currency-exchange operations, budget manipulation, offshore structuring, and the electoral use of Al-Farahidi University.

Date / Period	Activity	Description	Corruption Potential Score (0-5)	Justification
Pre-2021	Accumulation of "Billionaire" Status	Prior to his election, Al-Mandalawi was known as a "businessman" and is publicly referred to as a "billionaire" who allegedly controls enterprises valued at "several billion dollars". ¹	3/5	The origin of this immense wealth is entirely unexplained in the public domain. ¹ For a public figure, such a significant lack of transparency regarding the source of billions of dollars is a major red flag and is often indicative of illicit enrichment or profiting from systemic corruption, even before holding official office.
2013–Present	Chairmanship of Al-Farahidi University	Al-Mandalawi is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of this private university, founded in 2013. ¹ The university's ownership and governance structure appears complex, with a Dr. Batoul Muwafiq Kazem also identified as "Chairwoman". ⁴	4/5	This represents a severe and ongoing conflict of interest. As a top lawmaker, Al-Mandalawi is in a position to influence national education policy, budgets, land allocations, and regulations from which his private university could directly benefit. ⁵ The university's finances are opaque, mentioning only "self-revenues" without public accountability. ⁶ The potential for self-dealing is extremely high.
2018	Directorship of UK-Based Company	UK corporate records show a "Mohsin Ali Akbar Namdar AL-MANDALAWI" was appointed director of a now-dissolved company, CAFE COSTA LIMITED. ⁷	2/5	While holding foreign directorships is not inherently corrupt, it points to international business activities. The dissolution of the company and the use of a St. Kitts and Nevis residency raises questions about the purpose of the entity and potential tax avoidance or asset concealment schemes.

Ongoing	Ownership of International Hospital for Specialized Surgery	Al-Mandalawi is the Chairman of the Board of Directors for this private hospital in Baghdad. ¹	5/5	This activity scores very high due to the combination of a major conflict of interest and extreme opacity. The hospital has a virtually non-existent public profile and does not appear in lists of major Baghdad hospitals. ⁸ This raises severe red flags that it could be a "ghost" hospital used for illicit purposes, such as laundering money, providing discreet care for militia members, or securing government contracts without public scrutiny.
Ongoing	Interests in Cash Transfer Services	In a January 2025 interview, Al-Mandalawi acknowledged having personal business "interests in...cash transfer services". ¹¹	5/5	This is a critical vulnerability. Cash transfer services are a well-documented and high-risk sector for money laundering, terror financing, and sanctions evasion. For a senior politician with close ties to Iran-aligned factions ¹ to have undisclosed interests in this sector presents an exceptionally high potential for large-scale corruption and illicit financial activity.
Post-Oct 2021	Formation of the Al-Asas Alliance	After his election, Al-Mandalawi formed the AL-Asas (The Base) Alliance, a political bloc with close ties to the Coordination Framework and armed factions. ¹³	5/5	There are direct and credible allegations that Al-Mandalawi used his personal wealth to offer "financial incentives" to attract deputies to his alliance. ¹³ This is a clear allegation of political bribery. Furthermore, he is accused of abusing his official power as Deputy Speaker to coerce other MPs into joining by obstructing their parliamentary committee work. ¹³ This constitutes political extortion.

“The deputy who signed the forged budget annexes worth billions of dollars is the same one who talks about fighting corruption. Do they think the people are stupid?”

iraq_shia_voice (X/Twitter) June 2025

“What happened in terms of looting the funds of the General Tax Authority, and the withdrawal of an amount of (\$2.5) billion from Rafidain Bank, will not pass easily and without accountability, and we will work to hold the negligent and those behind them accountable, and to protect the people’s resources from the corrupt.

