

U.S. military's Gaza aid pier has failed and may be dismantled



U.S. Gaza Pier is falling apart (File photo by US Central Command)

Ramallah, June 19 (RHC)-- Aid organizations have said that the \$230 million temporary pier constructed by the U.S. military to expedite humanitarian aid to Gaza has not been successful in fulfilling its purpose and is likely to cease operations earlier than anticipated.

The pier has undergone repairs twice in the last month due to damage, while there is uncertainty as to whether the United Nations will continue to use it for humanitarian aid distribution to Palestinians.

The aid effort suffered another setback as the US military announced on Friday its decision to temporarily relocate the pier in order to protect it from potential damage caused by rough seas.

Washington is now considering temporary dismantling and relocation of its pier off the coast of Gaza for the second time, citing concerns about poor conditions. The decision "is not made lightly but is necessary to ensure the temporary pier can continue to deliver aid in the future," the U.S. Central Command said in a post on social media, stating that the pier would be moved to Israel.

Over the past month, the pier has only been operational for approximately 10 days, as it required frequent repairs due to being damaged by rough seas, detached for safety reasons, or temporarily halted due to security concerns.

According to certain American military officials, the pier's limited objectives are expected to be unattainable, despite its initial purpose as a temporary solution while the Biden administration negotiates with Israel to facilitate the transportation of essential goods to Gaza through land routes, which is considered a more effective method of providing relief.

The construction of the pier coincided with health authorities' warnings of an impending famine in the region and difficulty to have access to the people in need.

Aid groups report that despite the initial arrival of aid on May 17, the project has faced ongoing challenges, with a significant number of Gazans still enduring severe hunger.

According to Gaza officials, as many as 3,500 children are currently at risk of starving to death, as the territory is "rapidly" drifting towards famine.

"3,500 children are threatened by death due to malnutrition and lack of nutritional supplements and vaccines which became part of the prohibited items to enter Gaza," the Gaza-based Government Media Office said in a statement. "The crime of banning entry of food and medicine" exacerbated the suffering of the Palestinians in Gaza, it added, referring to Israeli restrictions.

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