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Article For Reading –

Rogue state: On Israel's conflict with Hezbollah.

Israel is choosing war over peace, escalation over compromise

First the paggers exploded. Then came the walkie-talkies. And then, Israel launched a massive bombardment campaign targeting Hezbollah, the powerful Iran-backed Lebanese-Shia militant group. As it appears, the pager and walkie-talkie explosions were a part of Israel's coordinated strategy aimed at weakening Hezbollah in their slow-burning war since October 7, 2023. When Israel launched its Gaza invasion after Hamas's attack a year ago, Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel "in **solidarity** with the Palestinians". While both sides exchanged fire, they were **wary** of not letting the tensions spiral into an all-out war. But that caution was abandoned when Israel killed Fuad Shukr, a senior Hezbollah commander, in an air strike on Beirut on July 31. Israel's large-scale air strikes, especially in southern Lebanon, a Hezbollah stronghold, saw the militia group firing hundreds of rockets into Israel. The war in the north has forced about 70,000 Israelis out of their homes.

Earlier this month, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that enabling the displaced residents to return to their homes in the northern Upper Galilee region was one of the objectives of the ongoing war. Then came the pager explosions and the subsequent air strikes.

According to Lebanese authorities, at least 575 people, including women and children, were killed in Israel's air strikes in just two days. In retaliation, Hezbollah fired more projectiles, including a ballistic missile on Wednesday (September 25, 2024) towards Tel Aviv. The conflict is now in an escalatory spiral and what is to be seen is whether Israel would launch a ground invasion. In 1978, Israel invaded Lebanon with the aim of pushing out Palestinian guerrillas north of the Litani river. The operation was unsuccessful. In 1982, its invasion — this time, the goal was to push the PLO out of Lebanon — managed to force the PLO to relocate from Lebanon, but the war led to the creation of Hezbollah. In 2000, after 18 years of Hezbollah's resistance, Israel withdrew, leaving a **buffer** it had carved out on the border in the hands of Hezbollah. In 2006, after a Hezbollah cross-border raid, Israel launched another invasion, but after 30 days of fighting, withdrew as part of a ceasefire agreement with Hezbollah. If the past is any indication, Israel is making another mistake in Lebanon.

A **ceasefire** in Gaza, which has been overwhelmingly demanded by the international community, would have quietened the northern border. Instead, Mr. Netanyahu, whose troops have killed over 40,000 Palestinians in 11 months in Gaza, has chosen to escalate the war with Hezbollah, killing hundreds more and pushing West Asia to the **brink** of an all-out war. This bellicosity, **callousness** and total disregard for international law and norms all bear the hallmarks of a rogue state. A **rogue** state with **impunity**.

Summary –

The passage describes Israel's escalating conflict with Hezbollah, starting with coordinated strikes, including pager and walkie-talkie explosions, followed by massive air strikes. In retaliation, Hezbollah fired rockets and ballistic missiles. The conflict has caused significant casualties, displaced thousands, and heightened tensions, risking an all-out war. It references Israel's previous military invasions of Lebanon and criticizes Prime Minister Netanyahu's approach, claiming it exacerbates the situation and shows disregard for international law.

Vocabulary-

1. Rogue (Noun, Adj.) दुष्ट, विपरीत –

Meaning- (Adj) Something that is unconstitutional or behaves in a way that deviate from the norm.

(Noun)- A person or animal that is dishonest or behaves unpredictably.

Synonyms – Errant, Rebellious, Wayward.

Antonyms – Reliable, Compliant, Conventional.

2. Solidarity (Noun) एकता –

Meaning – Quality or state of being United or working for a common purpose.

Synonyms – Unity, cohesion, Camaraderie.

Antonyms – Discord, Conflict, Isolation.

E.g.- The Workers show solidarity by going on strike together to demand better wages & condition.

3. Wary (Adj) सतर्क, सावधान –

Meaning – Someone or something as being cautious or on guard against potential danger or problems.

Synonyms – Cautious, Vigilant, Suspicious.

Antonyms – Trusting, Reckless, Careless.

E.g.- She was wary of strangers and always kept her distance.

4. Buffer (Noun, Verb) रोधक, प्रतिरोधी

Meaning – Something that provides protection, reduce impact, or act as barrier.

Synonyms – Barrier, Protector, Cushion.

Antonyms – Expose, Agitate, Exacerbate.

E.g.- The soft pad acted as a buffer against the impact.

5. Ceasefire (Noun) युद्धविराम –

Meaning – the act or agreement to stop fighting or hostilities.

Synonyms – Truce, Armistice, Concord.

Antonyms – Violence, Hostilities, Skirmish.

E.g.- The two countries agreed to a ceasefire to allow humanitarian aid to reach civilians affected by the conflict.

6. Brink(Noun) कगार-

Meaning – A critical or pivotal point, often indicating an impending event or situation.

Synonyms – Verge, Threshold, Rim.

Antonyms – Depth, Interior, Centre.

E g.- After months of tension, the two countries found themselves on the brink of War.

7. Impunity (Noun) दंडमुक्ति –

Meaning – The state of being exempt from punishment or consequences.

Synonyms – Exemption, Immunity, License.

Antonyms – Punishment, Penalty, Liability.

E.g.- The corrupt officials acted with impunity.

8. Callousness (Noun) निर्ममता –

Meaning – The quality of being emotionally insensitive or indifferent to the suffering or feelings of others.

Synonyms – Insensitivity, Brutality, Indifference.

Antonyms – Sensitivity, Compassion, Empathy.

E.g.- The callousness of the Company's management towards their employees concerned led to widespread dissatisfaction.