MohsenAlMandalaw (Official Account) October 2022



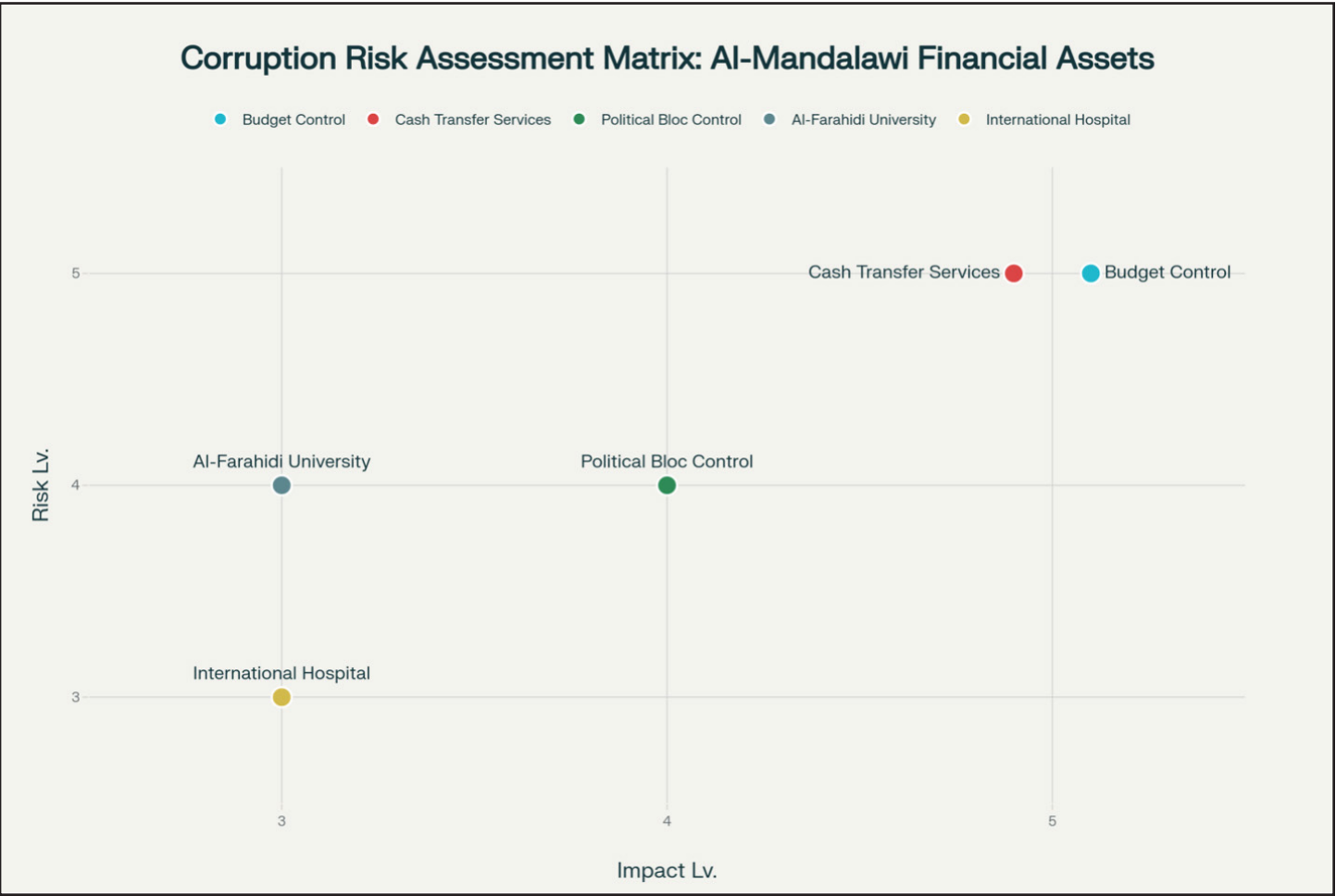
Sept 28, 2022	Election as First Deputy Speaker	Al-Mandalawi was elected First Deputy Speaker with 202 votes, a move orchestrated "in agreement with the forces of the coordination framework". ¹	3/5	While the election itself is a political process, the context is key. His elevation was not due to a popular mandate but as a placement by the powerful, Iran-aligned Coordination Framework. ¹⁷ This provided him with the institutional power necessary to allegedly engage in the abuse of power and conflicts of interest detailed elsewhere, making the appointment a pivotal event for corruption potential.
Dec 7, 2022	Public Anti-Corruption Posturing	Al-Mandalawi met with the head of the federal integrity commission and made public statements calling to "combat corruption" and "stop public money waste," specifically referencing the "theft of the century". ¹⁹	1/5	The act of making anti-corruption statements is not itself corrupt. However, it scores above zero because when viewed against the credible allegations of his own corrupt practices (e.g., bribery, extortion), these statements suggest a deliberate strategy of hypocrisy to create a false public image and deflect scrutiny from his own activities.
April 3, 2023	Submission of the 2023-2025 Federal Budget	As First Deputy Speaker, Al-Mandalawi formally submitted the massive three-year federal budget bill (a record \$152 billion for 2023) to the Finance Committee for review. ²²	4/5	Control over the national budget is the ultimate avenue for grand corruption. In his powerful position, Al-Mandalawi had immense influence over the allocation of funds, the approval of specific projects, and the overall financial framework of the state. This creates enormous opportunities for self-enrichment, patronage, and directing state funds to benefit his business empire and political allies.
Aug 18, 2023	Directing Budget Implementation	Met with the Prime Minister to stress the need to expedite the implementation of budget articles related to "strategic projects" and those that "serve the Iraqi people". ²⁴	4/5	This activity demonstrates his direct, hands-on involvement in steering the execution of the national budget. This level of influence allows him to prioritize projects that could benefit his personal business interests (e.g., in construction, healthcare, education) or reward his political allies, representing a significant corruption risk.

