

Sunday, 11 November 2012

Two killed in Lebanon clashes between Hezbollah and Salafi sheikh supporters



Two Lebanese were killed in the southern city of Sidon on Sunday in a gunbattle between supporters of the Shiite movement Hezbollah and hardline Sunni cleric Ahmed al-Assir, a security official said. "Two people were killed and seven injured in clashes between supporters of Salafi Sheikh Ahmed al-Assir and Hezbollah near a Palestinian refugee camp in Sidon. One of the injured was a representative for Hezbollah for the area," the source told AFP on condition of anonymity. According to the Daily Star Lebanon, sheikh Assir called for the removal of Hezbollah banners from Sidon and gave Sunday as a deadline. Shiites were preparing banners to commemorate the martyrdom of Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet, on November 24. The Lebanese army on Sunday deployed its armored vehicles after Assir urged his followers via the social media networks, Facebook and Twitter, to rally in the southern town, the newspaper added. A witness, Abu Ali Dirani, told the newspaper that Assir's supporters took on the street carrying weapons. Assir repeatedly said that he was not against Shiites, but "against Hezbollah because it supports the Syrian regime and because it killed Brig. Gen. Wissam al-Hasan." Hassan, who uncovered an alleged Syrian bomb plot inside Lebanon in August, died in a car bomb blast that killed seven other people and wounded 80 in Beirut's Ashrafiyeh district late October. The Hezbollah-Iran-Syria alliance was blamed for Hassan's assassination.