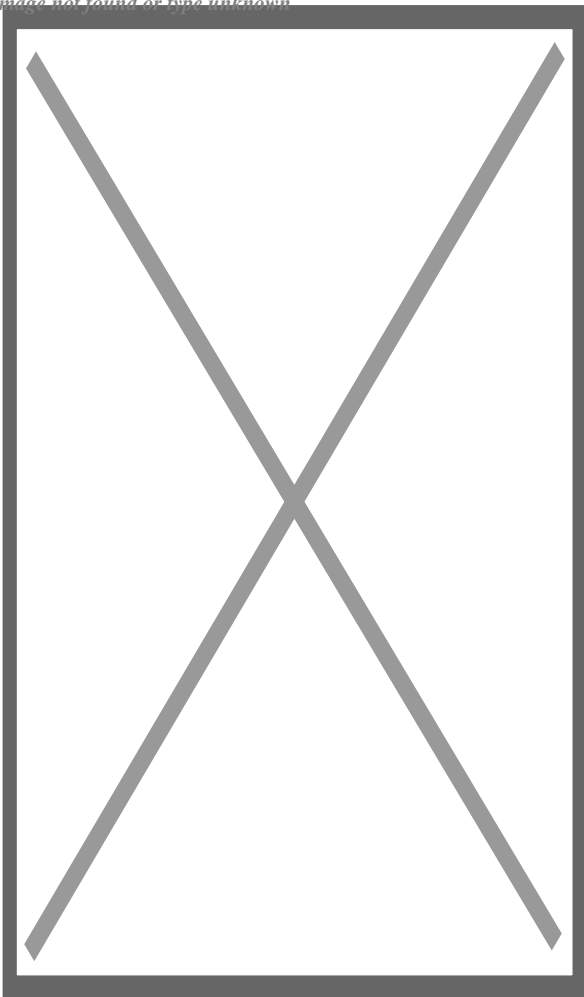


Israeli strike in Lebanon's Beirut kills Hezbollah spokesman Mohammad Afif

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Mohammad Afif speaks during a news conference in Beirut's southern suburbs [File: Haider Kadhim/Reuters]

Beirut, November 17 (RHC)-- An Israeli strike targeting a building in central Beirut has killed Hezbollah's spokesman Mohammad Afif, according to officials from the Lebanese armed group.

Three other people were injured in the strike in the densely populated Ras al-Nabaa district in the Lebanese capital, officials said on Sunday, adding that the building was targeted without warning. Many Lebanese displaced by Israel's ongoing strikes in Beirut's southern suburbs had taken refuge in the neighbourhood.

The Israeli military had not officially ordered the area to be evacuated ahead of the deadly strike on its handle on X. "Clearly, this is a continuation of the Israeli policy to go after not only the military wing of Hezbollah, but also officials within the administrative side of the organisation," said Al Jazeera's Dorsa Jabbari. "What Israel is trying to do is diminish the groups' capabilities on all fronts: economic, social, political, and military."

Afif managed Hezbollah's Al-Manar television station for several years before taking over as the top media relations officer for the armed group. He hosted several press conferences amid the rubble in the southern suburbs of the capital devastated by weeks of Israeli bombardment.

In his most recent comments to reporters on November 11, he said that Israeli troops had been unable to occupy any territory in Lebanon and that Hezbollah had enough weapons and supplies to fight a "long war." His killing is the latest in a string of assassinations of top Hezbollah leaders, including its chief Hassan Nasrallah, since Israel dramatically intensified its attacks across Lebanon in late September after one year of fire exchanges along the border.

Nasrallah was assassinated in an Israeli strike on a residential building in southern Beirut's Dahiyeh neighbourhood in late September.

Military analyst Elijah Magnier told Al Jazeera that the killing of Afif is part of Israel's strategy to disrupt Hezbollah's leadership and its ability to communicate with the world. It will also undermine Hezbollah's ability to coordinate responses that counter Israel's war narrative, which will force other officials in the group to be more visible, Magnier said.

"And also, it is showing that high-profile people in Hezbollah, no matter if they are military or non-military personnel, they can be assassinated," he told Al Jazeera from the Belgian capital, Brussels.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/369902-israeli-strike-in-lebanons-beirut-kills-hezbollah-spokesman-mohammad-afif>



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