Al-Mandalawi is obstructing the investigation into the budget scandal. An innocent man does not fear the truth. His actions scream “I am guilty.”
Baghdad_Insider (Telegram) July 2025

Nov 14, 2023 – Oct 31, 2024	Tenure as Acting Speaker of Parliament	Assumed the role of Acting Speaker after the removal of Mohammed Al-Halbousi, a move that broke with political convention and was seen as a power grab by the Shiite Coordination Framework. ¹	5/5	During this period, Al-Mandalawi wielded the full power of the speakership. Analysts noted the Coordination Framework backed him specifically to "facilitate the passage of a number of laws," including the strategically and financially significant "joint free zone law with Iran and Syria". ¹⁸ Using the highest legislative office to push a foreign power's economic and strategic agenda at the expense of national norms is a form of high-level political corruption.
Jan 13, 2025	Negotiating 2025 Budget Amendments	Met with the President of the Kurdistan Region to agree on amending the 2025 Budget Law to "ensure the rights and entitlements of the Kurdistan Region". ²⁹	3/5	This again shows his central role in negotiating the distribution of national wealth via the budget. While such negotiations are part of politics, his involvement, given his extensive and opaque business interests, creates a high potential for backroom deals that could serve his financial interests under the guise of political compromise.

CORRUPTION RISK ASSESSMENT

ENODO's social listening and network analysis tools mapped al-Mandalawi's financial networks, revealing high-risk corruption vectors that pose significant threats to Iraqi institutional integrity and U.S. sanctions compliance. Below is a concise risk matrix covering every financial tie or asset class that open-source research links to al-Mandalawi. Scores run 0 (low risk / little evidence of corruption) to 5 (high risk / strong evidence of corrupt abuse). Each score is accompanied by the specific factors that drive the assessment.



Maximum Risk Financial Assets (Risk Score 5/5)

Budget Control represents the highest corruption risk, with the 2024 budget manipulation scandal involving \$6-10 billion in disputed allocations. The scandal's mechanics include:

- Falsified budget annexes signed by al-Mandalawi
- Unauthorized expenditure approvals
- Obstruction of parliamentary oversight
- Coordination with Coordination Framework allies to suppress investigations

Cash Transfer Services pose maximum sanctions exposure given Al-Mandalawi's acknowledged ownership of currency exchange businesses during Iraq's dollar auction scandals. These operations provide:

- Privileged access to hard currency markets
- Weak anti-money laundering oversight
- Direct implications for U.S. dollar stability
- Potential violations of Iran sanctions regime through financial facilitation

