

Israel orders Gazans to leave so-called safe zone despite truce talks

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Gaza City, August 16 (RHC)-- The Israeli military has ordered the Palestinians to evacuate areas in southern and central Gaza, tightening the area they previously designated as a so-called "safe zone" -- while talks aimed at reaching a ceasefire deal is ongoing in Qatar.

The orders were issued on Friday for the area north of the southern city of Khan Younis, and the eastern part of Deir Al-Balah, where tens of thousands of Palestinians have sought shelter from Israeli strikes in other parts of the besieged strip.

The Israeli army claimed that the areas had been used by Hamas as a launch pad for attacks against Israel.

“Once again, fear spreads as families have nowhere to go. People remain trapped in an endless nightmare of death and destruction on a staggering scale,” the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) said in a post on X on Friday.

The latest evacuation warnings came while delegations from Israel, the U.S., Egypt and Qatar were due to meet for a second day of ceasefire talks in Doha. But they are apparently talking to themselves, because Hamas did not send representatives to the talks, no longer able to trust the United States as a mediator.

Bombs, however, have continued to fall in Gaza. “Why did (Israeli prime minister Benjamin) Netanyahu send a delegation to the talks while we are being killed here?” Mohammed al-Balwi asked, as bombs continue to fall in Gaza.

The regime’s bloody onslaught on Gaza has so far killed more than 40,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured tens of thousands others. Thousands more are also missing and presumed dead under rubble.

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