



Login

user:

pass:

Remember me

[register](#)

[RU](#) [EN](#) [ES](#)

User Menu

- Home Page
 - «Mirror of the World»
 - Support the Site
 - Contacts
 - Iraq-War board rules
- Articles
 - [Iraq News](#)
 - [Around the World](#)
 - [Historical analysis & facts](#)
 - [Current analysis](#)
 - [Economics](#)
 - [Hot News](#)
 - [Rankings](#)
- Forums

RSS feeds

RSS feed for articles and news

Weather

Baghdad	
	FR, 11/08 +45..+47 °C NW, 6 m/s
Basrah	
	FR, 11/08 +44..+46 °C SW, 5 m/s

Calendar-Filter

< Aug > < 2006 >

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
Today						

Hezbollah missiles rain down on tanks

By: Stephen Farrell in Metulla and Ian MacKinnon on: 10.08.2006 [22:08] (947 reads)



Hezbollah's lack of structure its strength

(10743 bytes) [c]

FROM a hill overlooking the Lebanese El Marj valley yesterday we watched Israeli tanks, above, crawling across a battlefield that they have yet to secure four weeks into this bitter war.

Hezbollah anti-tank missiles screamed in from the hazy hills and smashed into a Merkava tank, leaving it crippled. The crew could be seen sprinting to a second tank beneath clouds of smoke as artillery and missile fire thundered overhead. Another incoming missile sent a cloud of sparks billowing skywards just a few feet from a third tank. Later we saw a fourth crippled tank being towed to safety.

All this was happening just a few hundred yards across the border, within sight of Israel's red-roofed kibbutzim. Small numbers of Hezbollah fighters with Sagger and sophisticated TOW anti-tank missiles were tying down entire units of Israeli armour and infantry as they sought to advance to the villages of Khiam, Marjayoun, Taibeh and Kafr Kila.

Israel's response to Hezbollah's fierce resistance is a significant increase in its ground offensive.

But as the death toll mounts and Hezbollah continues to rain rockets on northern Israel — yesterday it killed a woman and her three-year-old son — Israelis are starting to show concern that their country is being sucked back into the flames of Lebanon, from which it retreated in May 2000 after previous illfated ventures.

In a front-page article in Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper Nahum Barnea urged the Israeli Prime Minister: "With American support, Israel still has a chance of getting out of this war with decent accomplishments. Take what they're offering you, Ehud Olmert."

The liberal daily Haaretz reported an angry exchange between Amir Peretz, the Defence Minister, and his predecessor, Shaul Mofaz, who criticised the planned new offensive. Mr Peretz retorted: "Where were you when Hezbollah built up this array?"

Concern was also expressed by Israeli soldiers, who told The Times how Hezbollah fighters were ambushing them in tanks or waiting for ground forces to enter "deserted" villages, then opening up.

Across the border from Aita al-Shaab, one soldier said: "There are a lot more missiles than we expected and a lot more Hezbollah left. They are shooting from everywhere."

In Rambam hospital in Haifa, Captain Hanoch Daubi told how rocket-propelled grenades had slammed into his tank near Bint Jbeil on Tuesday, wounding him and the driver as they tried to rescue two fatally injured comrades.

"When we got down in the town there was a firestorm of shooting," said the 26-year-old company commander, his face badly burnt and leg swathed in bandages.

"These guys fight just the way guerrillas would. They use civilian houses for cover and pop up firing from the windows. They don't wear uniforms but they are well organised and fight in small groups with determination."

That same afternoon in the village of Atira, north of Bint Jbeil, Captain Ari Dagan, a 26-year-old paratrooper, was hit in the leg in an ambush. "Hezbollah waited for us to walk into the town. It was deserted. But as soon as we got inside they attacked. It's extremely difficult for us to distinguish between civilians and the fighters," he said.

