

Army, militants, clash in Lebanon

by UPI

TRIPOLI, Lebanon - About 40 people were reported dead Sunday when government troops exchanged fierce gunfire with militants in northern Lebanon.

The gun battles occurred in Tripoli and at an adjacent Palestinian refugee camp, Nahr al-Bared, Alalam Satellite TV reported.

The fighting between army troops surrounding Nahr al-Bared and fighters from the Fatah al-Islam group began after a gun battle in a neighborhood in Tripoli.

Security officials said 22 soldiers and 17 militants were killed, Voice of America reported.

The militants are members of Fatah al-Islam, which is linked to al-Qaida. Fatah al-Islam is an offshoot of the Fatah uprising that split from the mainstream Fatah faction in the early 1980s, Alalam reported.

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