# Israeli PM Netanyahu hints at potential conflict escalation with Hezbollah post-Rafah operation



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that the "intense phase" of fighting in Rafah against Hamas is nearing completion. However, Netanyahu emphasized that the war is not over until Hamas relinquishes control of the Gaza Strip.

During a televised interview with Israel’s Channel 14, Netanyahu indicated the possibility of redirecting troops to confront Hezbollah along the Lebanese border once the Rafah operation subsides. This comes amid heightened tensions post a 7 October attack by Hamas, which resulted in the death of approximately 1,200 people and the capture of over 250 hostages.

The ongoing conflict has claimed the lives of more than 37,000 Palestinians and has precipitated a significant humanitarian crisis. Hezbollah's involvement has included launching missiles and drones into Israel, while Israeli airstrikes have extensively damaged southern Lebanon, displacing tens of thousands.

The possibility of expanding warfare raises concerns of Iranian support for Hezbollah and the broader implications for regional stability. Senior U.S. military officials have warned that an escalated conflict involving Hezbollah could lead to a wider war, potentially endangering U.S. forces in the region.