



Policy Analysis /

Profile: Sharia Youth Gathering

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Apr 29, 2021

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Brief Analysis

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The Sharia Youth Gathering is an umbrella movement of social service, cultural, sports, and scouting organizations that is effectively controlled by Kataib Hezbollah (KH) through a cadre of KH-linked commanders.

Name: Tajamo Shabab al-Sharia (TSS), Sharia Youth Gathering

Type of Movement: Youth organization, non-kinetic, mainly legal activities such as cultural events and peaceful protests to promote muqawama causes, and provision of social services.

History and Objectives:

- TSS announced its existence on November 7, 2020 in Baghdad. TSS Facebook account [describes](#) the group's mission as "preparing the Iraqi youth to lead the Iraqi society".
- Propagating political Islam is an important objective of TSS as [described](#) by Amir al-Musawai, the spokesperson of TSS.
- TSS was built on resources from Jamiat Kashafat al-Imam al-Hussein (JKIH) ([Imam Hussein Scout Association](#)) which was established in [2012](#) and has been used by [Kataib Hezbollah](#) (KH) to [recruit fighters](#). In a clear sign of affiliation, JKIH's initial logo included KH's flag. Also, JKIH's member regularly wear baseball caps with the [KH flag printed on them](#).
- TSS is rapidly expanding its presence in southern Shia populated provinces, probably to recruit as many Shia youth as possible.



Sharia Youth Gathering logo

Chain of Command:

- TSS claims to be an independent NGO, but the preponderance of evidence shows it is a KH organization, or at least has close ties with KH and its membership. The majority of known TSS leaders have direct links to KH through their prior membership of JKIH.
- TSS's known senior executive leadership [all held senior executive appointments in JKIH](#) and hold similar executive level appointments in TSS. It is probable that TSS's leadership have direct links to KH through their tenure at JKIH, and in their similar executive roles at TSS. TSS senior leaders include:
 - **Executive Manager of Sharia Youth Gathering:** Abbas al-Lami, [ex-Commissioner-General](#) of JKIH.
 - **Spokesman of Sharia Youth Gathering:** Amir al-Musawai, [ex-spokesman](#) for JKIH.
 - **The Head of Jihad al-Bina:** Sheikh Abbas al-Kenan, [ex-coordinator](#) of JKIH/Nahrawan branch.
 - **Commissioner-General of Imam Hussein Scout:** Safi al-Saidi.
- Social media accounts belonging to the muqawama (resistance) describe [TSS members](#) as [sons of KH](#).
- Also, TSS *mokibs* (Shia service tents set up during pilgrimage seasons to provide services for the pilgrims) clearly [fly](#) KH flags and their videos are [posted](#) by TSS's social media accounts.
- TSS is an open cultural and societal movement, and it is probable that not all members of TSS are affiliated with KH. TSS is, however, led and organized by individuals with deep ties to KH. Through its KH affiliated leaders and members, TSS carries out the policy objectives of KH, and is effectively controlled by the militia.

Affiliate relationships:

- None known at the present time,

Subordinate elements:

- TSS consists of at least four other sub-organizations according to the group's own social media accounts and statements. The sub-organizations include:
 - **Jihad al-Bina** (the Construction Jihad) a development foundation engaged in providing services such as water facilities for poor communities.
 - **Muasasat al-Shabab al-Riyadhi** (the Athlete Youth Organization) which is engaged in youth sport activities such as football tournaments.

- **Muwasat Ibn al-Jawad al-Thaqafiya** (Ibn al-Jawad Cultural Foundation) which organizes culture activities and events such as competition to create posters, etc.
- **JKIH** whose members received training at the hands of the Lebanese Imam Mahdi Scout Association which reportedly help Lebanese Hezbollah recruit soldiers.
- TSS operates its own YouTube channel, Telegram channel and Facebook page.



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