

► Israel to seek leverage in truce talks or Gaza war severely escalates: expert Rafah attack pushes conflict to 'tipping point'

By GT staff reporters

Israeli tanks entered the southern Gaza city of Rafah on Tuesday, even as the country sent a delegation to Cairo to resume talks for a potential truce. Chinese observers view Israel's military operation in Rafah as a pivotal moment in the conflict. The operation could either serve as a strategic and final move by Israel to gain leverage in truce negotiations, or it could escalate the current situation and lead to a wider humanitarian crisis, they said.

At least 27 people, including six women and nine children, were killed in Rafah since Monday evening, CNN confirmed

through hospital sources in the southern Gaza city.

Israel's military has seized control of the Gaza side of the Rafah crossing, an Israeli military official said Tuesday. International pressure is growing against Israel following the seizure after it refused to rule out a full-scale invasion in Rafah.

The incursion got underway as both Hamas and Israel reportedly sent a delegation to negotiate in Cairo, Egypt, NPR quoted anonymous officials as saying.

Copies of the three-stage deal that Hamas agreed to were leaked Monday night.

However, Israel's War Cabinet said Monday the deal

Hamas agreed to fell short of its "core demands," without elaborating.

"The negotiations are more of a diplomatic battle, and for Israel, invading Rafah has always been its goal," Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times on Wednesday.

He believes it is possible that Israel's attack on Rafah is to seek an advantage at the negotiations.

Chinese experts noted that Israel's military operation in Rafah has pushed the conflict to a tipping point. From a military conflict perspective, the Rafah

conflict may be the final battle, but on the other hand, Israel's attack on Rafah could escalate further, leading to a large-scale humanitarian disaster, Liu said.

On Tuesday, China and France released a joint statement on the situation in the Middle East, in which the two heads of state expressed their opposition to an Israeli offensive on Rafah, which would lead to an even bigger humanitarian disaster, as well as the forced displacement of Palestinian civilians.

Experts hailed the statement as marking another major effort by China in mediating the Middle East conflict, as it is an agreement reached by two per-

manent members of the United Nations Security Council, and paves way for China and France, as well as China and Europe, to seek collaboration in mediating the crisis in the Middle East.

Apart from sending envoys to the Middle East to promote negotiations and trying to reach a cease-fire deal at the UN level, China also invited Fatah and Hamas to hold talks in Beijing last month.

In the future, China will continue facilitating reconciliation between forces within Palestine to form a unified government and voice when participating in talks with Israel, the expert said.

► Flowers for remembrance



People lay flowers at the monument to warriors on May 8, 2024, the eve of Russia's Victory Day marking the 79th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War II. The country will stage its main annual Victory Day parade in Moscow's Red Square on May 9. Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to make an address at the event. Photo: VCG

Canada's anti-interference draft legislation to 'stoke hostility toward China'

By Zhang Yuying

Canada introduced draft legislation on Monday designed to counter foreign interference, a few days after the country issued a report alleging there had been "Chinese meddling" in its elections. Experts noted that Canada's latest move is another attempt to stoke hostility toward China, and also shows its strong dependence on the US in its foreign policy.

They also warned that if Canada's hype about "Chinese interference" continues, it could bring tension to the current lukewarm relations between the two countries and may affect normal bilateral exchanges.

According to Bloomberg, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government will require people lobbying or otherwise acting on behalf of a foreign government to register that activity publicly. The new law was introduced in Canada's Parliament on Monday, along with a series of other amendments to "make it easier to prosecute illegal foreign influence activity."

The move comes after Canada released an interim report on Friday claiming to have found evidence of foreign interference in its last two federal elections, and that China "stands out as a main perpetrator of such interference," the BBC reported.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said during a regular press conference on Monday that China has never and will never have any interest in interfering in Canada's internal affairs, and the so-called "China's foreign interference" is nothing but a lie to serve political purposes.

"The introduction of the new law based on groundless accusations of Chinese interference in Canada's elections is once again the country's attempt to fuel unfriendliness and hostility toward China both domestically and internationally," Li Haidong, a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, said on Wednesday.

Experts noted that Canada's latest action can also be interpreted as aligning with the US in an effort to counter China, highlighting Canada's lack of complete independence in its foreign policy approaches.

Manila's denial of objective facts hurts its own credibility: FM

By GT staff reporters

The Chinese Embassy in the Philippines has released details about the relevant communication between China and the Philippines in terms of managing the situation at Ren'ai Jiao. The facts are clear and backed by hard evidence that cannot be denied, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a press conference on Wednesday, urging the Philippines to honor its commitment, and stop maritime infringement and provocation at once.

On Tuesday, Bloomberg cited a Chinese official on background, said a transcript of the supposed recording of a phone call with Western

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Command Commander Vice Admiral Alberto Carlos "may be released to the public within days." In the transcript, Carlos agreed to a "new model" for resupply missions concerning Ren'ai Jiao.

Lin also said at the Wednesday press conference that the Philippine side has insisted on denying these objective facts and seeks to mislead the international community. This hurts its own credibility and puts peace and stability in the South China Sea in jeopardy, Lin said.

The Philippines' denials of the

"new model" and the "gentlemen's agreement" reflect the chaos and management confusion as well as multiple conflicting stances within the Philippine government regarding its policies toward China, said Ge Hongliang, deputy director of the College of ASEAN Studies at Guangxi University for Nationalities.

Manila's repeated violations of the gentlemen's agreement between the two sides, or in other words, consensus reached through consultations, weaken its claim of seeking a peaceful resolution to the dispute, Ge noted.