

The New Commander of the Hezbollah's 133 Unit?



Haj Khalil Harb

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Is Hajj Khalil Harb the new commander of Hezbollah's Unit 133?
What is his connection to the crime families in southern Lebanon?

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In the last several months, Hajj Khalil was appointed by Hezbollah to assist Hezbollah's Unit 133, and it is possible that he was even appointed to be its commander.



Lately, the IDF published a picture of Hajj Khalil Harb, the mythical commander of the Unit 1800 ("Lebanon-Palestine Operations") that was dismantled over a decade ago and was responsible for Palestinian terror attacks on Israel. It was stated that Harb was involved in the weapons and drugs smugglings from southern Lebanon into Israel. Several media outlets published that Harb's status in Hezbollah was tarnished and as a result he was forced to involve himself with weapons and drugs smuggling in southern Lebanon. The opposite is true in our assessment. Hajj Khalil Harb was already "called back to duty" by the Hezbollah leadership several months ago. Perhaps Hezbollah was dissatisfied with the Units 133's current performance (Unit 133 was established instead of Unit 1800) after its failure to establish terror infrastructures against Israel. In light of this, Harb was appointed by Hezbollah to assist Unit 133 and might have even been appointed as its commander.

Harb's primary objective today is to rehabilitate and strengthen Hezbollah's collaborators' and assistants' terror infrastructure inside Israeli territory. Among other methods, he is trying to do this by rehabilitating the weapons and drugs smuggling infrastructure on the border with Israel, in cooperation with the crime families in southern Lebanon, which he has known well since his days as commander of Hezbollah's Unit 1800.

Harb established and led Hezbollah's Unit 1800 in the 1990s. The unit was named the "Lebanon-Palestine Operations" Unit, and its objective was the planning and execution of terror attacks by collaborators in Israeli territory, the Gaza Strip, and Judea and Samaria. Another one of its objectives was to support Palestinian terror organizations inside and outside Lebanon, and recruit and train Palestinians to carry out terror attacks against Israel. A prominent example for this is the terror attack carried out by two Palestinians, who were recruited and directed by the Unit 1800 near Kibbutz Matzuva in March 2002, in which there were 6 Israeli casualties. The unit also established terror infrastructures in Jordan and in Egypt.

To achieve its objective of recruiting collaborators and executing terror attacks in Israeli territory, Unit 1800 closely collaborated with the crime families in southern Lebanon that were involved in the weapons and drugs smugglings into Israel (see Appendix).

As a result of a change in organization in Hezbollah's operational array in the years after the Second Lebanon War in 2006, the Unit 1800 was dismantled and replaced by the Unit 133, whose jurisdiction was expanded to Turkey and Eastern Europe. Muhammad Ataya, who was a senior member of the Unit 1800 who served under Harb, commanded 133 unit.

Hajj Khalil Harb (who is 62 today), acquired a large amount of experience and knowledge of the operational area on Lebanon's border with Israel and created close ties with the crime families of southern Lebanon. Harb's knowledge, experience and connections were all factors in the decision to appoint him several months ago to assist Unit 133 and might have even been appointed as its commander.

The crime families in southern Lebanon keep close touch with Hezbollah and assist it as needed. Most of the smuggling operations, which serve Hezbollah as a platform of terrorism, are done with its knowledge and frequently even at its behest.

