



### Israel Retreats to Use Smart Bombs: Expert

Additional Reporting by Bassiouni El-Wakil, IOL Staff

CAIRO – Israel's retreat from two strategic Lebanese towns it captured during its ongoing war against Lebanon is a military tactic shell Hizbullah's bunkers with laser-guided bombs it recently obtained from Washington, a Lebanese military expert said on Friday, July 28.



Hizbullah says it forced Israeli tanks to retreat.

"The Israeli army might have known whereabouts of Hizbullah fighters during its operations in southern Lebanon," Yassin Al-Swede told IslamOnline.net over the phone from Beirut.

He said Israel was forced to change its tactics due to the fierce resistance displayed by Hizbullah and heavy fighting with its fighters.

Hizbullah announced earlier in the day that it forced Israeli soldiers to withdraw from the two strategic towns of Bint Jbeil and Maroon Al-Ras.

Israeli army sources played down the move as a military tactic.

The battle for Bint Jbeil has rumbled on for at least four days now and been the scene of furious clashes between Hizbullah and Israeli forces.

Two days ago, eight Israeli soldiers were killed in fighting with Hizbullah fighters, making it the deadliest day for Israel's forces since the conflict began 16 days ago.

Dozens of rockets fired by Hizbullah in Lebanon hit towns across northern Israel on Friday, wounding at least six people.

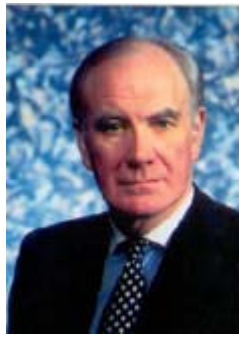
Hizbullah has fired more than 1,500 rockets into Israel since the conflict erupted.

Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah has vowed to take the war deeper into Israel, suggesting there could be strikes south of the city of Haifa.

Israel's offensive against Lebanon has killed 600 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians. A total of 51 Israelis have died, including 18 civilians.

## Stopovers

It has been reported that the Bush administration is rushing a delivery of precision-guided bombs to Israel, which requested the expedited shipment earlier in the month after beginning its air campaign against Lebanon.



Britain's The Times newspaper reported Friday that the British government will allow US aircraft carrying bombs and missiles to Israel to stop over in British airports.

"That will be allowed to continue. It is a right we have always granted," a senior government official told The Times.

Sir Campbell demanded the British government to refuse further US requests to use British airports as a transit for weapons.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Downing Street confirmed that two more requests by the United States to send planes carrying missiles as well as components to Israel over the next fortnight will go through.

Last weekend, two US aircraft carrying bunker-busting bombs bounded to Israel landed at Prestwick airport in Scotland, which raised Britain's ire.

British sources, however, told The Times that the dispute between Britain and the United States was about procedures and not the principle of allowing the aircraft stopover.

The sources said the US violated the rules by failing to notify the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of the aircraft's dangerous contents in advance.

The CAA must be notified about civilian planes carrying hazardous substances.

The two flights last weekend in Scotland's Prestwick airport were designated by the Pentagon as civilian cargo flights.

The UK approval of more US planes carrying arms to Israel to land in British airports have sparked furor among British MPs.

"Britain should say no," said Sir Menzies Campbell, leader of the second-ranked Liberal Democrats opposition party, demanding the government to refuse further US requests to use British airports as a transit for weapons.

"I think one would have hoped that the US government would have been sensitive to the fact that this is an issue which is causing a great deal of concern in the United Kingdom and would not have made such requests," he added.

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