

Nine soldiers killed as Israel faces staggering costs of Lebanon invasion



Beirut, October 25 (RHC)-- The Israeli military has confirmed the deaths of nine soldiers in southern Lebanon as the death toll rises amid Hezbollah's retaliatory operations against the invading forces.

On Friday, the occupation's army announced that five reserve soldiers were killed and 19 others were wounded, four of them seriously, during fighting in Lebanon the previous day. All of the troops killed served with the 8th Armored Brigade's 89th Battalion, it added, noting that they were hit by a Hezbollah rocket while they were accepting a logistics supply in a southern Lebanese village.

On Thursday, the regime announced that four soldiers were killed in southern Lebanon in an ambush by Hezbollah forces.

Israeli media said the soldiers were from the Carmeli Brigade, which has been fighting as part of the military's 146th Division.

Israel's far-right minister Itmar Ben-Gvir said that the death of one of the soldiers named Shlomo Aviad Nayman was "hard news" and a "great loss" for the extremist Otzma Yehudit party, which he hails from.

A total of 762 Israeli soldiers have been killed since the beginning of the Gaza onslaught, according to the latest figures released by the regime's military. Those figures, most analysts agree, could be deliberately downsized and actually more Israeli army troops could have been killed.

On Friday, the Hezbollah resistance movement released several statements, announcing retaliatory operations against the Israeli forces in the north of the occupied territories. In one of the statements, the resistance said that its fighters had targeted the Carmel military base, south of Haifa, with "a qualitative missile barrage" at 9:30 a.m. local time.

Another Friday statement revealed a Hezbollah strike against Israeli forces at the "Habushit" site. Earlier on Friday, the Lebanese force also announced that it had targeted the "enemy forces in the Manara settlement with a rocket barrage."

The operations were conducted in support of the Palestinian and Lebanese people, who are subject to brutal Israeli aggression, the resistance group added.

Amid the mounting Israeli death toll, the Israeli army's chief of staff Herzi Halevi hinted at the possibility of an "end" to the war with Hezbollah. "In the north, there is a possibility of reaching a sharp end," he said, adding, "We finished Hezbollah's senior chain of command in a very thorough way."

The remarks come as Hezbollah has shown no sign of withdrawal even after its top leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah was assassinated in an Israeli attack last month. The group announced last week a 'new phase' of escalation against Israel.

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