

The JRTN Movement and Iraq's Next Insurgency

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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The stabilization of Iraq has become wedged on a plateau, beyond which further improvement will be a slow process. One reason behind this stability is the ongoing virulence of northern and central Iraqi insurgents operating within Sunni Arab communities. Five predominately Sunni provinces and western Baghdad were responsible for an average of 68.5% of national incidents each month in 2011. This article argues that one driver for the ongoing resilience, or even revival, of Sunni militancy is the growing influence of the Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al-Naqshabandi (JRTN) movement, which has successfully tapped into Sunni Arab fear of Iraq's Shi'a-led government and the country's Kurdish population, while offering an authentic Iraqi alternate to al-Qa'ida in Iraq. The features of JRTN are becoming clearer, providing an interesting case study of an insurgent movement that learned from the mistakes of other militants and has successfully created a hybrid of Islamist themes and nationalist military expertise...

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