

Israel preparing to attack Syria: report

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Israel is reportedly preparing to strike arms depots and weapons manufacturing plants in Syria, claiming they belong to the Islamic resistance movement Hezbollah, a report says.

Tel Aviv has escalated its military presence in the occupied Golan Heights and the northern part of the Shebaa Farms, the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* said, citing a report in the Saturday edition of the Kuwaiti daily *Al Rai*.

The report quoted European sources as saying that recent Israeli reconnaissance flights, which violated Lebanese and Syrian airspace, are indications that Israel is ready to start a war in the area.

The potential targets are located far inside Syrian territory, the report added.

Israel remains technically at war with both Syria and Lebanon since it refuses to return the lands it occupied alongside vast expanses of other Arab territories during large-scale military operations in 1967.

In September 2007, at least four Israeli fighters crossed into Syrian airspace and launched an attack on an alleged nuclear facility, which caused a significant rise in tension.

Turkey-mediated talks between the two sides fell apart after Israel started the December 2008-January 2009 war on the Gaza Strip, which killed over 1,400 Palestinians.

Israel also started a war against Lebanon in 2006, which killed about 1,200 Lebanese, most of them civilians.

Israeli President Shimon Peres leveled a whole host of accusations against both countries, saying Damascus had supplied Russian-made scud missiles to Hezbollah, which defended the country during Israel's attacks on Lebanon.

However, the Israeli allegations have been categorically rejected by the governments of Syria and Lebanon as well as by the Hezbollah movement.

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