



Strike on base shows air defenses weren't ready for drone threat

Analysis **Amos Harel**

The drone strike on Sunday against the Golani Brigade training base in Regavim near Binyamina is the worst attack of its kind by Hezbollah since the war began over a year ago. The incident, in which four Golani soldiers were killed and dozens of their friends were wounded, exposed the challenge facing the system for detecting and providing protection from drones, as compared to the many successes chalked up by the aerial defense system in dealing with rockets and ballistic missiles. This time, Hezbollah was able to hit the Israel Defense Forces' soft underbelly – a base for new recruits and training near Binyamina, in the Wadi Ara region – and exploit the lenient directives, which enable many soldiers to be together in the same place, to achieve maximum damage.

The large number of incidents and casualties, and the prolonging of the war, have already made bad news almost a routine matter for the public. But it seems that the massive strike on Regavim – against new recruits in a dining hall, at a base far from the front – has led to reactions that are even harsher and sadder than usual. It's possible that this is related to the fact that civilians still don't see new recruits, even those in combat units, as likely to be harmed in war. What apparently also contributed to this was the fact that the



The funeral Monday of Amitai Alon, who was killed in the drone strike.

Golani Brigade, an Israeli symbol, is also the military unit that suffered the largest number of losses during the October 7 massacre last year.

This isn't the first time that Hezbollah has directed a focused attack on this area. In March 2023 the

organization sent a terrorist who crossed the border from Lebanon on foot and then traveled by electric bicycle to the Megiddo Junction. The man planted and detonated a large explosive device, which wounded a taxi driver – an Israeli Arab. The operative

was killed when he tried to cross the border back into Lebanese territory. The attack was explained at the time as a sign of a change in Hezbollah policy, and proof of the fact that the terror organization was willing to take more risks. Now, in the midst of a prolonged

war, Hezbollah's point of view is that all means are acceptable.

The lethal drone flew with the help of a GPS system, which enables a precise strike at the target, but not navigating it during the flight. Its operators aimed at the dining hall and hit it.

The penetration of the warhead, which weighed three to five kilograms (6.5-11 pounds), through the roof of the dining room caused great damage to the building where dozens of recruits were present at the

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Four soldiers killed in Hezbollah drone strike on IDF base

Adi Hashmonai, Bar Peleg, Fadi Amun and Jonathan Lis

Four soldiers were killed and around 60 others were wounded on Sunday in a drone strike on the Regavim military base near Binyamina in the center of the country. The soldiers, all 19-year-old trainees on track to become infantry fighters, were identified as Sgt. Omri Tamari, Sgt. Yosef Hieb, Sgt. Yoav Agmon and Sgt. Alon Amitay.

Seven of the soldiers were seriously wounded, 18 were moderately wounded, and the rest were lightly wounded, according to the Magen David Adom rescue service.

Hezbollah has claimed responsibility for the strike. The drone, a "Sayyad 107" model, was launched from Lebanon and struck the ceil-

ing of the base's dining hall without sirens being triggered, while many soldiers were eating dinner.

An initial Israel Defense Forces investigation found that two drones entered Israel via the Mediterranean Sea. While one was intercepted by the navy off the coast of Nahariya, but tracking of the second drone was lost until it became clear that it had fallen on the IDF base.

An IDF soldier present said that he had heard a "strange buzzing noise above him," and that sirens were not activated. He added that the strike occurred toward the end of dinner hours, and that the soldiers present were mainly those on kitchen duty.

"When [the drone] hit,

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Details of base hit by drone were readily available on IDF site

Avi Scharf

An official Israel Defense Forces website shows the precise location of a military building struck by a Hezbollah drone on Sunday, killing four soldiers and wounding dozens more.

A video found on the website details the Golani Brigade training base, including the exact locations of key buildings, such as the mess hall that was hit Sunday night.

The video, which first surfaced years ago, appears to be another instance in a

series of information security breaches, where the army and individual soldiers upload sensitive information to easily accessible platforms.

The website, Mitgaisim, is dedicated to communication with new IDF recruits. It contains extensive information about many military bases. The page on the Golani training base discusses its history, exact location, directions by public transportation, and a video showcasing its various facilities.

As Haaretz revealed

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From this complex, Hezbollah planned an invasion

Amos Harel

SOUTH LEBANON – The tunnel begins in the living room of a private home in a Shi'ite village in southern Lebanon. It ends roughly 800 meters (.5 miles) from there, deep inside the hill on which one neighborhood of the village is built. It is one of the largest Hezbollah combat facilities that the Is-

rael Defense Forces has discovered to date.

The complex contained the sector headquarters of the Radwan Force, Hezbollah's commando unit. In emergencies, it was meant to hold two companies of Radwan militants, who could then emerge from it undetected whenever the order was given. The IDF will destroy it in the near future, along with a significant

portion of the other military infrastructure built by Hezbollah in the area that the current ground operation has uncovered.

At the army's request, the village isn't being named, since soldiers are still conducting complex operations there. I can only say that it lies roughly three kilometers from the border, in the central sector. During a tour

there on Sunday afternoon, I could easily see homes in two kibbutzim on the Israeli side of the border.

These are the villages that comprise Hezbollah's first and second lines – Shi'ite communities near the Israeli border. From them, as well as from heavily vegetated areas near them, the organization planned to launch a surprise attack on

Israeli army outposts, kibbutzim and moshavim as the opening move of a war.

