

Israel News Hezbollah Deputy Chief: All of Israel Is Within Range of Our Missiles

Sheikh Naim Qassem comments come days after Israel launched an operation to destroy cross-border Hezbollah tunnels.



Lebanon's Hezbollah deputy leader Sheikh Naim Qassem gestures as he speaks during an interview with Reuters in Beirut, Lebanon March 15, 2018. REUTERS/Aziz Taher\ AZIZ TAHER/ REUTERS

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No part of Israel is outside the range of Hezbollah's missiles, according to the organization's deputy secretary general.

Speaking in an interview to the Iranian Arabic-language newspaper Alvefagh, Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem also boasted that Israel has been afraid to go war in Lebanon since 2006.

Qassem's comments come amid heightened tensions in the north, days after Israel announced the launch of Operation Northern Shield against Hezbollah tunnels crossing from Lebanon. However, he did not directly address the tunnels.

According to Qassem, before the recent botched undercover operation in Gaza, Israel did not consider an operation in Lebanon.

“The Israeli discourse shows that war with Lebanon is out of the question for them,” he said. “In their threats and analyses, they say that they will attack if Hezbollah does. So they are not initiating. The rules of the game are set by Hezbollah on the ground. The balance of deterrence makes it very hard for Israel to initiate a war against Lebanon.”

Qassem said that Hezbollah too would not initiate war, but would respond to Israeli aggression and that such a response and counter-response could potentially lead to war.

According to Qassem, Israel’s home front, including Tel Aviv, are under threat. “There is not a place in the Zionist entity that is not within Hezbollah’s range,” he said.

Qassem also spoke about a number of issues on the Lebanese domestic agenda, including the war in Syria and Palestinian affairs within the country.

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri responded on Thursday morning to the Israeli army operation to destroy cross-border tunnels constructed by Hezbollah. “The developments in the southern Lebanon border are no reason for escalation. This is what the Lebanese government wants and is acting toward,” he said in the first official Lebanese response to the development.

On Saturday, Israeli troops fired towards three suspects the army believes were Hezbollah operatives who attempted to reach sites where the army is working to destroy tunnels. The suspects crossed the international border between Israel and Lebanon but did not breach the border fence. They later fled the scene.

Shortly after, Israel announced that it uncovered another Hezbollah attack tunnel. It was later reported that Netanyahu spoke by telephone with Russian President Vladimir Putin about the Israeli operation.



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