# Residents of Alma al-Shaab Flee as Israeli-Hezbollah Conflict Intensifies



In the scenic Lebanese village of Alma al-Shaab, close to 800 residents have fled due to sustained cross-border fighting between Israeli forces and Hezbollah since October last year. The village sits just over a kilometer from the Israeli border and has been significantly impacted by the ongoing conflict.

Milad Eid, a local resident, recounted incidents of homes being hit by Israeli missiles, expressing his confusion over why his village is being targeted. Alma al-Shaab, with a population that swells to around 1,500 in the summer, now hosts only about 100 individuals, with no children remaining.

The conflict escalated a day after Hamas attacked Israel on October 8, 2023. Hezbollah and allied factions fired rockets into disputed areas along the border, prompting Israeli retaliation with drone strikes. This has led to a sharp increase in the intensity of attacks from both sides. Reports indicate that, by May, Alma al-Shaab had been hit 188 times by Israeli forces. The Israeli army claims its targets are Hezbollah fighters and infrastructure, a notion contested by some Lebanese officials who accuse Israel of conducting scorched earth tactics.

Deputy Mayor William Haddad detailed the extensive damage: 10 houses destroyed, 120 damaged, and significant agricultural and forest land burned. The local main water tank was also hit. Haddad noted that the current conflict is protracted, differing from the relatively shorter 2006 war.

Maria Shaya, a 31-year-old with roots in the village, described her childhood marked by constant conflict. She left at 18 for Beirut but remains emotionally tied to Alma al-Shaab, despite the continuous violence that prevents her from visiting her family.

Since the renewed hostilities, Israel claims to have launched over 5,300 attacks in Lebanon, with Hezbollah and allied groups retaliating around 1,200 times. UN figures from the end of May state that at least 88 Lebanese civilians have been killed, with more than 93,000 displaced. In Israel, reports indicate 10 civilian deaths and around 60,000 displaced.

UN officials have warned that the risk of miscalculation could trigger a broader conflict between Hezbollah and the Israeli military. Diplomatic efforts by the United States and France are ongoing to negotiate a cessation of hostilities, contingent on an end to Israel's offensive in Gaza.