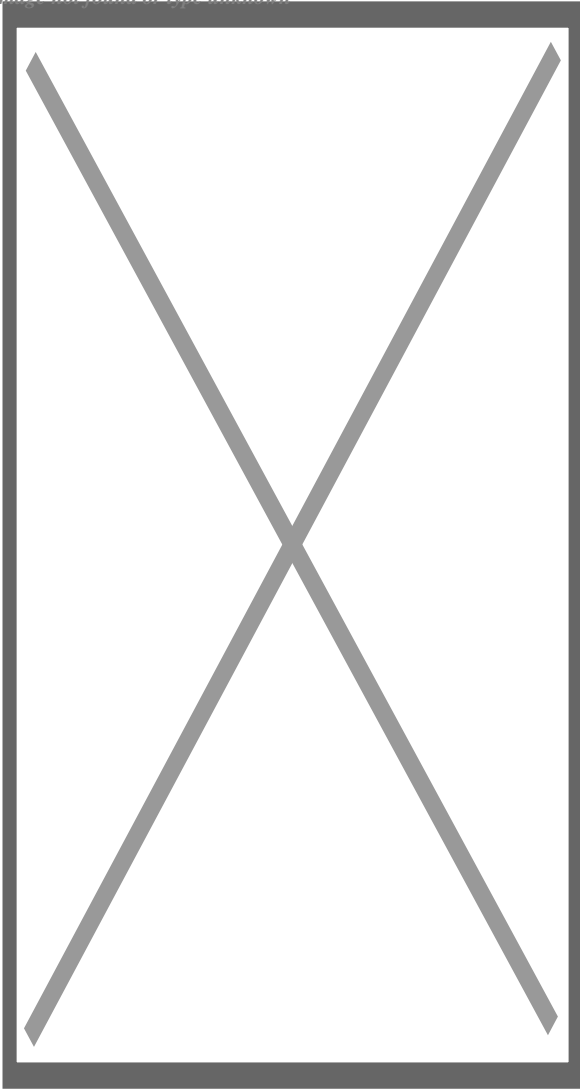


Health authorities say over 700,000 people could starve to death in north Gaza as Israeli blockade persists

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Palestinians receive food at a UN-run school in Rafah, on the southern Gaza Strip. (Photo by AFP)

Rafah, February 21 (RHC)-- Authorities of the war-torn Gaza Strip have warned that as many as 700,000 people could starve to death north of the Palestinian territory as Israel severely restricts humanitarian aid to the densely populated territory.

In a statement on Tuesday, Gaza's Government Media Office warned that more than 700,000 Palestinians in the coastal sliver could perish from deepening starvation as Israel has tightly restricted humanitarian aid to the enclave.

It also called on Russia, China, and Turkey, as well as Arab and Muslim nations and "all countries of the 'free' world" to intervene and apply pressure in a bid to put an end to the "genocide and famine" in the Gaza Strip.

"We call for an urgent and immediate end to the genocidal war against civilians, women and children as we call for bringing 10,000 aid trucks over the next two days into Gaza. We hold the U.S. administration and the international community additionally to Israel fully responsible for this famine," Gaza's Government Media Office further said.

The statement came as the World Food Programme has already announced a halt in its aid deliveries to northern Gaza, arguing that a "breakdown of social order" caused by mass starvation could endanger the lives of its crew in the territory.

Despite rampant hunger in the northern part of Gaza, Israel continues to block aid distribution missions in the besieged region, where children are more susceptible to hunger and diseases. According to a recent UN report, around 15 percent of children there under the age of two suffer from malnutrition.

Children in Gaza are also suffering the psychological consequences of Israeli bombings while losing their families and belongings as they are suffering from acute shortages of food and water.

The UN warns that acute malnutrition and the spread of diseases could spark an "explosion" in preventable child deaths in Gaza. Furthermore, the UN agencies for children, food and health warned in a joint statement on Monday that at least 90 percent of Gaza children under five are affected by one or more infectious diseases.

Separately on Tuesday, the Israeli military ordered the evacuation of the Zaytoun and Turkoman neighborhoods on the southern edge of Gaza City, located north of the Gaza Strip, where children are starving.

According to a report by the Global Nutrition Cluster, an aid partnership led by the UN children's agency, UNICEF, over 90 percent of children under five in Gaza eat two or fewer food groups a day, known as severe food poverty.

Israel has waged a brutal and genocidal war on besieged Gaza since October 7th last year, after the Hamas-resistant movement carried out its historic operation against the occupying entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.



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