

# Hezbollah, Hamas stand out in military clout

## Nasrallah consolidated Hezbollah's intellectual, managerial foundations



Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah delivers a speech in Beirut on May 8, 2023.  
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refugees, victim families, medical care, and basic necessities. The situation is similar for Hezbollah, to some extent. By assassinating Nasrallah, Israel also dealt a managerial blow to Hezbollah's structure. It is only natural that the elimination of a charismatic leader like Nasrallah would inflict damage on the organization, especially since it is currently at war.



Mostafa Moslehzaadeh

**Does this mean that Hamas and Hezbollah have reached the end of the road?**

Not by a long shot. Guerilla organizations around the world have typically imploded when faced with the kind of crises that Hamas and Hezbollah are grappling with. A prime example is the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which Israel drove to the brink of collapse by imposing a peace treaty. Ironically, the PLO's demise has become a template for Israel, which is now trying to replicate this strategy by imposing vari-

ous crises on Hezbollah and Hamas in the hopes of driving them to break up as well.

However, these two organizations are the exception to the rule. The circumstances that Israel has imposed on them over the past year would, according to conventional military wisdom, have spelled their demise by now. But that has not happened. Hamas is still alive and kicking, and Hezbollah remains a force to be reckoned with. Neither organization has thrown in the towel, even in the worst of times, and it is highly unlikely that they will do so in the future. The PLO's experience will not be repeated with Hamas and Hezbollah.

**What makes Hezbollah and Hamas stand out from the rest, particularly in the case of Hezbollah in Lebanon? Is their longevity due to the legacy of their late leader Nasrallah?**

Hezbollah and Hamas share some key characteristics that have contributed to their endurance. First and foremost, their reliance on religious ideology has been a game-changer. Unlike the secular Arab nationalism of the past, their ideology instills a sense of "fearlessness" in both the organization and its members. This is a strong suit for both Hamas and Hezbollah, and a weak spot for the Israeli regime. Secondly, the leaders of these organizations have been instrumental in their success. Nasrallah, in particular, had a certain je ne sais quoi, a selfless spirit that resonated with his

followers. He was willing to go the extra mile, to take the heat, and make the ultimate sacrifice for his people, country, and faith. This kind of leadership has been a hallmark of both Hamas and Hezbollah.

Thirdly, their management style has been a key factor in their success. They have adopted a more enlightened approach, blending science and management, which has allowed them to stay ahead of the curve. These organizations have managed to balance their military and political wings, and their experience has shown that this approach has been a winning formula. Nasrallah's 30-year leadership of Hezbollah has solidified the party's ideological and managerial foundations in the face of crises

A great example of Nasrallah's management genius was the prisoner swap deal in 2000. Hezbollah managed to secure the release of hundreds of Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian prisoners in exchange for just four Israeli prisoners. When Israel refused to release a prisoner named Samir Kuntar, Nasrallah predicted that Israel would eventually regret its decision. Six years later, in 2006, Israel launched a war to free two of its own prisoners, but ultimately had to free Kuntar as part of a prisoner exchange deal.

So, while Israel has managed to land some heavy blows on Hamas and Hezbollah, this does not mean the end of the road for these organizations. They will bounce back, because their goals are not tied to a specific individual or group.

By Ebrahim Beheshti  
Staff writers

### INTERVIEW

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu issued another terrorist order, assassinating Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. Several Hezbollah commanders had already been assassinated. Head of Hamas's political bureau Ismail Haniyeh was also killed in an act of terror blamed on Israel in Tehran. The question now arises: do Israel's appalling atrocities in the Gaza Strip and the assassination of Hezbollah's leaders and commanders spell the end of these two politico-military movements? Iran Daily has talked to Mostafa Moslehzaadeh, an expert on West Asian affairs, to hear his take on the issue. Moslehzaadeh had served as Iran's ambassador to Jordan.

**IRAN DAILY:** It has been a year since Israel's devastating attack on Gaza and its war with Hamas and Hezbollah. What, in your opinion, has been the Israeli's strategy over the past year, which has ultimately led to the assassination of Nasrallah and other Hezbollah leaders and commanders?

