



The “Rabat” (“the Liaison”) in south Lebanon – the one in charge of the village on behalf of Hezbollah

June 2021

General:

The “Rabat” (loosely translated as "the liaison") serves as Hezbollah's senior representative in a village and performs as Hezbollah's official administrator in charge of the village. In the village he administers, the “Rabat” determines and confirms who the village officials on behalf of Hezbollah will be, he determines the hierarchy of the Hezbollah officials in the village, his word is final, and his decisions must be fulfilled by Hezbollah members, even those who are members of Hezbollah's local village council. One “Rabat” may be appointed to several small, nearby villages. An area supervisor is appointed above the local “Rabats”.

The purpose of this document is to shed light on the “Rabat’s” function, a role which is a key part of Hezbollah's civilian and military infrastructure in southern Lebanon. The “Rabats” are considered to be key Hezbollah operatives in their area. Because of Hezbollah's information security policies and routine security practices of its operatives, especially the senior ones, there aren't many details regarding them. However, in the document, we were able to locate the names of 23 “Rabats” from all over south Lebanon, via information on their civilian interfaces, enabling us to locate photos and other details of some of them (see the appendix).

The “Rabat” serves as a liaison between the residents and Hezbollah, both in civilian and military matters. In the civilian aspect, the “Rabat” serves the residents as an address for requesting aid, such as money, food, resolution of conflicts and so on. For example, the assistance the residents were entitled to throughout the COVID-19 pandemic was distributed through the “Rabat”, whose mandate was to determine who receives the assistance and how much they receive.

Another example of this could be seen in the period following the Second Lebanon War in 2006. The compensation from Qatari charitable funds transferred to Lebanon was distributed to residents whose homes/businesses were destroyed, via the “Rabat”. The distribution of funds was carried out at the sole discretion of the “Rabat” and not according to any orderly criteria. The “Rabat” also attends many social events such as ceremonies, sporting events, as well as meetings and discussions related to the management of the village.

Ultimately, even though every village has a leader and Muhtar appointed by the Lebanese government, the “Rabat” has a central role in the village’s day-to-day life. In the military aspect, by virtue of his position as “Rabat” he is familiar with Hezbollah’s military and weapons deployment throughout his village. In places where Hezbollah decides to expropriate or lease civilian land or properties from the residents for the purpose of its military activities, the “Rabat” conducts the expropriation or leasing procedure vis-a-vis the relevant resident. In addition, the “Rabat” indicates and recommends Hezbollah units of the locations and assets in his town that are suitable to serve the **human shield** tactic, mapping them according to their degree of value and suitability for the type of infrastructure and military weapons that are meant to be concealed in them.

In a seized (loot) document from the Second Lebanon War in 2006, one can learn the method used by Hezbollah of renting apartments and businesses in townships and villages in southern Lebanon. (see; “Hezbollah’s use of Lebanese civilians as Human Shields” - *Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center*, appendix 1-iii page 213). Muhammad Ala Hamid Srur, from the village of Ayta ash Shab, a Hezbollah prisoner captured in the 2006 war, described in his interrogation how Hezbollah rents the houses and apartments. The properties are leased, after Hezbollah address the person in charge of the village on its behalf (the "Rabat"). The “Rabat” coordinates between Hezbollah and the property owner.

The property owner receives a security credit through the “Rabat”, who knows him personally.

Hezbollah's logistics unit and other units use civilian businesses in south Lebanon to procure and acquire services and equipment for military operations, usually food products, construction materials, fuel, etc. Some of these business owners are Hezbollah operatives, and some are civilians who maintain trade relations with Hezbollah. The “Rabat” is the mediator between the various Hezbollah units that need these services and the civilians providing them. The “Rabat” strengthens Hezbollah’s grip on the Lebanese village residents’ day-to-day life, their property and needs, allowing Hezbollah to turn them into human shields on a wider scale.

The Rabat system in southern Lebanon is another clear sign that the state of Hezbollah actually controls the state of Lebanon and that Hezbollah’s power is derived from its connections to the people – Hezbollah put much work into cultivating these connections.

When analyzing the list of the village “Rabats” in southern Lebanon, much can be learned about Hezbollah’s criminal personality. The “Rabats” are involved in many crimes or in cover-ups of family members’ crimes, as well as in blackmail, threats, and sometimes even in murder. A prominent incident demonstrating this is that of Hussein Mehdi, resident of the village of Debel located only several kilometers from Lebanon’s border with Israel. Mehdi threatened and then assaulted a woman named Faduut Salameh after she refused to sign a “contract of *almutea*” (a Shiite temporary marriage for a limited period of time, the relationship is meant purely for pleasure while the woman is actually considered a mistress of sorts).