Despite everything, the Israeli troops remain confident. "The fighting is very hard but the soldiers on the ground feel that we are winning," said Omri Shachar, a 22-year-old paratroop officer recovering from a leg wound in Ziv hospital in Safed.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,251-2307810,00.html>

Hezbollah's lack of structure its strength

As Hezbollah resists almost four weeks of Israeli air and ground operations, many analysts are calling it the most effective Arab force the Israeli army has yet faced.

The militia has stockpiles of missiles and light arms and, perhaps most important, a highly mobile command structure that allows it to conduct a classic hit-and-run guerrilla war of attrition.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty correspondents Charles Recknagel and Dominik Breithaupt spoke with Timur Goksel, the former spokesman of the United Nations monitoring force in south Lebanon, to learn more about Hezbollah's organization and

tactics. Goksel now teaches at the American University in Beirut.

RFE/RL: Looking at the number of about 2,000-4,000 soldiers that fight for the Hezbollah against 10,000 Israeli soldiers, it seems unlikely that the militia could keep up an effective resistance for long. What makes it so difficult for the Israeli army to defeat the Hezbollah militia?

Timur Goksel: These people have been fighting the Israelis for 18 years in south Lebanon. People forget that. They already know the Israelis. And they fought them when they occupied Lebanon Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 and maintained a buffer zone in south Lebanon until 2000 and since then they have been preparing for a guerrilla war again.

And they are a very experienced, very well-equipped guerrilla army and they also believe in what they are doing. And they have the local support of the population and they are local people themselves, they feel like they are defending their own villages. So when you put this together you get a very strong army - a guerrilla army, at least.

Lack of hierarchy important

RFE/RL: A common strategy in wartime is to disrupt the command-and-control capability of the enemy. But Hezbollah seems to have survived almost a month of heavy Israeli bombing. How does the militia remain effective on the battlefield?

Goksel: They don't work in military hierarchies or military command levels. They don't have anything like that. There is one leader in Beirut and all the other units in the field are autonomous, they know what they are doing by themselves. They don't need communications, they don't report everything, they don't ask for orders, they know what they are doing.

There are small units of not more than 20 men, and most are local people. They

operate on their own, they don't need supplies. They are very independent. That makes it very difficult to catch them, of course.

RFE/RL: The organizational structure you describe is common to a secret guerrilla movement. Yet Hezbollah has been a highly public presence in Lebanon for more than two decades, including now being part of the government. Could you describe the group's structure in more detail?

Goksel: Hezbollah's political and social arm is very public but Hezbollah's military is a very secretive organization. Even most other Hezbollah people will not know who they military members are. They are extremely security-conscious - extremely - to the point of paranoia.

Most people don't know who these people are because they never display themselves, they don't have uniforms, they don't have any bases, they don't work out of bases, they don't have supply depots. Therefore, it is a very secretive arm and that is because they have a very healthy respect for Israeli intelligence, which is always trying to track them down.

Nasrallah's leadership

RFE/RL: How directly does Hassan Nasrallah, the spiritual leader of Hezbollah, control its military arm?

Goksel: Their structure is that only Sheikh Nasrallah is the supreme commander and there is nobody else between him and the field leaders. They removed all those intermediate levels years ago, because they felt like when you are organized as a military unit then it is very easy for Israel to detect you, because when you are such a formal organization you make noise when you move. So they removed all organization and they are working with a secret cell system, actually.

RFE/RL: But doesn't a secret cell system also present some disadvantages when it comes to launching coordinated operations on the battlefield? Is there no central planning?

Goksel: There are also predetermined operations. They have a lot of local autonomy but they will not launch an operation unless it is all part of a plan. There is a local leader, there is a regional leader system, but they don't report to any military headquarters in Beirut. It is not cumbersome, there are no levels like in a normal army, such as companies, battalions, regiments, nothing like that. It is a very flat sort of organization, not a pyramid sort of organization.

RFE/RL: Do we know where Nasrallah is now?

Goksel: I wouldn't know where he is and certainly they Hezbollah are not advertising it. But I know one thing about that man: he never abandons his people. He is famous for that. The reason he became Sheikh Nasrallah the leader of Hezbollah is because of his reputation for never leaving the fighters.

