

Report: Iran trained more than 30,000 Hezbollah fighters

Published: Oct. 9, 2013 at 6:50 AM

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Oct. 9 (UPI) --

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Oct. 9 (UPI) -- Iran's Revolutionary Guards have trained more than 30,000 Hezbollah fighters in Iran and Lebanon since the 1980s, Lebanese officials said.

Citing Lebanese sources, a report in the Saudi newspaper al-Watan Wednesday said Hezbollah fighters underwent "intensive training" in military camps set up in Lebanon with the aim of protecting Iranian interests in the region under the pretext of fighting Israel.

Hezbollah fighters were trained in guerrilla warfare, and also the use of "sophisticated" weapons, the report said.

One of the main military bases set up by Iran's Revolutionary Guards is in Baalbeck in Lebanon and is known as the Sheik Abdullah barracks, the report said. Fighters started training there and finished in Iran.

Some of the Iranian-trained Hezbollah fighters who belong to elite units were deployed to Syria to repel efforts to remove President Bashar Assad from power, the report said.

Earlier this week, Lebanese Member of Parliament Khaled Daher told the newspaper Iran's Revolutionary Guards constructed underground bunkers and storerooms in Lebanon to house long-range missiles capable of carrying chemical warheads that Hezbollah received from Syria.

© 2013 United Press International, Inc. All Rights Reserved.