

Fighting erupts outside Beirut

by UPI

BEIRUT, Lebanon -- Fighting broke out Sunday east of Beirut between supporters of the Lebanese government and followers of the militant group Hezbollah, officials say. The fighting in the Shouf and Aley districts in the mountains overlooking Beirut followed clashes in the northern city of Tripoli that left at least two people dead and five wounded, The New York Times reported. In Beirut, where there had been heavy fighting between Sunnis and Shiites since Wednesday, there was calm Sunday after the military demanded a halt on attacks in Beirut, officials said. A large portion of opposition fighters backed off by early Sunday, with only small Amal movement groups remaining to monitor the streets, Alalam Satellite TV reported. Intense clashes continued in northern Lebanon Sunday between followers of the Western-backed government and the Alawite sect, an official said. The official said thousands of people had left the area and several were injured. "About 7,000 people have fled from Bab al-Tebbaneh, which marks the front lines, because of the battles," he said.

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