Hezbollah drone attack wounds 18 IDF soldiers, one seriously

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Eighteen Israel Defense Forces soldiers were wounded, one seriously, by a Hezbollah suicide drone attack near a kibbutz in the northern Golan Heights on Sunday afternoon, the army confirmed.

According to the IDF Home Front Command, several suspicious “aerial targets” infiltrated from Lebanon around 4 p.m. on Sunday, setting off air raid sirens in the Galilee panhandle and northern Golan Heights.

According to local media reports, one of the UAVs impacted in the area of Kibbutz Merom Golan, wounding troops stationed there.

Haifa’s Rambam Hospital confirmed on Sunday night that three wounded soldiers were brought to its emergency room by helicopter. One was listed as being in serious condition and required surgery.

“Two victims arrived in mild to moderate condition; they are conscious and suffering from shrapnel injuries,” said a spokesperson for the hospital, adding that, “in the evening, another casualty was brought in; he is also conscious and will remain under observation.”

Hezbollah has attacked Israel’s north nearly every day since joining the war in support of Hamas on Oct. 8, firing thousands of suicide drones, rockets and anti-tank missiles at Israeli border towns, killing more than 20 people and causing widespread damage. Tens of thousands of Israeli civilians remain internally displaced due to the ongoing violence.

The Iran-backed terror group took responsibility for Sunday’s attack, claiming it sent a “swarm of drones” towards an Israeli military site in response to Israeli Air Force strikes against targets in Southern Lebanon.

Israel’s *Ynet* news outlet reported that Hezbollah claimed at least nine attacks on the Jewish state on Sunday, including the launch of a volley of heavy Falaq rockets towards Moshav Beit Hillel in the Eastern Galilee.

In another incident, three anti-tank missiles were fired at the city of Metula. One of the missiles hit a residential building, one fell in a nearby orchard and the third exploded in Lebanese territory, *Ynet* reported. No injuries were reported in the northern city, which is largely evacuated.

In response, IAF jets struck a series of Hezbollah positions in Southern Lebanon overnight, the IDF announced on Sunday morning. The targets included buildings used by the terror group and other infrastructure in Kafr Kila, Houla, El Biyada and Rab El Thalathine, according to the IDF.

Last month, the [IDF](https://www.jns.org/idf-green-lights-operational-plans-for-lebanon/) formally “authorized and validated” operational plans for a campaign aimed at pushing Hezbollah north of the Litani River, which was also the stated goal of 2006’s UNSC Resolution 1701.

On Saturday, Iran threatened that an Israeli military operation against Hezbollah in Lebanon could lead to an “obliterating war” with all of Tehran’s terror proxies, adding that “all options are on the table.”

The threat, posted to the account of Iran’s mission to the United Nations, added that the regime regards the IDF’s declaration that it has approved the [military operation](https://www.jns.org/idf-green-lights-operational-plans-for-lebanon/) in Lebanon as “psychological warfare.”

During meetings in Washington last week, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant stressed that while Jerusalem prefers a diplomatic solution, it will take whatever action is required to restore security to the north.

“We do not want war, but we are preparing for every scenario,” Gallant stated following the meetings. Jerusalem has emphasized that any deal “will not be an agreement on paper” but must include “the physical removal of Hezbollah from the border, and we will have to enforce it.”

In a video statement published last week, Hezbollah chief [Hassan Nasrallah](https://www.jns.org/hezbollah-threatens-war-without-rules/) vowed to fight the Jewish state “without restraints, without rules, without limits” should war be “imposed” on Lebanon. He has also threatened that an “[invasion](https://www.jns.org/nasrallah-threatens-cyprus-for-the-first-time/) of the Galilee remains on the table.”

*Ynet* reported on Sunday that the Islamic Republic has been accelerating weapons shipments to Hezbollah in recent weeks. The smuggled arms include air defense systems to fend off IAF strikes, as well as Almas (“Diamond”) advanced anti-tank-guided missile systems.

On June 23, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that the U.S. military likely would not be able to help the Jewish state defend itself in the case of an all-out war with [Hezbollah](https://www.jns.org/us-will-have-difficulty-defending-israel-against-hezbollah/) in the way it did when [Iran](https://www.jns.org/dozens-of-drones-launched-from-iran-expected-to-strike-israel-in-hours/) launched a barrage of missiles and drones at Israeli territory in April.

Air Force Gen. Charles Q. Brown noted that it is harder to repel the shorter-range rockets from Lebanon, *AP* reported. An Israel-Hezbollah war also risks triggering a direct military response by Tehran, he added.

Iran would also be “more inclined to support Hezbollah” than it is the Hamas terror group in the Gaza Strip, “particularly if they felt that Hezbollah was being significantly threatened,” Brown warned.