

Profile: Raba Allah

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Brief Analysis

Part of a series: [Militia Spotlight: Profiles \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/series/militia-spotlight-profiles\)](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/series/militia-spotlight-profiles)

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Raba Allah is the "mothership" for vigilante and counter-protester groups developed by the Kataib Hezbollah network.

Name: Raba Allah (RA) (God's Fellows).

Type of movement: Facade group. Kinetic (vigilante) and nonkinetic cultural/social operations. Domestic counter-political/social moderate operations.

History and objectives:

- On September 4, 2020, RA posted its first message on its Telegram channel demanding that the Iraqi media outlet UTV apologize for "insulting the *marjaiya* and other religious scholars," then threatened that the network's offices would be burnt down otherwise.
- On September 6, 2020, RA claimed responsibility for its first vigilante action: an August 31 arson attack against the office of Dijlah TV.
- RA appears to have existed prior to the attack on Dijlah. In one video posted on November 27, 2020, the group indicated that its members had taken part in protests outside the U.S. embassy on December 31, 2019.
- RA members have participated in the following actions:
 - In October 2020, burning the offices of television channels and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).
 - In November 2020, smashing massage parlors, liquor stores, and other businesses deemed to be "un-Islamic" and assaulting their workers and customers.
 - Mounting efforts to smear political and media characters and threaten them with violence.
 - Organizing protests in front of foreign missions, including the Baghdad embassies of France (September 2020) and Turkey (February 2021).



Raba Allah logo

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- Raba Allah is assessed to have undertaken [attacks on U.S.-branded stores](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/kataib-hezbollahs-raba-allah-undertakes-unclaimed-attacks-us-brands) (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/kataib-hezbollahs-raba-allah-undertakes-unclaimed-attacks-us-brands>) in Baghdad in May 2024.

Chain of command:

- Clear and convincing evidence shows that RA is a branch of [Kataib Hezbollah](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-kataib-hezbollah) (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-kataib-hezbollah>) (KH). On March 25, 2021, KH marched its armed forces in Baghdad as a show of force, threatening the prime minister and high-ranking security officials. The parade was announced as an RA action on *muqawama* (resistance) social media channels, and RA members were seen carrying weapons during the event, including RPG-7s.



RA members assaulting workers at a massage parlor in Baghdad, damaging their place of business, November 26, 2020.

Affiliate relationships:

- RA was initially a joint project with other *muqawama* groups such as [Asaib Ahl al-Haq](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-asaib-ahl-al-haq-0) (AAH). Various groups used to call themselves RA, but due to differences regarding choice of targets, non-KH members withdrew from RA in November 2020 and created other, less influential vigilante groups. One ex-RA group is now called al-Lijan al-Shabiya (The Popular Committees).



RA members taking part in an unsanctioned militia parade in Baghdad alongside KH soldiers, March 25, 2021.

Subordinate elements:

- RA has a Telegram channel that posts original content, primarily statements or calls to protest.
- The preponderance of evidence suggests that Ahl al-Marouf (People of Virtue) is a junior spinoff of RA developed specifically for vigilante attacks.
- The preponderance of evidence suggests that Jabhat Abu Jiddaha (People of Lighter Front) is another junior spinoff of RA, developed specifically to mobilize protesters and counter-protesters.



PART OF A SERIES

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