



By: TA | AP Insight

Israel is mobilizing thousands of reservists in anticipation of the combat operation expanding in Gaza



Israel began mobilizing tens of thousands of reservists and repeated evacuation warnings as part of its plan to widen its **offensive** in Gaza City, which has sparked **opposition** domestically and condemnation abroad.

The call-up, which was **announced** last month, comes as ground and air forces press forward and pursue more targets in northern and central Gaza, striking parts of Zeitoun and Shijaiyah — two western Gaza City neighborhoods that Israeli forces have repeatedly invaded during the nearly two-year war against Hamas militants.

Zeitoun, once Gaza City's largest neighborhood with markets, schools and clinics, has been transformed over the past month, with streets being emptied and buildings reduced to rubble as it becomes what Israel's military last week **called** a "dangerous combat zone."

Gaza City is Hamas' political and military stronghold and, according to Israel, still home to a vast tunnel network, despite multiple incursions throughout the war. It's also one of the last refuges in northern Gaza, where hundreds of thousands of civilians are sheltering, facing the twin threats of combat and famine.

Reservists protested the call-up in Tel Aviv on Tuesday, questioning whether the offensive was a political move and whether it would push Israel toward its goals of crippling Hamas' military capabilities in Gaza.

Deadly strikes in Gaza City

Israel on Tuesday repeated earlier warnings to Palestinians who have remained in Gaza City, unconvinced that another displacement will keep them safe.

Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee warned that combat operations would soon be expanding, and that services would be made available in Muwasi, a makeshift tent camp south of Gaza City.

At least 47 people have been killed across the Gaza Strip since dawn on Tuesday, according to hospitals.

In Gaza City, Israeli strikes killed at least 26 people, who arrived at Shifa hospital since Tuesday morning, an official there told The Associated Press.

A strike on a residential building in Tel al-Hawa wounded 28 people on Tuesday, according to al-Quds Hospital, a day after overnight strikes in the neighborhood.

Overnight, a strike on a residential building in the neighborhood killed 15 people including at least 3 children.

AP footage showed rescue workers pulling a bloodied infant alive from beneath rubble, then placing the dead under white sheets — a scene that captured the dangers facing Gaza City's exhausted residents, uprooted time and again and uncertain if any place is secure.

"We were sleeping safe and sound in our home, and then we suddenly woke up to the sound of banging and rising smoke," Sana Drimli, a woman who lived in the building with her family, told the AP. "We woke up to see what happened to us and check in on our children and discovered that everyone around us is dead."

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Shifa Hospital's morgue confirmed 15 deaths from the Israeli strike, one of several lethal strikes on the neighborhood.

Further south, Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis and Awda Hospital in Nuseirat said they received 22 casualties killed by Israeli airstrikes and gunfire near distribution sites and in a corridor frequented by U.N. convoys.

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Ministry.

The toll includes Palestinians who have sought aid in areas where U.N. convoys have been overwhelmed by looters and desperate crowds, and where people have been fatally shot while heading to sites run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, or GHF, an Israeli-backed American contractor.

Israel's military and GHF didn't immediately respond to questions about the latest incidents.

Reservists protest in Tel Aviv

At least 60,000 reservists will be gradually called up, Israel's military said last month. It will also extend the service of an additional 20,000 reservists already serving.

In Israel, with a population of less than 10 million, most Jewish men complete compulsory military service and remain in the reserves for at least a decade. But criticism over the war in Gaza is growing.

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A number of movements are organizing to encourage reservists not to serve, though it's unclear how many will refuse the latest call-up.

Refusing to show up for reserve duty is an offense that can merit prison time, though only a handful of reserve soldiers who have refused to serve have been put in military prison over the course of the war.

Malnutrition and combat tolls mount

Since the world's leading authority on food crises declared last month that Gaza City was

experiencing **famine**, malnutrition-related deaths have mounted. Gaza's Health Ministry said on Tuesday that a total of 185 people died of malnutrition in August — marking the highest count in months.



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A total of 63,633 Palestinians have been killed in the war, according to the ministry, which says another 160,914 people have been wounded as of Tuesday.

The ministry doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants in its count, but says women and children make up around half the dead.

The ministry is part of the Hamas-run government but staffed by medical professionals. U.N. agencies and many independent experts consider its figures to be the most reliable estimate of war casualties. Israel disputes them, but hasn't provided its own toll.

The war started when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took 251 people **hostage**.

Forty-eight hostages are still inside Gaza, around 20 of them believed by Israel to be alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefires or other deals.