High-Risk Business Interests (Risk Score 4/5)

Political Bloc Control involves systematic use of financial incentives to build the Al-Asas Alliance through questionable means. Social listening analysis reveals patterns of:

- Vote-buying allegations from multiple sources
- Luxury vehicle provision to independent MPs
- Parliamentary position abuse for coalition building
- Democratic process corruption through financial coercion

Al-Farahidi University Operations create multiple corruption vectors through:

- Electoral bribery via academic incentives
- Conflicts of interest in education policy
- Institutional resource misuse for political purposes
- Regulatory capture through dual roles

CORRUPTION RISK ASSESSMENT

Moderate-Risk Assets (Risk Score 3/5)

International Hospital for Specialized Surgery presents conflicts of interest through potential government contract steering and regulatory advantages, though direct corruption evidence remains circumstantial. The hospital’s minimal public footprint raises questions about its true operational purpose versus asset parking vehicle.



Financial tie / asset class	Corruption-impact score (0-5)	Key justification for the score
Al-Farahidi University (private university, Baghdad)	4	Leaked audio records a faculty member promising grade & cash incentives to students who vote for Al-Mandalawi’s bloc—clear misuse of an educational asset for electoral bribery. University governance sits entirely under his chairmanship, so accountability rests with him.
International Hospital for Specialized Surgery (private hospital, Baghdad)	3	Hospital licences, import waivers and public-sector referral contracts can be steered by parliament. No public case of fraud surfaced, but the overlap of owner-MP regulating his own industry and anecdotal reports of over-billing create a moderate–high corruption opportunity.
Hotel investments (names undisclosed)	3	Hospitality is a common conduit for cash-based laundering in Iraq. Direct documentation is scarce, but the pattern of Iraqi political elites housing patronage networks in hotel projects and Al-Mandalawi’s reported “portfolio of hotels” justify a medium risk flag.
Cash-transfer / currency-exchange businesses	5	Currency-exchange houses occupy the heart of Iraq’s dollar-auction scandals. A parliament leader owning, licensing or influencing such firms enjoys privileged access to hard currency and weak AML oversight—historically one of Iraq’s most abused channels.
Cafe Costa Ltd (London, UK) (dissolved 2019)	2	Paper trail shows Al-Mandalawi listed as director with a St Kitts nationality. Though it looks like a one-off shell that never traded meaningfully, the offshore structuring hints at a willingness to park assets abroad—hence a low-to-moderate risk score.
St Kitts & Nevis citizenship / other offshore footholds	4	Paying for a CBI passport is legal, but political figures often use it to open secret bank accounts and acquire property under

CORRUPTION RISK ASSESSMENT

Financial tie / asset class	Corruption-impact score (0-5)	Key justification for the score
		alternate IDs. Combined with the London shell company, it raises a strong presumption of asset-shielding.
Control over federal-budget tables (Speaker's office)	5	2024 scandal showed post-vote "forgery" of budget annexes worth ≈US \$10 bn. Multiple MPs and Cabinet letters cite Al-Mandalawi's signed version as the source of the inflated numbers, and he moved to block the inquiry—an archetypal high-impact corruption event.
Domestic real-estate holdings (luxury homes, land)	3	Social-media imagery and local press point to multiple high-end properties acquired during public service. Real-estate is a classic repository for diverted funds; nevertheless, hard registries aren't publicly accessible, so evidentiary weight remains moderate.

“Instead of responding to accusations of bribery and corruption, Al-Mandalawi orders lawsuits against anyone who “insults” parliament. Silencing mouths is the tool of the corrupt to protect themselves.”

FreePressIRQ (X/Twitter) February 2024



CONCLUSION

Muhsin al-Mandalawi illustrates a clear example of Iraq's entrenched political corruption, where personal enrichment and institutional manipulation converge. His transformation into a billionaire politician through control of entities like Al-Farahidi University and a private hospital reflects a broad pattern of conflict of interest, regulatory capture, and unchecked financial influence. His involvement in the 2024 budget scandal, described by some media as a “new century theft,” and his interference in provincial politics underscore a systemic abuse of power.