Appendix - details on the "Rabats" found:

1. Rabiah Afif:

- a. Lives in the village of: Sultaniyeh
- b. Previously suspected of attacking another resident of the village due to an ideological controversy and criticism of Hezbollah.



2. Al Sayed Saraj:

- a. Lives in the village of: Aitit



3. Hajj Abu Abbas Zraqt:

- a. Lives in the village of: Meis el Jabal



4. a-Sayeed Nader Martzah:

- a. Lives in the village of: Zawtar El Charqiyeh



5. **Hajj 'Ali Jafar Farhat:**

- a. Lives in the village of: Aanqoun
- b. Telephone number:
96176742641



6. **Hajj Mohsen Abu 'Alyoi:**

- a. Lives in the town of: Bint Jbeil.



7. **Hajj Wissam Tafleh:**

- a. Lives in the city of: Tyre.



8. **Hussein Mehdi:**

- a. Lives in the village of: Debel.
- b. He owns a factory in the town where a fire broke out in January 2021.

Video of the incident:

<https://www.facebook.com/debaal.karyati.lb/videos/%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%82-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B5%D9%86%D8%B9-%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AF%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%83%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%86%D9%8A/427572731986960/>

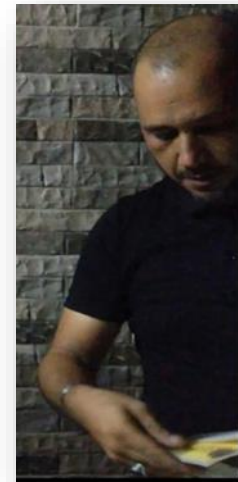
- c. In August 2019, he was involved with the “Rabat” of the village Bafliyah in inciting an assault on a woman named Faduat Salameh after she refused to sign a "contract of *almutea*" (a Shiite temporary marriage for a limited period of time, the relationship is



meant purely for pleasure while the woman is actually considered a sort of mistress). Eventually, some of the residents, in cooperation with Hezbollah operatives, attacked the woman and kicked her and her belongings from the house.

9. **Ahmad Qassem:**

- a. Lives in the town of: Mahrouna.



10. **Hussein Ratha Mathirakh:**

- a. Lives in the village of: Aarzal.
b. Nicknamed: “the injured brother” (a Hezbollah handicap).



11. Samir Fadel Hasson:

- a. Lives in the town of: Ghazieh.



12. Sheikh Zeid Thaher

- a. Lives in the city of: Sidon.



13. Sheikh Naama al-As'ad (Mattar):

- a. Lives in the town of: al Loubieh al Janubiyah.
- b. It is suspected that he was involved along with 4 Hezbollah members in the summer of 2020 in the murder of an Amal man in his town, after he himself was attacked earlier. He joined Hezbollah in 2010.

14. Ahmed Balhas:

- a. Lives in the village of: Siddikine.
- b. His brother Ibrahim belongs to the *General Security Directorate*. It is likely he possesses a PhD. and served as the former mayor of Siddikine. The Balhas clan is the strongest clan in the village.

15. Ahsan Zin Aladdin:

- a. Lives in the village of: safed al Bateih.
- b. He was involved in a murder case in which he covered up for his 16-year-old nephew who murdered another boy named Ali Hassan Zin al-Din. The affair appears to have been hushed up and has not received much attention.

16. Hussein Shafik Daquiq:

- a. Lives in the village of: Harieth.
- b. He contracted COVID19. He is about 35 years old. In the past, he was injured in an explosion from to an IED attached to a car.

17. **Khalil Ramal**
 - a. Lives in the village of: Doueir.
 - b. Holds an engineering degree.

18. **Hajj Hassan Khanj:**
 - a. Lives in the village of: Tefahta.

19. **Haj Ali Nazia Haider:**
 - a. Lives in the village of: Tourah.

20. **Ibrahim Hamoud:**
 - a. Lives in the village of: Touline.

21. **Ali Maalem:**
 - a. Lives in the village of: Kufar Raman.

22. **Hajj Hassan 'S'iy'a:**
 - a. Lives in the village of: al Qasibah.

23. **Ahmed Yassin:**
 - a. Lives in the village of: Aadshit.