

Israel issues new evacuation orders as so-called safe areas of Gaza come under attack

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Gaza City, August 8 (RHC)-- The Israeli military has issued new evacuation orders for Palestinians in northern Gaza, as Gaza City braces for a possible ground operation. On Wednesday, army spokesperson Avichay Adraee posted the evacuation orders for several districts in Beit Hanoon and Beit Lahiya, areas that were among the most affected by Israel's ground invasion at the onset of the war 10 months ago.

In a message sent to Palestinian residents, he said that Hamas and other groups were "firing rockets from your area" towards Israel and that the military "will act forcefully and immediately against them." "For

your own safety, evacuate immediately to the known shelters in the centre of Gaza City,” the army spokesman said.

Israel's Channel 12 reported that the army was preparing for a “large-scale” ground operation in Gaza City, where an Israeli air raid on a house killed three Palestinians on Wednesday, according to medical sources.

Al Jazeera correspondents reported at least two other people were killed in air raids in the city. One of the victims was found in Gaza City's Daraj neighbourhood while another was recovered in the Zeitoun area.

Overnight Israeli attacks also destroyed two homes and tents sheltering displaced people in central Gaza's Deir el-Balah, killing three people and wounding 10. Palestinians who had moved to the area after Israeli forces said it was a designated “safe zone”, are now forced to pick up their lives again.

“Most of the people here have been displaced numerous times – from Rafah, Khan Younis and central Gaza – now they're all crammed into Deir el-Balah,” one resident told Al Jazeera. “The Israelis claim it is a safe zone. Why are they shelling the area now? This is all false propaganda.”

“There is a growing fear right now because of the concentrated air attacks on the central area, coupled with heavy artillery in the past few days,” Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud reported from Khan Younis in southern Gaza.

“Deir el-Balah is the only remaining, somehow intact, city with buildings people can shelter in. But right now, there is a growing concern that the repeated attacks on Deir el-Balah indicate that this area, and largely the central area, is on the verge of a wider-scale attack and a larger invasion.”

Fighting has continued in the Gaza Strip even as Israel braces for an expected response from Iran and its close Lebanese ally Hezbollah after the July 31 assassination in the Iranian capital, Tehran, of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

Israeli military attacks on Gaza have killed 24 people and injured 110 in the latest 24-hour reporting period, according to the enclave's Health Ministry.

It said on Wednesday that at least 39,677 people have been killed and 91,645 wounded in Gaza since October 7. An estimated 1,139 people were killed in Israel during the Hamas-led attacks and more than 200 were taken captive.

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