



■ **1975:** Civil war erupts. Lebanese **Maronite Christian** and **Phalangist** militias fight **Shia, Sunni** and **Druze** militias and **Palestinian Liberation Organization**. Maronites are backed by Israel and Syria

■ **1978:** Syrian forces enter Lebanon as peacekeepers



■ **1982:** Israel invades Lebanon to oust **PLO** leadership. Anti-Israeli resistance groups

coalesce into **Hezbollah** (*Party of God*) under leadership of **Sheikh Abbas al-Musawi** (above). 22-year-old **Sayed Hassan Nasrallah** joins newly-founded group

■ **Sep 14:** Israeli ally, Lebanese President **Bachir Gemayel**, assassinated



■ **Sep 16:** Lebanese **Maronite Christian** militias – supporters of Gemayel – attack **Sabra** and **Shatila** refugee camps under eyes of Israeli army. Death toll estimated at 700-3,500

Hezbollah – rise of a state within a state

After Israel pulled out of southern Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah's secretary-general **Sayed Hassan Nasrallah** moved into politics and raised hopes he planned to abandon guerrilla activities. But the group – backed by Syria and Iran – quietly built up its military strength to become one of the most sophisticated militia forces in the world



■ **Apr 1983:** Hezbollah pioneers use of suicide truck bombs with attack on U.S. Embassy in Beirut – 63 people killed

■ **Oct:** Suicide truck bomb kills 241 U.S. Marine-peacekeepers at their Beirut barracks

■ **Feb 1984:** U.S. troops withdraw from Beirut

■ **1985-1991:** Hezbollah turns to hostage-taking. 62 Western civilians including 48 Americans and three Britons kidnapped. Seven hostages murdered.



39 American hostages are from hijacked **TWA 847**. U.S. journalist **Terry Anderson** (1) and academic **Thomas Sutherland** (2) are held for six years – British church envoy **Terry Waite** (3) is freed after almost five



■ **1990:** Civil war ends with **Taif Agreement** which calls for disbanding of all militias – Hezbollah is only group to retain its weapons



■ **1992:** Nasrallah takes over Hezbollah leadership

following assassination of al-Musawi by Israel. He calls for Hezbollah to participate in elections for first time – party wins 12 seats

■ **1993:** Israel launches major attack on southern Lebanon – **Operation Accountability** – to counter Hezbollah resistance

■ **1994:** Hezbollah bombs Jewish community centre in Argentina, killing 95 people

■ **1996:** Israel mounts **Grapes of Wrath**, military blitz against Hezbollah

■ **1997:** Nasrallah's son killed in fighting with Israelis

■ **2000:** Israeli Prime Minister **Ariel Sharon** pulls troops out of Lebanon. Hezbollah takes credit for withdrawal. Nasrallah begins covert military buildup – with weapons from Syria and Iran – and builds bunkers and tunnels along Israel-Lebanon border



■ **2004:** Israel's Sharon and Hezbollah conduct prisoner swap. 420 Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners are exchanged for Israeli hostage and bodies of three soldiers

■ **2005:** Syrian troops leave Lebanon in line with UN Security Council resolution. Hezbollah turns down UN demand that it be disarmed and continues to secretly import Iranian weapons



■ **Rockets and ranges:**
Iran: **Katyusha** Up to 40km
Syria: **Raad** 45km
Arsenal (est.) 10,000

Iran: **Fajr-3** 50km
Iran: **Fajr-5** 70km
Arsenal Up to 120

Iran: **C-802 Noor** 120km
Arsenal Unknown

Iran: **Zelzal-1,-2** 120-200km
Arsenal 11-12

■ **Hezbollah wins 23 of 128 seats in Lebanon's parliament**



■ **July 2006:** Kidnap of two Israeli soldiers triggers massive retaliation. **Israel surprised at ferocity of Hezbollah resistance. Nasrallah (above) threatens to extend rocket attacks**