

The key implications of Hezbollah's Aziz Unit commander assassination

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 04.07.2024

The assassination of senior Hezbollah figure Muhammad Neamah Naser, the commander of Hezbollah's Aziz Unit, responsible for launching attacks from southwestern Lebanon into Israel, is a significant tactical achievement for Israel with various implications.

However, it does not alter the overall conflict against Hezbollah.

Firstly, Israel is demonstrating determination against Hezbollah, continuing to eliminate senior field commanders in Hezbollah's ranks despite leader Hassan Nasrallah's threats.

This assassination also sends a message to Hezbollah about Israel's operational and intelligence capabilities, which persist despite Hezbollah's efforts to improve its readiness and minimize damage and losses.

This is part of an ongoing effort by the IDF aimed at signaling to Hezbollah the cost of its participation in the conflict. The elimination of senior commanders, along with the reduction of capabilities and assets, are the primary tools the IDF currently uses against Hezbollah.

This assassination also reflects the technological and operational advantage of the IDF over Hezbollah, which, despite its technological advancements, is still unable to carry out such eliminations and significantly lags in its casualty numbers compared to the losses it has inflicted on Israel.

Nonetheless, the assassination will not deter Hezbollah from continuing its current pattern of attacks, as part of its strategy to assist Hamas by exhausting Israel.

It is important to remember that Israel is fighting Hezbollah under various constraints, mainly the desire to focus on the Gaza conflict and the Biden administration's veto on expanding the war to the northern front.

Hezbollah also does not seem eager to expand the scope of the war and is ready to cease fire once the Gaza conflict ends.

It will quickly find a replacement for the commander of the Aziz unit but the assassination will be remembered as one of the significant eliminations carried out in the war, alongside the assassination of Radwan Force commander Wissam Tawil, and Abu Taleb, the commander of the Ansar unit on the organization's southern front, responsible for Hezbollah's activities from the eastern sector, from Bint Jbeil to Mount Dov.

In light of reports about increased weapons shipments from Iran to Hezbollah in recent months, Israel needs to strike these weapon transfers to limit Hezbollah's ability to benefit from the strategic backing provided by Tehran as much as possible.

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