

Aid trucks enter Gaza after weeks as Israeli attacks continue across strip

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A child looks on as Palestinian woman holds the shrouded body of another child killed in Israeli bombardment

It remains unclear how the aid will be delivered to Gaza areas facing relentless Israeli bombardment [Eyad Baba/AFP]

Rafah, May 26 (RHC)-- Aid trucks are entering Gaza through Karem Abu Salem crossing in the south as the living conditions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians continue to deteriorate under Israel's relentless war on the Palestinian enclave.

Egypt's state-affiliated Al-Qahera TV on Sunday shared a video on X, showing aid trucks entering Gaza through the crossing, known to Israelis as Kerem Shalom. Aid officials said 200 trucks loaded with aid are set to enter the strip.

The Karem Abu Salem crossing is located at the intersection of Israel, Gaza and Egypt. The first four trucks to enter Gaza carried fuel for hospitals and desalination plants, Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud, reporting from Deir el-Balah in Gaza, said. He said four other trucks were expected to carry cooking gas.

Mahmoud said the aid will be distributed to the organisations supposed to be receiving aid, who will take them to warehouses in the evacuation zone of Khan Younis city and central Gaza. But, he warned, the aid was not enough.

"The 200 trucks are not nearly enough in the face of the challenges and the hard, difficult conditions created by not only the intense bombing campaign but by the conditions created on the ground," said Mahmoud.

"We are talking about a broken aid mechanism on the ground in terms of ensuring safety for aid workers, in terms of infrastructure, as well as warehouses that have been deliberately attacked several times in the past."

Sunday's volume of deliveries still falls far short of what the United Nations says is the minimum of 500 to 600 trucks required daily to feed millions of people – most of them refugees – on the brink of starvation. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), a global hunger monitor, has warned of an imminent famine in parts of Gaza, home to 2.3 million people.

Aid for Gaza was held up at the Rafah border crossing since early May after the Israeli forces stepped up their military offensive in the area where hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians had taken shelter. Rafah is the main entry point into Gaza for humanitarian aid and commercial supplies.

UN humanitarian officials, aid groups and health personnel had been pleading with Israel for days, if not weeks, to allow the delivery of much-needed food, fuel and medical supplies into Gaza, warning that failure to do so could plunge the area into mass starvation.

On Friday, Egypt reached an agreement with the United States to allow UN humanitarian aid to flow into Gaza temporarily through Karem Abu Salem until legal mechanisms are in place to reopen the Rafah crossing from the Palestinian side.

There have been reports that some food supplies bound for Gaza had begun to rot due to the delay in the delivery over Israeli objections. Even as aid enters Gaza after weeks, it remains unclear how it will be delivered to the areas amid relentless Israeli bombardment and killings.

Gaza's Ministry of Health on Sunday said at least 35,984 people have been killed in the territory since October. The death toll includes at least 81 over the past 24 hours, a ministry statement said, adding that 80,643 others have been wounded.

On Sunday, a health official in Gaza told Al Jazeera at least 58 people have been killed across the territory in the past 24 hours, including 10 children sheltering at a school in Jabalia.

In Rafah, the epicentre of Israel's latest military offensive in southern Gaza, at least six people from the same family were killed in an Israeli attack. The survivors of the attack were taken to the Kuwaiti Hospital, according to the Wafa news agency. It was unclear how many people were wounded.

Separate Israeli attacks targeting a women's centre in central Gaza's Nuseirat refugee camp also killed a child and six other people.

In northern Gaza, Israeli forces are advancing on Jabalia, trying to take control of its largest refugee camp. Fighting in the camp has intensified in the past two weeks, with Hamas on Saturday claiming to have captured some Israeli soldiers during the fighting in Jabalia. The Israeli military rejected the claim.

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