

# Lebanon is rocked again by exploding devices as Israel declares a 'new phase' of war

BEIRUT (AP) — Walkie-talkies and solar equipment exploded in Beirut and other parts of Lebanon on Wednesday in an apparent second wave of attacks targeting devices a day after pagers used by Hezbollah blew up, state media and officials for the militant group said. At least 20 people were killed and more than 450 wounded in the second wave, the Health Ministry said.

The attacks — which were widely believed to be carried out by Israel targeting Hezbollah but have also killed civilians — have hiked fears that the two sides' simmering conflict could escalate into all-out war.

Speaking to Israeli troops on Wednesday, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said, "We are at the start of a new phase in the war — it requires courage, determination and perseverance." He made no mention of the exploding devices but praised the work of Israel's army and security agencies, saying "the results are very impressive."

In Wednesday's attacks, several blasts were heard at a funeral in Beirut for three Hezbollah members and a child killed by exploding pagers the day before, according to Associated Press journalists at the scene. An AP photographer in the southern coastal city of Sidon saw a car and a mobile phone shop damaged after devices exploded inside of them. A girl was hurt in the south when a home solar energy system blew up, the state news agency reported.

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