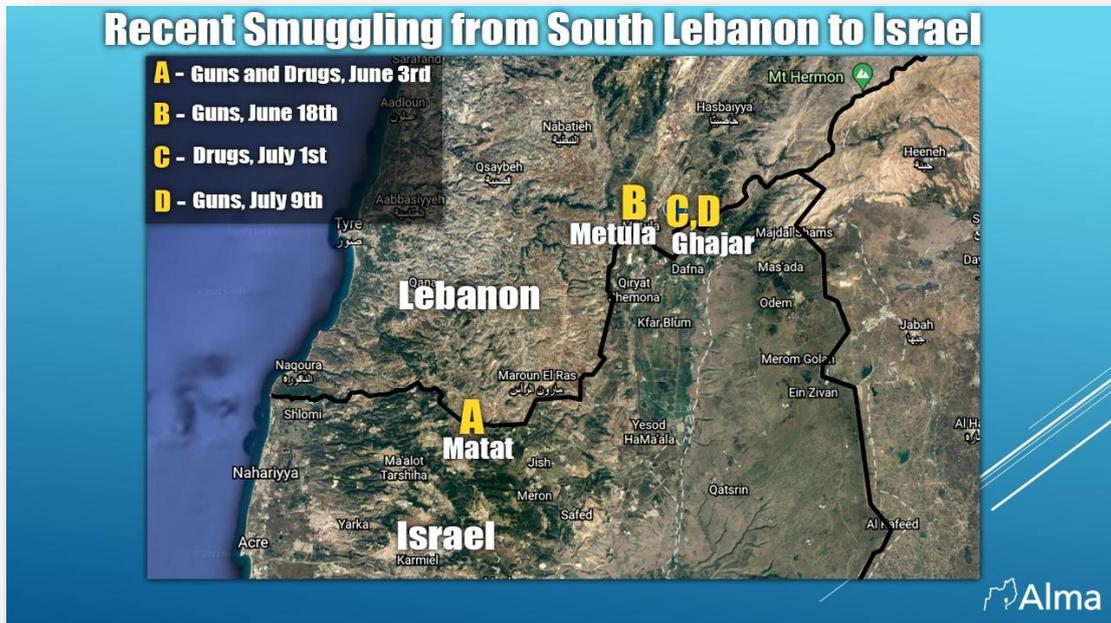
The weapons and drugs smugglings, and possibly also the crossings of Sudani workers from Lebanon into Israel – provide continuous intelligence for Hezbollah of the area and of the IDF's methods of response and operation. Hezbollah analyzes the outcomes of these smugglings to learn from them and prepare for possible future tactical military operations against Israel in the border area, in the form of terror attacks.

In addition, Hezbollah is attempting to transport weapons and drugs (an alternative method of payment to money), via these smugglings, to existing and potential collaborators living in Israeli and Palestinian territory. These collaborators gather and transfer intelligence to Hezbollah, and some are even designated to assist with and even carry out terror attacks. The transportation of the weapons and drugs is based on the connections between the southern-Lebanon crime families and criminal organizations in Israel, which receive the smuggled goods and deliver them to their destination in Israel.

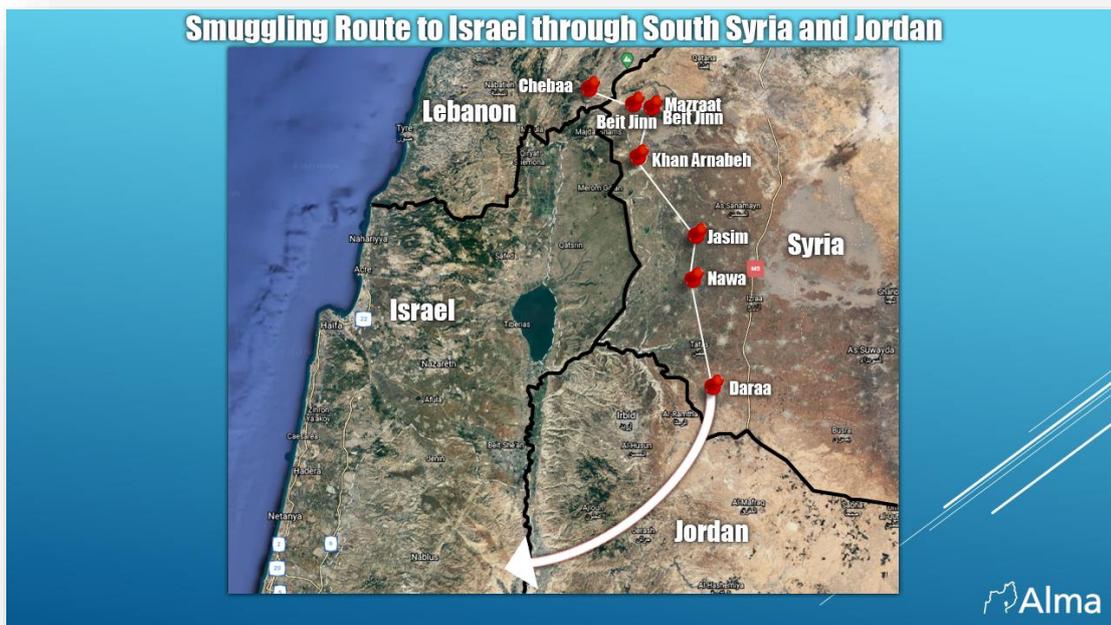
A prominent example for this type of smuggling attempts was the attempt to smuggle 43 Glock handguns on July 9th, near the village Ghajar. Half of the village is in Israeli territory and the other half in Lebanese territory, but in practice the entire village has been under Israeli authority since 2006.