So I can safely assume that he is with his own people. He never abandons them, that is not his style. That's why he became so famous and so adored within the whole of Hezbollah, because he never leaves his people alone.

RFE/RL: There are reports that the Israeli army is trying to assassinate Nasrallah by targeting Hezbollah compounds in southern Beirut and elsewhere. Would Hezbollah fall apart if he were killed?

Goksel: If Sheikh Nasrallah goes, that organization is likely to come apart. Because, especially at a time like this, no other leader can emerge to keep this whole massive organization of social, economic, political, and military things together. Nobody can do that.

And there are some competing currents in Hezbollah that Sheikh Nasrallah is keeping together. In my understanding, some of these groups might become more independent in their actions. And when you have people with guns and rockets taking independent action, then you are looking for trouble because you never know which way they will go. Because he is providing the central discipline and the central command.

Cutting off Hezbollah, or Lebanon?

RFE/RL: The Israeli army says it is bombing Lebanese infrastructure such as highways to cut supply routes from Syria - and ultimately Iran - which are suspected of rearming Hezbollah. But is it possible to stop supplies from reaching the militia?

Goksel: More than being a strategy, that is a way of destroying the Lebanese infrastructure. That is not a strategy, that is an excuse to inflict maximum pain on this country. Because they the Israelis couldn't do it stop Hezbollah, they want the Lebanese people to stop Hezbollah. And certainly if the bombing is to prevent the supply of arms to Hezbollah, it cannot do that. There are 300 kilometers of open borders. Are they going to watch every border crossing 24 hours a day? That is a "no go", but it is a good excuse to keep bombing.

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/HH11Ak03.html

5 comments

<input type="radio"/> Only comments	Comments per page 50 <input type="text"/>
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Article and comments	<input type="button" value="Send"/>

ISRAEL

by Neyaz on 10.08.2006 [22:20]

More powerfullllll stuff coming your WAY, TEL-AVIV is NEXT!

Long live juche>>>>>>>>>and the father of juche.

how they fight.

by picard-fortune-500 on 10.08.2006 [22:22]

ht tp://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/HH11Ak03.html

So beautiful when the missile kiss the Tank

by pdove on 10.08.2006 [23:12]

Long Live Iraqi Resistance and People!

Long Live Arab People!

Ha ha ha!

by TerraHertz on 11.08.2006 [00:50]

"These guys fight just the way guerrillas would. They use civilian houses for cover and pop up firing .."

In villages! My god, the nerve of those Hizballah fighters! Using civilian buildings as cover, in villages! (Perhaps the Israeli 'soldiers' would prefer their targets standing in lines in the streets?)

"Hezbollah waited for us to walk into the town. It was deserted. But as soon as we got inside they attacked. It's extremely difficult for us to distinguish between civilians and the fighters,"

Ha ha ha! These IDF jerks are insane! What on earth do they expect their enemy to do? Have they become _so_ accustomed to shooting schoolgirls in the head while walking home, that they can't even understand how a real soldier fights a war?

'deserted' - no, it obviously wasn't. You were just too stupid to expect a trap. And if you thought it was deserted, whats with the difficulty telling 'civilians' from 'fighters'. As if you'd really avoid shooting a civilian anyway.

The picture to this article - I can't figure out whats going on there. The explosion seems to be of a shell fired by the tank. But why detonate so soon? And the smoke - is that tank damaged, or smokescreening? The shell burst seems to be of some incendiary type. I don't get it.

what makes it so difficult?

by eureka on 11.08.2006 [01:58]

""Looking at the number of about 2,000-4,000 soldiers that fight for the Hezbollah against 10,000 Israeli soldiers, it seems unlikely that the militia could keep up an effective resistance for long. What makes it so difficult for the Israeli army to defeat the Hezbollah militia?""

When God Almighty is for you, who can be against you. May the Glory and Power of Allah, The Almighty, remain with the Hezbollah fighters and all the muslim people.

Glory to God

Posting comments:

You should be registered AND logged in user to post comments here.

