Israel tells UN more Hezbollah tunnels in Lebanon: report

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<https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/middle-east/194152-190128-israel-tells-un-more-hezbollah-tunnels-in-lebanon-report>

Israel has notified the United Nations about “underground infrastructure” dug by Hezbollah in Lebanon, including tunnels that have not yet crossed the border into Israeli territory, Times of Israel reported on Monday.

In December last year, the Israeli army launched “Operation Northern Shield” to identify and destroy a number of cross-border tunnels dug by Hezbollah, resulting in the destruction of six tunnels.

Earlier this month, the army[concluded its operation](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/193056-190113-idf-announces-northern-operation-concluding-after-final-hezbollah-tunnel-located), saying there were no more tunnels crossing into Israeli territory.

An Israeli official told Times of Israel that this “underground infrastructure” on the Lebanese side of the border is known to Israel, thus confirming a similar statement from the army on January 13.

“The IDF is monitoring and is in possession of a number of sites where Hezbollah is digging underground infrastructure that has yet to cross into Israeli territory,” the army said at the time.

The report comes after Hezbollah’s leader Hassan Nasrallah traded barbs with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the weekend, [ridiculing the Israeli army’s efforts](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/middle-east/194031-190126-hezbollah-chief-warns-israel-against-continuing-strikes-in-syria) to destroy the cross-border tunnels.

"The Israelis discovered a number of tunnels after many years, and it's not a surprise, the surprise is that it took them so long to find them," the 60-year old leader said on Saturday.

"Yes, there are tunnels in southern Lebanon," Nasrallah said, in his first comments on the issue since Israel announced the operation on December 4.

"One of the tunnels discovered in recent weeks is 13 or 14 years" old, said a smiling Nasrallah.

The Israeli operation brought to light the "failure" of the country's intelligence services, he added. "Do you think we would conquer the Galilee with only four tunnels?" he asked.

Addressing Netanyahu directly, Nasrallah said: "don't make an error of judgement and don't lead the region towards war or a major clash."

Netanyahu[responded on Sunday to Nasrallah’s threats](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/194062-190127-netanyahu-says-hezbollah-embarrassed-by-israel-s-successful-tunnel-operation)with his own warning while reasserting that Israel’s foiling of the secret cross-border tunnels dealt a harsh blow to the terror group.

"Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah yesterday broke his silence. He is very embarrassed because of our tremendous success in Operation Northern Shield," Netanyahu told his cabinet during the weekly Sunday meeting.

“Nasrallah has good reasons not to want to feel our lethal might," he added starkly.

“His people invested a great deal of effort into digging them [the tunnels], and within three weeks we completely deprived him of his weaponry,” the Israeli premier boasted.

Meanwhile, former IDF chief of staff Gadi Eisenkot backed up Netanyahu's statement, saying Nasrallah's claims were "baseless".

“We assessed that there was a project like this (cross-border tunnels), and beginning in 2014 we had knowledge of the program. At the time that we decided to act. And in six weeks, we destroyed all the attack tunnels into northern Israel. (Nasrallah’s) claim that there are things we don’t know about is baseless. We have clear knowledge that this project was foiled," Eisenkot said at an event at Tel Aviv’s Institute for National Security Studies.