Now the villages are abandoned, and large swaths of them are destroyed. Here and there, small Hezbollah cells are still holed up inside them. The IDF is expected to do much more damage to them before it moves on to comb other villages and brushland.

Hezbollah's late secretary-general, Hassan Nasrallah, began talking about the idea of "conquering the Galilee" around a decade ago. Over the last five years, once the Radwan Force had ended its role in Syria's civil war and some of their commando battalions were redeployed to southern Lebanon,

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Soldiers in Lebanon with equipment that fleeing Hezbollah members left behind.

'Please come save us':

Recordings of Be'eri hostage standoff highlight Oct. 7 failure

Josh Breiner, Bar Peleg and Fadi Amun

It's October 7, just before 4 P.M. At Pesi Cohen's home in Kibbutz Be'eri, Tal Katz, who fled the Nova music festival with his girlfriend Yasmin Porat, is held hostage in the yard by a squad of Hamas' elite Nukhba force, who are armed with rifles and pistols. Suddenly, one of the terrorists hands him a phone. In the few seconds he has, Katz sums up the day's devastating failure in a single sentence.

"Listen," he begs, "we ask you to please come save us, what is with you in this country? Come save us." The person on the other end is Capt. Rami, a Shin Bet security service official who is conducting lengthy negotiations with the commander of the terrorist squad, Hassan Hamduna.

Thirteen hostages were killed at Cohen's home that day. Toward the end of the standoff, the Israeli army fired four tank shells at the house. While a military investigation concluded that most of the hostages were murdered by the terrorists, the exact manner of their deaths has yet to be fully determined.

Haaretz has obtained recordings of the conversations between the terrorists and Israeli security personnel. These recordings provide insight into what transpired in the house where the 15 hostages were held. They reveal significant gaps in communication between the various forces involved, including the Shin Bet, the police's Yamam special anti-terror unit, and the Israel Defense Forces, leading to the loss of critical information during the incident.

'I have school tomorrow, I'm scared'

Among the hostages held in the house, located near the kibbutz's dining room, were Cohen's sister, Hanna Siton, who came to spend the holiday at Cohen's home with her husband Itzhak and their son Tal; neighbors Ze'ev and Zehava Haker; 12-year-old twins Liel and Yanai Hetzroni and their aunt Ayala; 62-year-old Chava Ben Ami; Be'eri residents Adi and Hadas Dagan; Suheyb Abu Amar al-Razm, who was abducted by the terrorists from the Nova festival; and Katz and Porat, who had escaped from the festival to the kibbutz.

Hadas Dagan and Porat were the only survivors.

Having escaped the party, Porat and Katz found shelter in the home of the Dagan family in Be'eri. The two couples hid in the safe room since morning, until terrorists broke into the house around noon and led them at gunpoint to Cohen's home. At around 3 P.M., the terrorists ordered al-Razm to ask Porat whether she had contacts with senior Israeli military officials. She said she didn't, so the terrorists called the police's emergency hotline using a phone belonging to one of the Hakers. At the terrorists' demand, Porat told police there were 50 hostages in the house.

At some point in the conversation, Hamduna, the commander of the terrorist squad, took the phone and threatened the police operator, who was speaking to him in Arabic: "If you make any problems for me, I'll kill one of the 50 hostages I have here... I'm coming out of Be'eri, and if you don't tell the military to make safe passage for us, safe passage to Gaza – 50 hostages, we will kill them all."

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'Over-identification': Making sense of Milei's great passion for Judaism

Judy Maltz

He's best known for his unruly hair and foul mouth, but those are hardly his only distinguishing traits.

An economist by training, President Javier Milei is the first elected leader of Argentina not to rise up the ranks of a major political party. In fact, his party, La Libertad Avanza (Freedom Moves Forward), was founded as July 2021.

The former television pundit gained popularity by promising voters the very opposite of what his predecessors had pledged the public. A sworn libertarian, Argentina's new president believes the smaller the government, the better.

But stranger than anything else perhaps has been Milei's obsession with Judaism and Israel. His mentor and close adviser is an Orthodox rabbi who leads the small Moroccan Jewish community of Argentina and was little known until Milei burst onto the political scene.

In choosing Shimon Axel Wahnish as his ambassador to Israel, Milei has demonstrated how much faith he puts in this spiritual mentor of his. Argentina's unconventional president also has close ties to the Hasidic



Photos: Andres Kudacki/AP / Art: Anastasia Shub

Chabad-Lubavitch community and has visited the grave of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (aka "the rebbe") on numerous occasions. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, it was one of his first stops after being elected president.

Madman with a kippa

Fondly known as "the madman" among his followers, Milei studies Torah on a regular basis, has appeared

at public events wearing a kippa and plans to convert to Judaism. (The only reason he has not followed through as yet, he says, is that he would not be able to perform his duties as head of state if he were required to observe Shabbat at the same time.)

In campaign events, his inauguration speech and public gatherings, Milei has been known to invoke the following verse from the Book of Maccabees: "Victory in war

does not depend on the size of the armed forces but on the forces of heaven."

Raanan Rein, a professor of Latin American and Spanish history at Tel Aviv University, and Pablo Mendez Shiff, his doctoral student, borrowed from this theme for the title of their new co-edited book, "Forces of Heaven: Argentina, Milei, and the Jews," published this week by

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