

## Israel steps up armed forces readiness

by UPI

JERUSALEM -- Israel's military and intelligence forces are prepared for a quick response to a possible Hezbollah attack, military sources said Monday. Defense Minister Ehud Barak said he placed the forces on heightened guard in light of indications that Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah intends to make good his threat of "open war" against Israel, reported DEBKAFfile.com, a military intelligence Web site based in Jerusalem. Barak's directives, issued Monday, indicate he changed his mind about the possibility of a Hezbollah attack in retaliation for the Feb. 12 death of terrorist Imad Mughniyeh. Increased troop and weapons movement prompted the change, sources told DEBKAFfile.com. Barak earlier said he thought any attack would occur after the Arab League summit at the end of March.

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