

*Israeli warplanes relentlessly
bombard Rafah, claiming more
lives amid rising fears of
catastrophe*



Rafah, May 9 (RHC)-- Israeli warplanes have carried out a series of airstrikes on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, resulting in the loss of civilian lives and leaving several others wounded as the brutal war enters its 216th day.

At least 20 Palestinians were killed and numerous others were wounded in a series of Israeli airstrikes that took place on Thursday in Rafah city. The attacks were focused on a residence in the al-Jnaina neighborhood of Rafah, with additional bombings hitting Tal as-Sultan neighborhood to the west, which killed four and injured sixteen others.

A significant number of casualties were also reported in Gaza following intense shelling near the Ali bin Abi Talib Mosque in the al-Zaytoun neighborhood on Thursday. Numerous buildings have been destroyed, and there are reports of missing individuals as ambulances face difficulties in accessing the area.

Eight civilians, including three children and an infant, tragically lost their lives on Thursday in an Israeli airstrike targeting a residence owned by the Eid family in the western part of Rafah city.

The Gaza Strip continues to be targeted by airstrikes, with a particular focus on the central and eastern regions. The majority of these attacks have been concentrated in the eastern part of Rafah city.

This is while the al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Palestinian resistance group Hamas, reported “fierce clashes” with Israeli forces in eastern Rafah on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of Islamic Jihad, also confirmed clashes with Israeli forces in the same area.

An estimated 1.5 million people had packed into Rafah in search of refuge over the last several months of Israel’s war on the Gaza Strip. Since Monday, Israeli forces are forcing more Palestinian citizens to evacuate Rafah.

The vast majority of the people are taking either the coastal road where Israeli gunboats keep firing at them, or Salah al-Din Street – a highly perilous area due to ongoing attacks in the eastern part of Rafah, Khan Yunis, and the central region.

The UN and humanitarian aid groups are warning of a “catastrophe” should Israel launch a full ground invasion of the city. The world body on Tuesday expressed alarm over what it called Israel's "choking-off" of Gaza's two main aid arteries, after Israeli troops took full control of the Palestinian side of the nearby Rafah crossing with Egypt.

The number of people killed in Israeli attacks on Gaza in the past 24 hours has reached 60.

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