



Pagers, beds and phones: Latest Lebanon attack in Israel's history of bold covert ops

Israel has a long and controversial history of covert killings.

By [David Brennan](#) / October 2, 2024

LONDON -- The unassuming pager took its place in the annals of Israeli covert operations history in September, when thousands of the credit card-sized devices served as tiny Trojan horses for explosive charges as they were held by likely Hezbollah operatives.

The pager detonations in Lebanon and Syria on Sept. 17 were followed by the explosion -- around 24 hours later -- of walkie-talkies, used by Hezbollah as a communications network after its beepers were compromised.

[...]

Orna Mizrahi of the Institute for National Security Studies think tank in Israel told ABC News that the communication devices operations stand out due to "the amount of people that were eliminated."

"We don't call it assassination; we call it elimination," said Mizrahi, who previously served in the Israel Defense Forces' Military Intelligence Research Division and in the prime minister's office as deputy national security adviser for foreign policy.

The attacks represent a world-first, Mizrahi said. "It's a real invention."

As to the criticism of the mass detonation of the devices, Mizrahi responded: "The terrorists are the only ones that used them. So, it is like a bullet in the hand of your enemy. But it wasn't a bullet. It was something that was exploding in their hands."

[...]

Mizrahi said those conducting such "elimination" operations usually do so based on one or more of three criteria. The target might be a "very important terrorist" with significant influence and capabilities, she said.

The target may be a long-standing one, with plans put in place and those executing them waiting for the right moment to strike, Mizrahi added.

Or, the eventual target may be identified as part of an imminent attack "and you want to intercept it and to stop it," she added.

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