

Gaza on brink of 'devastating humanitarian catastrophe'

Iran: New front against Israel possible

International Desk

The Gaza Strip is on the brink of a "devastating humanitarian catastrophe" as the Israeli regime has intensified its heavy and indiscriminate bombardment on the besieged Palestinian territory, which has killed nearly 1,800 Palestinians so far.

The Israeli Army has ordered the evacuation of all civilians living in Gaza City and in the north of the Gaza Strip ahead of an expected ground offensive on the Palestinian region after it called up 300,000 reservists and moved forces, tanks and armor to the southern desert area around Gaza.

UN officials in Gaza "were informed by their liaison officers in the Israeli military that the entire population of Gaza north of Wadi Gaza should relocate to southern Gaza within the next 24 hours," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said in a statement in New York.

"This amounts to approximately 1.1 million people," Dujarric added, or nearly half of Gaza's 2.3 million population.

Dujarric said the UN "considers it impossible for such a movement to take place without devastating humanitarian consequences."

'Fake propaganda'

Salama Marouf, head of the Hamas government media office, said the relocation warning was an attempt by Israel "to broadcast and pass on fake propaganda, aiming to sow confusion among citizens and harm our internal cohesion."

He added: "We urge our citizens not to engage in these attempts."

Since Saturday, Israel has been pounding Gaza in

retaliation for a Hamas attack in Israel that has killed at least 1,300 people, the deadliest attack in Israeli history. At least 1,799 people have also been killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza, said the Health Ministry in Gaza on Friday.

The ministry reported in a statement the "martyrdom of 1,799 citizens including 583 children and 351 women," adding that more than 7,000 people have been wounded.

At least nine Palestinians were also killed by Israeli fire across the occupied West Bank during rallies in solidarity with Gaza, the Health Ministry said.

The Israeli Army said its "fighter jets struck 750 military targets in the northern Gaza Strip overnight".

Israeli fighter jets and drones have levelled entire blocks and destroyed thousands of buildings.

Total siege

Israel has cut off water, food and power supplies to Gaza in a total siege it has vowed will not end until all hostages are freed.

The territory was already under a land, air and sea blockade since 2006.

Any Israeli ground operation is complicated by Hamas's holding - according to Israel - an estimated 150 Israeli, foreign and dual-nationals who were taken back to Gaza during the attack.

Hamas on Friday said 13 hostages, including foreigners, had been killed in Israeli strikes.

New fronts against Israel

The continued air strikes and blockade on Gaza has drawn warnings from Iran. Iran's Foreign Minister



Palestinians evacuate wounded after an Israeli airstrike in Rafah refugee camp, southern Gaza Strip, on October 12, 2023.
● HATEM ALI/AP

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian warned on Friday that fighting against the Israeli regime may expand to new fronts.

"Some European officials asked me if there were any chances that new fronts might open up against the Zionist regime," Amir-Abdollahian said on Thursday in the Lebanese capital of Beirut, his second stop on a regional tour that has already taken him to Iraq.

"I told them as far as the Zionists keep up their war crimes, there exists every prospect that other resistance movements [may enter the war]," he added.

Amir-Abdollahian has started the tour as means of talking with ranking officials in the destination countries about the developments that have been unfolding in the region, especially the Israeli regime's crimes against Gaza.

He called Israel's displacement of tens of thousands of Palestinians as part of the warfare, and its con-

comitant enforcement of an all-out siege on Gaza, "an organized war crime" on the part of the occupying regime.

"Continuation of these war crimes will be followed by other reactions on other axes, for which the Zionist regime and its supporters would be responsible," he added.

Lebanon's Hezbollah movement on Friday said it would be fully prepared to join its ally Hamas in the war against Israel when the time was right.

"We, as Hezbollah, are contributing to the confrontation and will (continue) to contribute to it within our vision and plan," Hezbollah deputy chief Naim Qassem told a pro-Palestinian rally in Beirut's southern suburbs.

"We are fully prepared, and when the time comes for action, we will take it," he said. An outreach by "major countries, Arab countries, and envoys from the United Nations, directly and

indirectly, asking us not to interfere in the battle, will not affect us," he said, adding, "Hezbollah knows its duties".

Israel has traded fire with Hezbollah and allied Palestinian factions in Lebanon in recent days, although the tit-for-tat attacks have remained limited.

US support for Israel

On the other side, the US has sent additional munitions to Israel and deployed an aircraft carrier battle group to the eastern Mediterranean in a show of support, while warning Israel's other enemies not to enter the war.

On Friday, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, also on a solidarity visit to Israel, pledged "iron-clad" backing for Israel in its war.

In London, the UK said it was sending two Royal Navy ships and surveillance aircraft to the eastern Mediterranean to support Israel and "ensure regional stability".

