

Title:

Little Known Weapons Of Mass Destruction Threat During Lebanon War

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Summary:

A well informed source in the Israeli intelligence community, who cannot be identified, says the Israeli air force raids, following the July 12 Hezbollah attack on an IDF border patrol, were aimed first of all at "Hezbollah's strategic weapons' secret locations." The source added that this initial goal did not include "ordinary" short and medium range rockets but was specifically aimed against the heavier weapon systems supplied by Iran with the Zalzal rockets topping the list...

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Article Body:

A well informed source in the Israeli intelligence community, who cannot be identified, says the Israeli air force raids, following the July 12 Hezbollah attack on an IDF border patrol, were aimed first of all at "Hezbollah's strategic weapons' secret locations." The source added that this initial goal did not include "ordinary" short and medium range rockets but was specifically aimed against the heavier weapon systems supplied by Iran with the Zalzal rockets topping the list. "Our first aim was to neutralize the heavy ones and their launching systems since we had solid information the Hezbollah had a plan to use chemical war heads.

Information the Israeli intelligence had regarding chemical weapons in Hezbollah hands was validated by friendly intelligence organizations, including a recent DIA memo. The source also said the Iranian manufacturers together with their Syrian allies toyed with the idea of "testing" their CW by letting the Hezbollah launch them on a limited scale while they would remain in the shadows in an attempt to wash their hands of such an attack when, as could be expected, the world community would react with an outcry of fierce criticism. The Iranian CW program centered at Damgahn, some 300 kilometers east of Tehran, manufactures an estimated 1,000 tons a year of various chemical nerve agents.

The Syrians pushed for at least preparing a strategic arsenal to be used if Israel would move on to destroy Hezbollah strongholds, assessing that this time,

due to the suddenness of events, the Israeli population would not be properly prepared for that kind of attack. As events unfolded, the Israeli intelligence learned that Sheikh Hassan Nasarallah, who was in Damascus just a few days prior to the July 12 attack, had raised some concerns over the possibility of a massive Israeli reaction if he gave the order to go ahead with the abduction plan.

His Syrian liaison officers and representatives of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' al-Quds Force told him he could then retaliate by launching a chemical war head. They assessed it would be highly effective because the Israeli population would not have been put on high alert as was done during the two Iraq wars when anti-gas attack kits were distributed across the country, and homes, offices and air raid shelters, were sealed with special nylon sheets.

However, when the hostilities erupted the first move Israel undertook was a massive air raid to first and foremost destroy every target which was part of the Zalzal Project. Thus Nasarallah's gamble he could wreak a catastrophic CW blow on Israel was shattered before he had a chance to carry it out.

The air raids were planned in several stages. The first and most vital incursion was to destroy all Zalzal depots, which soon enough were proven highly successful. The second crucial stage came with the total destruction of what became known as the Hezbollah high rise enclave in south Beirut and where their offices and communication centers were situated.

The prime purpose in this instance was to destroy Hezbollah's so-called scientific wing facilities and not, as was widely believed, to catch Sheikh Nasarallah or even anyone of his skilled scientific workforce who have widespread links to Shiite students and teachers in colleges throughout Europe and the U.S., but first and foremost to Iranian WMD experts often housed in these buildings where they had special guest apartments for visiting experts.

Equipment seized by IDF ground forces in small Lebanese towns such as Maise-e-Jabel, where sophisticated listening and monitoring devices were captured, as well as documents revealing that some monitoring devices were programmed to shadow Israeli hospitals and the army's medical corps evacuation network, could have enabled Hezbollah to follow-up on the nature of damages caused. Obviously they were hoping to learn about the overall affect of the chemical warheads as well had they been launched. The discoveries in Maise-e-Jabel left no doubt that the air force had to go on several more rounds to utterly destroy Hezbollah's enclave in Beirut.

The use of Chinese made radar guided C-802 cruise missiles became possible on

the fourth day of the fighting when both Iran and Syria agreed the flare-up was a good opportunity to test them. A convoy of Syrian military trucks carrying the system entered Lebanon through Tellkalakh and the Tripoli highway in the north, and Iranian operators arrived directly from Tehran with their Hezbollah trainees to carry out the launch of three such missiles. One of them hit an Israeli missile boat; the others sank two freighters, an Egyptian one and a Cambodian one.

This system is too massive to be smuggled through mountain passages and therefore every bridge, every road and every road junction going from Syria into Lebanon had to be immediately destroyed following the first unanticipated cruise missile attack.

A number of commando raids into the Beqaa Valley were designed to detect and destroy chemical warhead storages. Unsurprisingly such finds, whether verified or not, were not made public. However, Hezbollah militiamen sealed off the entire vicinity after the last raid on Boudai, clearly indicating they were worried over some sort of possible leakages. The same precautions were undertaken in south Beirut where Hezbollah fighters prevented free access to their destroyed enclave.

According to the intelligence source it is assumed Hezbollah will attempt in the future to proceed with two basic options as envisioned by the Revolutionary Guards and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Tehran. The first would be to launch various types of rockets, including modified Zalzals from aboard medium sized boats or freighters in the Mediterranean. Their success in hitting targets some 75 to 85 kilometers from their launch sites into northern Israel suggests they could, in theory, also launch a rocket from the sea to hit the heavily populated urban area around Tel Aviv. This type of a naval terror attack is an idea al-Qaeda too is known to have been toying with and is a significant threat to Europe and North America as well.

Another preference was to improve the scheme of aerial suicide bombers, al-Qaeda style, by establishing an "air wing" which could "sneak in without the warning sign emitted by a hijacked plane." Already in 2004 Iran equipped the Hezbollah with UAVs of the type Mirsad-1 and the Ababil outfitted with cameras and GPS systems as part of an overall guidance structure monitored by wireless radio and telephone systems all the way from Tehran, just like the U.S. Air Force and the CIA handle UAVs armed with Hellfire missiles from a base in Colorado.

The IDF shared its findings with the U.S. which regards this information as vital for U.S. national security, and because of the importance to show jihadists that their systems, even when highly sophisticated, can and will be

destroyed with or without heavy collateral damage. When Sheikh Nasarallah boasted towards the end of the campaign that within hours he would destroy Haifa, and when realizing the Hezbollah and their handlers were ready to take their campaign all the way, Israel had no choice but to react aggressively with an all out assault up and down and across the width of Lebanon to safeguard the lives of hundreds of thousands. Thus Nasarallah's Zalzal depots, his planning offices, communication systems and even vital land routes, had to be totally destroyed by the Israeli air force, navy and commandos.