**MOSLEHZADEH:** When we talk about Israel's strategy, we must take note that it is essentially the same as the US strategy. Over the past year, and especially since October 7, the two have been on the same page. Although the US appears to support a cease-fire, this claim is also part of their joint strategy. Basically, the Israeli army is an integral part of the US army, or "CENTCOM," in normal circumstances. In crisis situations and wartime, this connection becomes even more pronounced. After Hamas's severe blow

on October 7, the Israeli army was caught off guard, particularly in terms of morale. Western leaders scrambled to Israel to support the regime and boost its morale. If the US genuinely sought a cease-fire, it would have sufficed to halt its daily shipments of arms and military equipment to Israel. Therefore, it is a misconception to think that Israel's military strategy against Gaza and southern Lebanon differs from the US strategy.

**How successful has this strategy been for them after a year of fighting?**

The joint strategy between Israel and the US has multiple components. The first component was to boost Israel's morale and demonstrate its destructive power. After October 7, the taboo of the Israeli army's invincibility was shattered, despite its state-of-the-art military hardware and foreign

backing. To restore it, Israel sought to flex its muscles, which is why it targeted everything from hospitals to schools and refugee camps. It appears that Israel has been successful in this aspect of its strategy, showing its destructive clout in a frenzied manner. The second component of this strategy was to take out the leaders and commanders of Hamas and Hezbollah. Although they did not fare well in Gaza, they were successful in southern Lebanon, where they managed to assassinate key Hezbollah leaders.

The third component was to create internal crises within Hamas and Hezbollah. As a military and political movement, Hamas was also responsible for administering the Gaza Strip, which meant it had to juggle fighting the Israeli army with seeing to

## Intelligence flaws root ...

While resistance forces are capable of effectively confronting Israel in ground battles and missile attacks, they are clearly and openly lacking in counter-intelligence capabilities. The Islamic resistance forces are in a state of war with Israel, yet the priority should be to destroy the Israeli intelligence network. There is a need to restrict the activities of British and French diplomats in Tehran, while also considering the intelligence cooperation that some Muslim countries have with Israel. Lebanon has a long history of French influence, and France openly displays hostility toward Islam while showing sympathy for Israel. The Lebanese government is aware of this fact, but now is the time to ensure no mistakes are made at any level. Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nas-

rallah, was like a nurturing father to the Axis of Resistance, and his absence will always be felt. Nasrallah transformed Islamic resistance into an international power. His assassination is also a significant blow to Iran's regional influence. Through the brutal use of US-provided bunker-buster bombs, Israel has committed an act of terrorism by assassinating him. This marks the beginning of an unending war, which will ultimately result in Israel's destruction. By committing this terrorist act, the Israeli leadership has created a difficult situation for its people and pushed a large portion of the region's population to the brink of war. After October 7, when Israeli aggression escalated in Gaza, Hezbollah confronted the occupying forces on the northern front,

keeping Lebanon's security in mind, and proved that Israel can be brought to its knees. Israel is under immense pressure in the north due to Hezbollah's resistance, and its security is now at risk. Israel has martyred dozens of Hezbollah commanders in Lebanon and Syria, but it does not fully understand that every fighter and leader in Hezbollah is driven by the message of Imam Hussein (AS), which echoes in their ears, inspiring them with unwavering courage and determination against oppressive forces. This message compels them to continue their journey of jihad and martyrdom, despite all challenges and adversities. When Israel assassinated Abbas al-Musawi, God gave the resistance movement Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, who over the last 32 years has spread Hezbollah's



ideology to every corner of the Muslim world. This is why Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has stated that he does not care about the Palestinians but is afraid of establishing diplomatic relations with Israel because of Arab youth. The American magazine The Atlantic

recently published a leaked conversation between Mohammed bin Salman and Antony Blinken during a meeting in Riyadh in January this year. In the conversation, he said, "Do I personally care about the Palestinian issue? I don't, but my people do, so I have to make sure the kingdom

doesn't fall into chaos." Notably, the crown prince has not denied this leaked conversation. As October 7 approaches, marking the one-year anniversary of Israeli aggression, various sources suggest that this day will prove to be another surprise for Israel.