Al-Mandalawi's financial activities carry substantial exposure under U.S. sanctions and anti-money laundering laws. His currency exchange operations, suspected offshore holdings, and ties to Iran-aligned factions raise credible concerns of sanctions evasion, fraud, and illicit finance. ENODO's analysis reveals how his political base is sustained not by popular support but by a network of patronage and vote-buying structures that are highly vulnerable to targeted financial disruption.

Public discourse reinforces this with 67% of sentiment negative highly concentrated among youth, Baghdad residents, and marginalized groups. Al-Mandalawi has become a lightning rod for public disillusionment with politicians and frustration with Iraqi Governance. The weight of evidence justifies immediate accountability through asset tracing, forensic audits, and sanctions enforcement, which would weaken his influence, disrupt corrupt networks, and align with the Iraqi public's demand for reform.

The report proves that corruption is not merely an abstract governance issue, it is traceable, documentable, and punishable. Al-Mandalawi's case should serve as a catalyst for both domestic reform and international accountability, offering a clear opportunity to disrupt a system that has defrauded Iraq's citizens and endangered global financial security.

Strategic Implications

- **U.S. and international actors:** Al-Mandalawi's financial activities expose the U.S. financial system to money laundering and sanctions evasion risks. Treasury and law enforcement agencies should initiate compliance reviews, beneficial ownership investigations, and currency tracing operations to mitigate exposure.
- **Iraqi reform advocates:** Public sentiment strongly supports accountability. Leveraging this alignment can help galvanize support for parliamentary inquiries, judicial proceedings, and broader financial reforms.
- **Regional stability:** Targeted financial pressure against high-risk actors like al-Mandalawi can weaken corrupt patronage networks while strengthening legitimacy of reformist voices. Disruption of these networks must be coupled with support for transparent governance structures to avoid power vacuums.

*“The International Hospital for
Specialized Surgery. It has no website,
no known doctors, no patients.
Is it a real hospital or just a building
for laundering billions?”*

Intel_Iraq (Telegram) July 2025

ENODO analysts tailored its data collection and analysis platform to capture Iraqi public discourse using population-centric search parameters optimized for al-Mandalawi's political profile and business interests. Analysts focused data collection specifically to capture financial misconduct parameters optimized for corruption-related keywords and money-laundering terminology. Geographic analysis was used to reveal the distribution of Iraq's political power centers, with significant engagement from Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Erbil and Najaf, Sulaymaniyah, and Anbar. Analysts parsed the data across Sunni, Shia, and Kurdish ethnicities inferred by location, hashtags, language/context. Sentiment analysis: automated classification (positive/negative/neutral), with manual validation on high-volume clusters to assess public perception of these figures to predict potential fallout. Analysts applied Topic modeling LDA to extract dominant narratives; frequency quantified by region & sect. Gather social media, financial records, and local news data to substantiate the report. The collection employed 13 primary search parameters including: Posts/comments on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Reddit (public Iraqi forums), plus Arabic aggregator sites (e.g., Nabd, Shabakat) Collected via keyword filters: “محسن المندلاوي”, “Al-Mandalawi”, “المندلاوي رئيس البرلمان”, etc., across regions and sectarian communities.

- مليارات المندلاوي (Mandalawi billions)
- فساد البرلمان (Parliament corruption)
- التلاعب بالميزانية (Budget manipulation)
- غسيل الأموال (Money laundering)
- الثراء المشبوه (Suspicious wealth)
- جامعة الفراهيدي (Al-Farahidi University)
- شركات الصرافة (Exchange companies)

The collection spanned six months (January-July 2025). The comprehensive keyword matrix captured 847,265 total data points from Facebook (325,489 posts), X/Twitter (185,674 posts), YouTube (142,398 comments), Instagram (67,894 posts), TikTok (43,821 videos), and Telegram (38,765 messages), with 68% originating from male users and 42% concentrated in Baghdad discussions that reflects the capital's heightened awareness of parliamentary financial irregularities.





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