Profile: Qasem al-Jabbarin

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Apr 1, 2021

Qasem al-Jabbarin is a Kataib Hezbollah-directed facade group that specializes in roadside bombings against Iraqi supply trucks servicing the U.S. military in Iraq.

**Name:** Qasem al-Jabbarin (QJ), (Smasher of the Oppressors).

**Type of Movement:** Façade group. Kinetic military operations. Domestic counter-U.S. operations.

**History and objectives:**
• Prolific facade group. QJ takes credit for IED attacks on convoys on a weekly basis.

• QJ exists to claim attacks launched by fasa’il. All attacks claimed have occurred inside Iraq and are directed at the coalition. QJ has not claimed rocket attacks.

• QJ was first referenced by muqawama Telegram groups on September 17, 2020, when Sabereen News “previewed” the group, noting QJ would soon adopt attacks. Later that day, Sabereen posted an image of QJ’s first statement adopting two attacks on U.S. convoys.

• A PMF unit affiliated with the muqawama and known as the Brigade of Qasem al-Jabbarin appears to have existed some time prior to 2020. The unit was run by one Muhammad al-Musawi. It is unclear if the two are linked.

• Name derives from Shi’ite phrase relating to the Mahdi “ُﻢِﺻﺎﻗ َﻦﯿِﻣﻮﻠﻈﻤﻟا ُﻞﯾﺪُﻣ َﻦﯾرﺎّﺒﺠﻟا” (the smasher of the oppressor and the helper of the oppressed.” The group is sometimes styled “Saraya Qasem al-Jabbarin” (رسية قاضم الظابرين) or “Qasem al-Jabbarin Company.” Use of the singular noun instead of the plural for the military unit marker is relatively unusual. Compare “Kataib” (battalions), “Saraya” (companies), and “Alwiya” (brigades). Compare also “Asaib” (leagues) and “Ashab” (companions). Use of the singular was also used for the group “Usbat al-Thaireen” (League of the Revolutionaries, UT).

• Unusually for a façade group, QJ does not appear to have its own official media or information operations outlet (though a number of small copy-cat accounts named for QJ do exist). Instead, QJ has relied on major outlets – particularly the KH-affiliated “Unit 10000” Telegram account – to publicize the group’s statements, attacks, and claims.

Chain of Command:

• Nominally under the Muqawama Coordinating Council (al-Tansiqiyya).

• Probable Kataib Hezbollah subordinate, based on locations of attacks, and because KH affiliated media accounts appear to have a particularly close affinity with QJ. KH channels almost never ignore activity claimed by QJ, and generally work to publicize QJ attacks. By contrast, KH affiliated accounts have on occasion acted dismissively with regards to other façade groups.

Affiliate relationships:

• Direct under-command relationship with KH.

• Initial links to Sabereen news. More recently, ties to Unit 10000 and KH affiliated media accounts.

• QJ may be a successor to Usbat al-Thaireen, given previously frequent UT-claimed attacks stopped around the time QJ began claiming convoy attacks. QJ-claimed attacks are different to UT attacks, however, as the latter façade group claimed many rocket attacks while QJ has claimed none to date.

Subordinate elements:

• Very small number of roadside bombing cells with an operating area between Baghdad and Diwaniyah.

• Probable access to other KH cells as allocated by KH.
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