

High-tech Attack in Lebanon May Usher In a Regional War

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Between Tuesday and Wednesday, 32 people were killed and about 4,000 injured by exploding handheld devices, including pagers, walkie-talkie radios, mobile phones, laptops, and even solar power cells across Lebanon, with two children among the dead. Many of the injured lost fingers, hands, and eyes, with some 300 in critical condition according to the Health Ministry's press briefing on Thursday morning.

Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Hezbollah, gave a televised address on Thursday evening. Nasrallah explained how Israel had sent direct and indirect messages on Tuesday threatening the Lebanese resistance that more attacks would follow if the attacks on Israel continued. The Wednesday attack was a follow-up of the threat from the previous day.

Nasrallah called the Israeli attacks a 'declaration of war' and a 'war crime'. Belgium's Foreign Ministry called it an act of 'terrorism', with other Western countries also condemning it.

Nasrallah reiterated that to stop the attacks on Israel, a ceasefire in Gaza must be put into effect.

Hezbollah discontinued the use of mobile phones among its operatives because Israel was capable of listening in. Instead, the Lebanese resistance group started using pagers and walkie-talkies.

The pagers were sold under the name Apollo Gold, a well-known Taiwanese manufacturer. However, investigators confirmed that they were not made in Taiwan but by a Hungarian firm, BAC Consulting, which had a contract from Taiwan to use the Apollo Gold brand name.

According to the New York Times, BAC was an Israeli shell company set up to mask the identity of the Israeli agents who inserted explosive material and a remote detonator capability into the pagers.

According to leaked intelligence to Al-Monitor, the explosions were planned to go off at the start of a full-scale war against Lebanon. Still, a leak alerted two members of Hezbollah to the danger, and the Israelis detonated the devices on Tuesday.

Hezbollah had attacked Israel on August 25 and among the targets was the elite spy center known as Unit 8200. 22 Israelis were killed and 74 wounded at the cyber-spy headquarters.

When the pagers exploded on Tuesday, many analysts saw the attack as a response to the attack on Unit 8200.

The Israeli spies who planted the explosives in the pagers were most likely from Unit 8200.

Hezbollah has been calibrating its attacks and minimizing casualties to avoid justifying Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to start a full-scale war against Lebanon. The US administration of President Joe Biden has been asking Netanyahu to reign in the extremist elements in his cabinet who are pushing for a regional war.

Israel has been waiting for Hezbollah to lose patience so that they can start a full-scale war. Media reports from Tel Aviv say Netanyahu will fire Yoav Gallant the Defense Minister. The two have a tense relationship, but Gallant seems to accept that his next mission will be a full-scale attack on Lebanon.

According to the Times of Israel, Gallant said Israel's focus has moved to the northern front as a "new phase" of the war is beginning. Lebanon's Foreign Minister saw the attack on Lebanon as a signal to a wider war.

Netanyahu knows that he could stop the Hezbollah attacks on Israel by agreeing to a ceasefire in Gaza. Biden got Netanyahu's promise of a ceasefire in July, but later Netanyahu reneged on his agreement and used the excuse of demanding Israeli troops on the Philadelphia corridor. Once it was clear to Biden that Netanyahu would not agree to any ceasefire, under any terms, Biden stepped out of the race for a second term as President.

Netanyahu is bound to keep the war going in Gaza, despite not having achieved his military goals there, because he is in office only as long as he does the bidding of two Ultra-Extremist Jewish settlers, Itamar Ben-Gvir, and Bezalel Smotrich. If Netanyahu loses their support in his cabinet, his coalition will fall, and Netanyahu will go to jail on past corruption charges.

From the beginning of the war on Gaza, Netanyahu has been determined to destroy Hamas, and his second goal has been to destroy Hezbollah. Military experts have cautioned that his goals cannot be achieved because the resistance to occupation can never be stopped. An army can kill leaders and fighters, but the desire for freedom and independence can never be wiped out. India and South Africa are both examples of winning independence from colonial rule.

With the Biden Oval Office flying on auto-pilot, Netanyahu feels this is the unique chance to start a major war in Lebanon, which the US government will pay for. He knows from his standing ovations speech at the US Congress, that Israel is assured of US military support during a war in Lebanon. Netanyahu has calculated that the time is right because if Donald Trump were to win in November, he might pressure Netanyahu to a ceasefire and stop the blank check for weapons. Trump has proved in his previous term in office that he is not in favor of foreign wars in which the US taxpayers have to pay the bill.

All eyes are on the skies of Lebanon, as the hours passing by bring us closer to a possible war that has not been seen in its scope for 50 years.

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