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News of the day with Nasser Kandil

Netanyahu Corrects His New Defense Minister: The Goal Is to Deter, Not Disarm, Hezbollah

A U.S. Proposal for Agreement: Security Privileges for the Occupying Entity and International Oversight of Airports, Ports, and Borders

The Second Ground Phase Stumbles with Losses as Resistance Strikes Tel Aviv After Haifa

The political editor wrote:

Acknowledging the futility of discussing the future of the resistance has become a fundamental part of the occupying entity's approach to Lebanon. The belief is that a decisive battle over strategic security - which the entity now considers essential for its survival by eliminating the resistance - will have to wait for a future round. This understanding follows the realisation, through the course of the war, that the occupying army's military capabilities are limited, unable to achieve the overwhelming dominance necessary to consider a goal of this magnitude. Notably, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

publicly clarified that the war's objective is merely to push Hezbollah's arms beyond the Litani River, not to disarm the group. This followed comments by Defense Minister Israel Katz, whom Netanyahu appointed, linking an end to the war with Hezbollah's disarmament - a statement that sparked both ridicule and questions about an indefinite conflict.

Netanyahu's comments were a necessary political recalibration as he seeks to leverage negotiations to showcase a partial victory that could justify ending the war without relinquishing the gains established since Resolution 1701. This includes continued occupation of Lebanese territories and violations of its airspace and waters. The goal is to secure legitimacy for these violations by embedding them within any new agreement. Unable to achieve a decisive military victory to boost its negotiating position, the U.S. delivered a proposal via Ambassador Lisa Johnson to Lebanese Speaker Nabih Berri. The proposal, an attempt to soften Netanyahu's demands by attaching a limited timeframe to these violations, was presented as a measure to verify the removal of threats and ensure Hezbollah does not rebuild its strength - a primary goal, according to occupying military officials quoted in the Washington Post. This proposal suggests that international oversight of Beirut's airport, ports, and the Lebanese-Syrian borders is at the core of Washington and Tel Aviv's objectives. To that end, Tel Aviv is exerting military pressure on both Beirut and Damascus to make internationalizing the borders a focal point in negotiations. A

Lebanese source closely involved in the negotiations mentioned that these demands are unacceptable for Lebanon, but to avoid undermining the talks, Lebanese officials have refrained from public opposition, even though they find the new draft impossible to accept.

The negotiating deadlock reflects the faltering of the occupying army's ground operations, whose second phase has shown even less effectiveness than the first, recording more losses. This phase began with a large incursion toward the Ainata-Aytarun-Bint Jbeil triangle, which resulted in dozens of casualties, with the occupying army acknowledging seven fatalities. The airstrikes, targeting civilians and healthcare facilities with notable brutality, have failed to impose terms on Lebanon. Meanwhile, the resistance has marked substantial field achievements, while its strikes into the entity's depth have set a steady rhythm with impactful operations beyond Haifa and deep into Tel Aviv, targeting sensitive military sites, including the main military intelligence headquarters.