

## A Hezbollah Coup Attempt This Summer?

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Walid Phares checks in today with the latest on the possibility of a surge in the violence in Lebanon over the coming weeks, including possible plans by Hezbollah to overthrow the Lebanese government.

Yesterday, MEMRI issued a report entitled "Possible eruption of violent crisis in Lebanon after July 15." The report either cites or quotes previous reports published by Lebanese and Arab media, both pro and anti-Syro-Iranian.

Following are my thoughts on the points raised:

The Syro-Iranian plan to crush Lebanon is not new. It has been incrementally developing since the summer of 2005. The plan moved forward inch-by-inch - assassinations, intimidations, so-called dialogue, urban intifada in Beirut, intelligence activities, war with Israel, propaganda, fighting with Fatah al Islam, etc. - so that by early summer 2007, the gradual crush would be set to begin.

The Lebanese cabinet of Fuad Seniora is aware of this possibility, but it lost multiple opportunities, early on, to bring in the United Nations and a multinational presence on the Syrian-Lebanese borders and in the major cities. The Syro-Iranian axis took advantage of this to reinforce its own forces within Lebanon.

The "axis" believes that the United States and its allies will be less-and-less capable of intervening by early 2008, hence during the summer-fall 2007 period we may see moves to gain more territory in Lebanon.

The main issue now is the presidency of the republic. Elections are currently slated to take place in September. But current, pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud will try to postpone the elections as long as he can. The March 14 movement (opposed to the Syrian regime) will try to vote for its candidate "not yet selected" by late October/early November. The new president won't be recognized by Hezbollah and its allies.

Hezbollah and its allies will form a government of their own and take control of large parts of Lebanon. This plan is two years old. It is being publicized only now by both parties in the propaganda-warfare realm.

There is a possibility that the "axis" may attempt to break down the Seniora government during the summer (July-September) through ground action, and also by initiating the formation of another cabinet.

Al Mustaqbal, the pro-Hariri daily is publishing reports about a potential coup d'etat by Hezbollah as a "preemptive strike." The information about Iran-Hezbollah plans for a coup, were made available as early as 2006 by the Lebanese international lobby (also known as the World Council of the Cedars Revolution). The March 14 coalition chose to release this information now, as the other side is also leaking it in an attempt to intimidate the Seniora cabinet. Hence, as both sides are leaking it simultaneously, it has been picked up by international monitors of the various media, including MEMRI. In short, the plan of a coup d'etat by Hezbollah, and backed by Iran and Syria is two years old, but it is surfacing now as the crush moment draws dramatically closer.

Read the MEMRI report [here](#).