

Israeli forces attack Palestinian fishing boats in Gaza with live fire, water cannon



Gaza City, October 18 (RHC)-- Israeli naval forces have attacked Palestinian fishing boats off the coasts of the besieged Gaza Strip, shooting live ammunition and blasting water from cannons at them to prevent the Palestinian fishermen from earning their living.

The attack took place within three nautical miles off the shore of al-Sudaniya area in the northwest of Gaza City on Thursday, Palestine's official Wafa news agency reported. The live bullets and blasting water hoses inflicted damage to Palestinian fishing boats but no injuries were reported though fishermen were forced to abandon their boats and swim to the coast.

Almost every day, Israeli naval forces harass Gazan fishermen, shoot at them, damage their boats, and make arrests. Sometimes, fishermen are wounded or killed during gunfire attacks.

Israel imposed a limit of three nautical miles on fishing in the waters off the Gaza shore until August 2014, when Palestinian fishermen were allowed to go out six miles under a ceasefire agreement reached after a deadly 50-day Israeli war in the same month.

The fishing zone is supposed to extend to 20 nautical miles under the Oslo Accords, which were signed between the Israeli regime and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) during the early-mid 1990s to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

During the past few years, however, Israeli forces have carried out more than one hundred attacks on Palestinian boats, arresting dozens of fishermen and confiscating several boats. Furthermore, they time and again prevent Gazan fishermen from doing their job.

The Israeli attacks on Palestinian fishermen and the restrictions imposed on them have severely affected the livelihoods of some 4,000 fishermen and at least 1,500 more people involved in the fishing industry.

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