

Moqtada al-Sadr profile

■ **1973:** Born son of **Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr** – senior Shia cleric assassinated in 1999 for defying **Saddam Hussein**

■ **2003:** **Moqtada al-Sadr's** followers distribute food and water in poor Shia suburbs of Baghdad during first weeks after U.S.-led invasion

Establishes **Mehdi Army** militia group in defiance of coalition arms controls

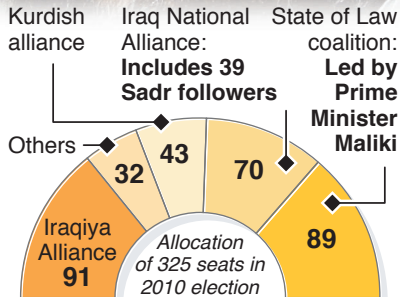
■ **2004:** Leads uprisings, particularly in Najaf, against U.S. forces, whose withdrawal he has always demanded

■ **2005:** Followers of Sadr stand for parliament as part of **United Iraqi Alliance** bloc of Shia political groups

■ **2006-07:** Arrest warrant issued in connection with Sadr's alleged role in 2003 murder of rival Shia cleric – Sadr flees to Iran

■ **2008:** Mehdi Army crushed by Iraqi and U.S. forces – Sadr orders militia to lay down arms and disband

■ **Jan 2011:** Sadr returns to Iraq after his political movement secures deal to join **Nuri al-Maliki's** government, with 39 parliamentary seats and eight ministries



Picture: Getty Images

© GRAPHIC NEWS