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Israel readies evacuees' tent city ahead of Rafah assault

JERUSALEM

Israel's military is poised to evacuate Palestinian civilians from Rafah and assault Hamas hold-outs in the southern Gaza Strip city, a senior Israeli defence official said yesterday, despite international warnings of humanitarian catastrophe.

A spokesperson for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government said Israel was "moving ahead" with a ground operation, but gave no timeline.

The defence official said Israel's Defence Ministry had bought 40,000 tents, each with the capacity for 10 to 12 people, to house Palestinians relocated from Rafah in advance of an assault.

Video circulating online appeared to show rows of square white tents going up in Khan Younis, a city some 5km from Rafah.

An Israeli government source said Netanyahu's war cabinet planned to meet in the coming two weeks to authorise civilian evacuations, expected to take around a month.

The defence official, who requested anonymity, told Reuters that the military could go into action immediately but was awaiting a green light from Netanyahu.

—Reuters

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UAE approves Dh2 billion to repair rain-damaged homes

COMMITTEE FORMED TO DISBURSE COMPENSATIONS TO AFFECTED FAMILIES

ABU DHABI

BY KHITAM ALAMIR

Chief News Editor

The UAE Cabinet yesterday approved Dh2 billion to address the damage caused to citizens' homes by the recent rains, and assigned a ministerial committee to disburse compensations to affected families.

The Cabinet meeting at Qasr Al Watan, which was chaired by His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, also discussed the impact of the unprecedented weather conditions experienced by the country. "The situation was unprecedented in its severity, yet as a nation, we always strive to learn and evolve," Shaikh Mohammad wrote on his X account.

Exceptional situation

"The central operations rooms managed to handle over 200,000 reports, engaging over 17,000 members from security, emergency, and interior agencies, alongside 15,000 personnel from local authorities. Additionally, thousands of volunteers contributed to dealing with the aftermath of the exceptional weather situation."

The Cabinet approved the formation of a committee to



WAM

The Cabinet meeting, chaired by Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, also reviewed the recent progress of the UAE Tourism Strategy and highlighted the sector's key achievements.

inventory the damage of floods and rains on infrastructure and propose solutions and procedures at the state level. The committee is headed by the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure and will comprise members from Ministries of Defence and Interior, the National Emergency, Crisis and

Disaster Management Authority and other federal entities, in addition to representatives from all local emirates.

Shaikh Mohammad said the exceptional weather situation brought benefits to the country, with dams being filled, valleys flowing with abundant rains, and underground water

reserves replenished. "We have learned valuable lessons from dealing with heavy rains in our developed cities, identifying areas for improvement, and enhancing our preparedness for such conditions, making us more resilient for the future," he emphasised.

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