Millions worldwide protest in support of Palestine

International Desk

Millions demonstrated Friday across various countries of the world in support of Palestinians and against the intensifying Israeli bombardment of Gaza, underscoring the risk of a wider regional conflict as Israel prepares for a possible ground invasion.

Tens of thousands of Muslims demonstrated Friday across the Middle East including Iran in support of Palestinians and condemnation of Israel.

This is while, France and Germany banned pro-Palestinian demonstrations and several Western countries said they had stepped up security fearing that protests could lead to acts of violence, Reuters reported.

Some 1,000 Muslims rallied in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, after Friday prayers to show solidarity with

the Palestinians. Chanting "Free Palestine" and "Crush the Zionists", they burned two effigies draped with Israeli flags, aljazeera.com reported.

From the typically sedate streets of downtown Amman in Jordan to Yemen's war-scarred capital of Sana'a, crowds of Muslim worshippers poured into the streets after weekly Friday prayers, angered by devastating Israeli airstrikes on Gaza that began after the Palestinian resistance group Hamas launched an unprecedented surprise attack on Israel last Saturday, AP reported.

The Israeli strikes have killed more than 1,530 people in the Gaza Strip, which has already been under a land, sea, and air blockade for more than 15 years.

In Iran, tens of thousands of people participated in nationwide rallies, chanting

slogans in support of Palestinians and in condemnation of the United States and the apartheid Tel Aviv regime.

The demonstrators were also carrying pro-Palestine banners. Some Iranian political figures participated in the protests as well.

At the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Al-Quds' Old City on Friday, Israeli police permitted only certain older men, women, and children to enter the sprawling hill-top compound for prayers, trying to limit the potential for violence. Only 5,000 worshippers made it into the site, the Islamic endowment that manages the mosque said. On a typical Friday, some 50,000 gather there for prayers.

In Beirut, thousands of supporters of Lebanon's Hezbollah group waved Lebanese, Palestinian, and Hezbollah flags, chanting slogans in support of Gaza.

In Baghdad, tens of thousands of protesters gathered in Tahrir Square — the protest hub of Iraq's capital — for rallies called by the influential Shia cleric and political leader Muqtada al-Sadr.

"May this demonstration ... terrify the great evil, the United States, which supports Zionist terrorism against our loved ones in Palestine," al-Sadr said in an online statement.

In the Syrian capital of Damascus, protesters — including Palestinians from the Yarmouk refugee camp formed after the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation — also rallied.

In Yemen's Sana'a, demonstrators crowded the streets waving Yemeni and Palestinian flags.

After Friday prayers, Egyptian demonstrators ringed the historic Al-Azhar Mosque — the Sunni Muslim world's foremost



Protesters participate in a pro-Palestinian demonstration in Helsinki, Finland, on October 13, 2023.
● EMMI KORHONEN/AFP

religious institution — in downtown Cairo, chanting that Israel remained their enemy "generation after generation".

In Pakistan's capital of Islamabad, some worshippers trampled on American and Israeli flags.

"International media and international courts turn a blind eye to the injustices that befall Palestinians. They only notice the actions that the Palestinians take to defend themselves," said Faheem Ahmed, a worshipper in Karachi. "They call those actions terrorism."

West's silence on Israeli aggression exposed its ugliness



By Syed Ali Hasan
Iran Daily's
correspondent in
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The merciless thought process of the international community, which has not spared any effort to fuel sorrow and anger over Hamas's pre-emptive attacks against Israel and justify Israel's brutal assaults, is reflecting the reality of human suffering. There are morally acceptable responses to human suffering, such as mourning, relieving, and stopping it. And then, there is the case of Israel, which has channeled that suffering into becoming a terrorist state itself by targeting and civilians of Gaza and laying siege to the whole area, not to mention its move to cut off water and electricity.

The pre-emptive attack of a resistance group has goaded terrorists and supporters of terrorism on the state level into showing their true colors. How can the United States justify its alliance with Israel when Israel has restricted water and food supplies to Palestinians, resulting in the dire suffering of ordinary people who are left starving and enfeebled as a form of collective punishment? Additionally, there have been reports of entire buildings bombarded and reduced to rubble in Gaza.

West's double standard regarding Israel's violation of human rights was expected. However, the Islamic world is shocked by the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation which have not only failed to prevent Israeli aggression in Gaza but also seemingly supported Israel.

Yet, Pakistan has strongly condemned Israel's disproportionate and indiscriminate bombing of the Palestinian population in Gaza and called for its immediate cessation. Prior to this, Iran's Leader Seyyed Ali Khamenei firmly supported Hamas, emphasizing that Palestinians cannot endure Israeli oppression indefinitely. There is a perceived lack of advocating for the rights of Palestinians on the part of Saudis. To date, Saudi Arabia has not taken any substantial steps in favor of Palestinians. Riyadh has been notably uncomfortable with Hamas' recent actions since it has most likely put the move to normalize its ties with Tel Aviv on hold.