

Hezbollah foiled US coup bid?

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DAMASCUS: Syrian official daily *Al-Baath* on Sunday said Hezbollah had foiled a US-planned coup to seize control of Lebanon during the gunbattles which rocked the country.

"The Americans launched a pre-emptive strike against opposition nationalist forces, starting with the (Hezbollah) resistance, and attempted a Washington-planned coup but were taken aback by the opposition, which restored order in Lebanon," the paper said.

The Lebanese opposition aimed to "remove foreign interference and stop the plots to transform Lebanon... into an Israeli protectorate and new focal point of US links in the region," the paper added.

"The recent events in Lebanon showed that the coup (attempt) carried out by the Americans and their men in Lebanon backfired," *Al-Baath* added. Lebanese troops patrolled Beirut on Sunday after Hezbollah fighters pulled back from areas they had seized.