In the image: the Glock 19 shipment from the foiled smuggling attempt on July 9th, 2021.



According to a ground analysis we did, there is another potential smuggling route into Israel - the “Jordanian” route, which begins in the village Sheeba in southern Lebanon, crosses over to southern Syria via the Shebaa valley, then to the city of Daraa, from there to northern Jordan and then westward to the border with Israel. Smuggling is easier via this route because the borders between the different countries are less secure.



Appendix – Prominent Crime Families in Southern Lebanon:**A. The Bero Family – Kfar Kila**

Kaid Muhammad Hassin Bero, a prominent member of the family, is apparently a resident of Beirut today. In October 2000 he was involved in the kidnapping of Israeli citizen Elchanan Tenenbaum. Kaid's father, Mohammad, considered the biggest drug dealer in the area, died in an Israeli prison in 2003 at the age of 70.

Throughout all his years of work, Kaid has been taking advantage of his drug dealing platform to try to recruit collaborators in Israel for Hezbollah. Those he recruited include Mohammad and Ahmed Shimali from the village Ghajar and Nissim Nazar from the city of Holon.

B. The Nhara Family – Ebel El Saqi:

Kamil Sa'id Nhara is the family's prominent member and has a rich history in drug-dealing. In 2002, Ramzi Nhara, his brother and a known drug dealer and Hezbollah collaborator, was killed near his village, Ebel El Saqi, by an explosive charge that was placed on his car. Israel is suspected to be the perpetrator of this killing. After Ramzi's death, Kamil supported Hezbollah and said that "we should continue resisting Israel, it is an honor to be on the front with Israel."

Kamil was involved in the operating of an IDF officer, Lieutenant Colonel Omar al-Heib, who was convicted in 2006 of spying for Hezbollah and drug trafficking.

Kamil, who is a former member of the Ebel El Saqi council, owns an importing and exporting company, named "Kamil Nhara General Trading, Import and Export Est", which he established in Nabatieh in 1991, that also provides shipping and handling services.

C. The Asaaf family - Ramish:

Assaf Elias Najib Asaaf is the family's prominent member and was mentioned in 2014 as one of Hezbollah's contacts of Israeli-Arab drug dealers that were involved in the Hezbollah-led planning of a terrorist operation (the placing of an explosive charge).

According to a lone indication from 2015, Asaaf served time in a Lebanese prison for dealing drugs, but with the help of Hezbollah, he was released early, on the grounds that he "helped recruit collaborators from the IDF using his drug dealing business..."

D. The Sheet Family – Kfar Kila

Hatem Rada Sheet, 52, is the family's prominent member and was also mentioned in 2014 as one of Hezbollah's contacts of Israeli-Arab drug dealers that were involved in the Hezbollah-led planning of a terrorist operation. He apparently owns a café in Kfar Kila.

The Sheet family is known for its connections with Hezbollah. Mussah Sheet, the head of the Kfar Kila Council, denied the claims that Hezbollah uses its civilian population as a human shield. Other family members, such as Ahmed Sheet and Mohammad Sheet, are supported by Hezbollah in their runs for local election campaigns, and the family produced military operatives that were even killed in the civil war in Syria, such as Basaam Sheet who was killed in Syria in 2015.

E. The Nimr Family – Qlayaa

George Milad Abd Nimr, a.k.a. "Abu Ali", is the family's prominent member. In August 2012 he supplied merchandise to smugglers on the Israeli side of the Lebanese border, including Saed Kaamuz, an Israeli citizen that fled to Lebanon. It was mentioned that in several of these smugglings the Israeli smugglers had no idea that part of the merchandise contains explosives and other weapons. He was also mentioned in 2014 as one of Hezbollah's contacts of Israeli-Arab drug dealers that were involved in the Hezbollah-led planning of a terrorist operation. George attempted to build a weapons-smuggling network into Israel using SMS messages. The weapons field is well known by Nimr. He has a trade company named "جورج نمر للتجارة العامة والاستيراد والتصدير" that is licensed (since 2003) to trade hunting weapons and its respective ammunition. The address of the company is: جديدة مرجعيون - الشارع العام - العقار رقم 1183 - ملك الرهينة الأنطونية - قضاء مرجعيون - محافظة النبطية.