

*Thousands flee Gaza's Rafah
amid constant and devastating
Israeli attacks*

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Rafah, February 13 (RHC)-- Thousands of Palestinians are fleeing Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah after Israeli forces attacked the area where at least 1.4 million internally displaced people have been sheltering.

Palestinian health authorities said at least 67 people were killed in overnight attacks on Monday after Israeli strikes hit 14 houses and three mosques.

Despite calls to refrain, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been talking about staging a land assault on Rafah. With the threat of more attacks looming, many Palestinians who initially fled south

towards the city for safety and now fleeing back to the central region.

Gaza's Rafah, about 64sq km (25sq miles) in size, is massively overcrowded since hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians fled there after the Israeli army designated it a so-called "safe zone" in its ongoing war.

More than half the population of Gaza has now crowded into the tiny area to escape Israeli bombardment, which has flattened much of the rest of the enclave. With an influx of desperate people and a lack of clean water, food, medicine and other basic supplies, disease is also flourishing.

Rawaa Abu Dayya, who has been displaced with her family seven times since Israel's war began on October 7, is among those who recently fled Rafah. "We were living in unbelievable fear," she told Al Jazeera. The family hails from Beit Lahiya in Gaza's north, and are now setting up a tent in Deir el-Balah in central Gaza.

"There is no place that is safe. But at least we feel like there is relative safety in Deir el-Balah at the moment," she said. "My biggest fear is losing a member of my family, someone I love and who I care about deeply."

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