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Israel developing anti-militant "bionic hornet"

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JERUSALEM (Reuters) - Israel is using nanotechnology to try to create a robot no bigger than a hornet that would be able to chase, photograph and kill its targets, an Israeli newspaper reported on Friday.

The flying robot, nicknamed the "bionic hornet", would be able to navigate its way down narrow alleyways to target otherwise unreachable enemies such as rocket launchers, the daily Yedioth Ahronoth said.

It is one of several weapons being developed by scientists to combat militants, it said. Others include super gloves that would give the user the strength of a "bionic man" and miniature sensors to detect suicide bombers.

The research integrates nanotechnology into Israel's security department and will find creative solutions to problems the army has been unable to address, Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres told Yedioth Ahronoth.

"The war in Lebanon proved that we need smaller weaponry. It's illogical to send a plane worth \$100 million against a suicidal terrorist. So we are building futuristic weapons," Peres said.

The 34-day war in Lebanon ended with a U.N.-brokered ceasefire in mid-August. The war killed more than 1,200 Lebanese, mostly civilians, and 157 Israelis, mostly soldiers.

Prototypes for the new weapons are expected within three years, he said.

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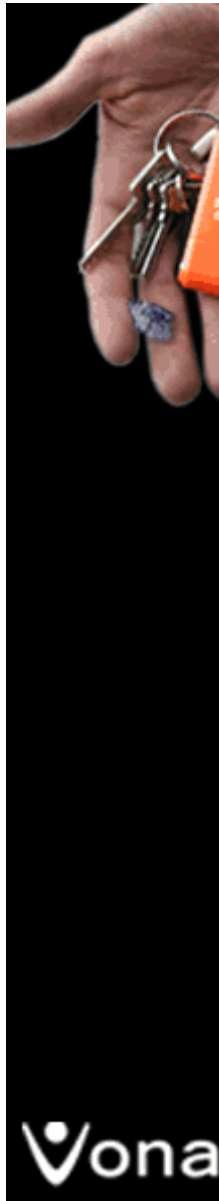
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