Israel launches more air raids on Gaza
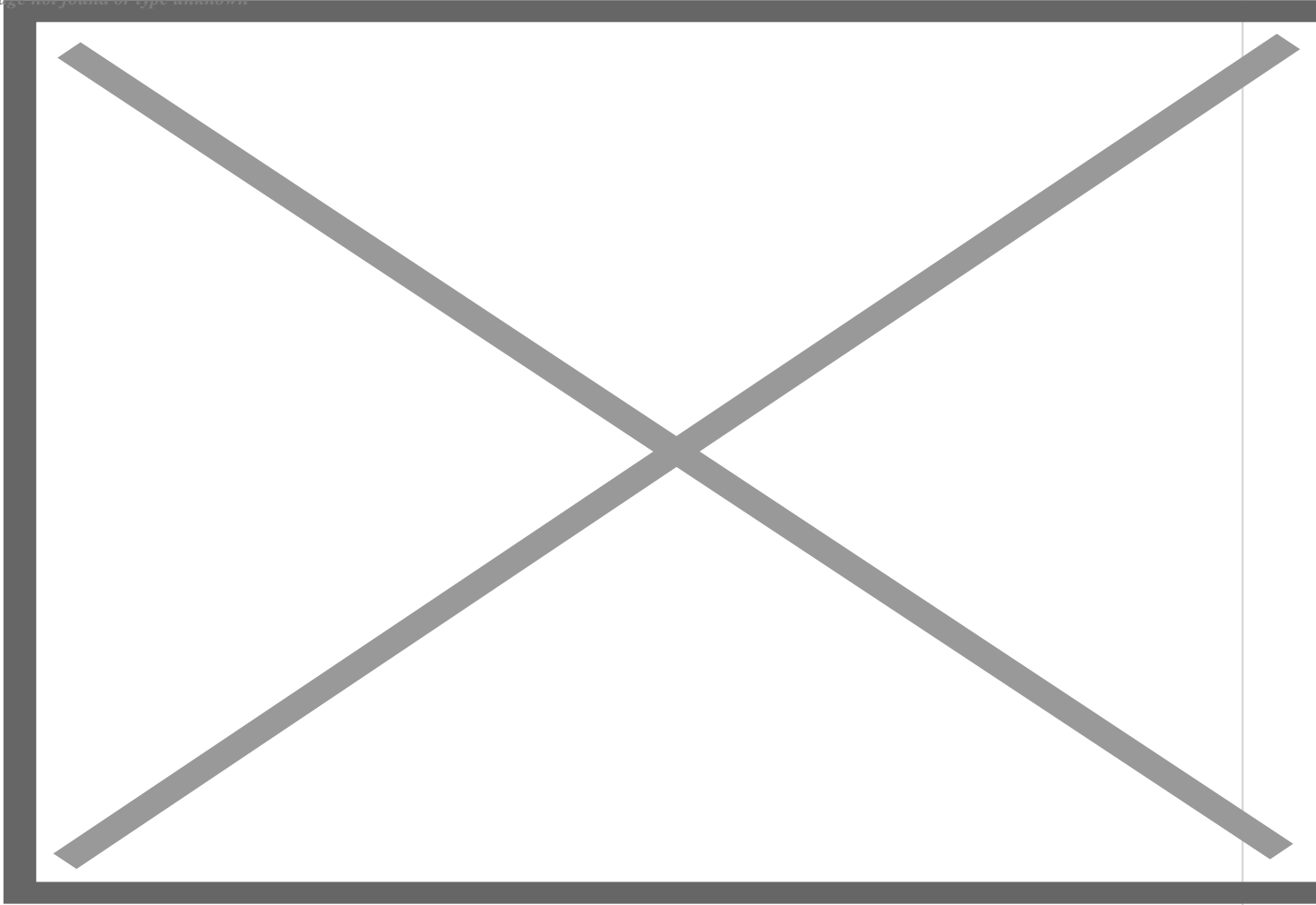

Fire and smoke rise above buildings in Gaza City as Israel launches air raids on the Palestinian enclave early on February 2, 2023 [Ali Jadallah/Anadolu]

Gaza City, February 2 (RHC)-- The Israeli military has launched air raids on the besieged Gaza Strip, as fears over escalating violence continue in the region. The attacks early on Thursday come in the wake of a deadly Israeli raid in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin last week. Ten Palestinians were killed as a result of the raid, which was followed by Palestinian attacks targeting Israelis over the weekend, including

a shooting in occupied East Jerusalem in which seven Israelis were killed.

The unrest has also triggered exchanges of fire between Israeli forces and Palestinian groups in Gaza. This included rockets fired from the blockaded strip on Wednesday night, which were claimed by the Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas.

The Israeli military said its air raids hit rocket and weapon production sites used by Hamas, the group that governs Gaza.

"Our Al-Qassam Brigades heroically confront the occupation's aggression and its bombing of the Strip," said Qassem. They added that the rocket fire was a response to the raids in the occupied West Bank, and the treatment of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

After the raids, new rounds of rockets fired from Gaza and explosions that shook buildings and lit up the night sky over Gaza.

Ahmed Abu Jarad, a father-of-three living in the Al-Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza, described the Israeli bombardment as a "nightmare."

"Every second there was bombing very close to my house," Abu Jarad told Al Jazeera. "We cannot sleep due to the bombs. The sound of the explosions is very strong, shaking the whole place. This is the second time in just one week. It has become unbearable."

The armed unit of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine said it had launched rocket salvos at Israel early on Thursday in response to the air raids and the "systematic aggression" against Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

In a tweet sent after Wednesday's rocket launch, Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who oversees prisons, said he would push ahead with plans to toughen conditions for Palestinian prisoners. "The rocket fire from Gaza will not stop me from continuing efforts to cancel summer camp conditions for murderous terrorists," he said, adding that he had asked the security cabinet to convene.

Israel's treatment of Palestinian prisoners has been routinely criticised by human rights organisations, with hundreds held without charge in what Israel calls "administrative detention."

Israel has been carrying out near-daily raids in the West Bank for a year. A new far-right Israeli government came into power at the end of last year, and January has been a particularly bloody month for Palestinians, in which 35 people, both fighters and civilians, were killed. Israeli forces have killed at least 200 Palestinians in the past year.

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