

## **Rising Tensions in Middle East: Israel Approves Potential Offensive in Lebanon**

Amidst escalating tensions with Hezbollah, the IDF's Northern Command has approved plans for an offensive in Lebanon if diplomatic efforts fail to address the threats posed by Hezbollah along the northern border areas. On June 18, a senior Israeli military official released a statement saying, "We held a joint situational assessment in the hashtag#NorthernCommand. As part of the situational assessment, operational plans for an offensive in Lebanon were approved and validated."

The statement stressed the importance of accelerating operational readiness, highlighting a state of heightened alertness and preparation for potential conflict. Hours before the announcement, Hezbollah reportedly released a provocative video showcasing reconnaissance footage from its drones. The nine-minute-long video included images of various military and strategic locations in Northern Israel, including air defense sites, hashtag#IronDome batteries, and facilities of hashtag#Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. It also included key infrastructure in hashtag#Haifa, such as docks, airports, naval bases, and missile boats.

While hostilities could escalate in the short term, the IDF's statement does not indicate an imminent war. The IDF has been preparing for months, conducting military exercises, and approving an operational plan. Tensions between Israel and Hezbollah are likely to increase, attracting more attention to the Lebanon front. However, Israel is expected to consider expanding operations against Hezbollah only after completing its current maneuver in Rafah, southern hashtag#Gaza, which may take some time.