

Fighting resumes in Lebanon

by UPI

TRIPOLI, Lebanon - Fighting resumed Thursday between Lebanese troops and an extremist group at a refugee camp near Tripoli.

The BBC reported that sporadic gunfire was exchanged Thursday and that the Lebanese navy had sunk two inflatable boats in which members of Fatah al-Islam had tried to escape the seaside Palestinian refugee camp.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said Thursday the government was determined to beat back the Fatah al-Islam fighters.

"We will put an end to the terrorist phenomenon without hesitation," Siniora said, the BBC reported. "We will not surrender to the terrorists."

Fatah al-Islam has denied that it is part of the al-Qaida terror network. The group has been fighting with the Lebanese army since Sunday.

Amnesty International issued a statement Wednesday urging the Lebanese army to stop using tanks and heavy artillery against the refugee camp where the militant group is holed up. The human rights group said the use of heavy equipment increases civilian casualties.

Thousands of refugees used a cease-fire on Wednesday to flee the camp, but thousands remained inside with no power or water. At least 50 militants and soldiers have died in the fighting. The civilian casualties were unknown.

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