

Israeli forces pound Gaza after al-Mawasi tent camp attack kills 25



Medic with the *Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS)* runs to a medical post with two seriously wounded children from tent camp in Al-Mawasi

Gaza City, June 23 (RHC)-- The Israeli military launched attacks across the Gaza Strip after an assault on a tent camp in al-Mawasi in the south killed at least 25 people, according to Palestinian officials.

Israeli attacks killed 101 Palestinians and wounded 169 in the last 24 hours, Gaza's Ministry of Health said on Saturday, with many people under the rubble and ambulances and civil defence crews unable to reach them.

This is the highest daily death toll recorded in the enclave by the ministry since June 8th, when Israeli forces killed at least 274 Palestinians to free four Israeli captives in the Nuseirat refugee camp.

On Friday, an Israeli attack near the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) base at the al-Mawasi camp – designated by Israel as a safe zone – that Palestinian officials say killed at least 25 people and wounded 50 others, involved two strikes, The Associated Press news agency reported.

Witnesses whose relatives died in one of the bombardments told AP how Israeli forces fired a second volley that killed people who came out of their tents.

“We were in our tent, and they hit with a ‘sound bomb’ near the Red Cross tents, and then my husband came out at the first sound,” Mona Ashour, whose husband was killed in the attack, told AP outside Nasser Hospital in nearby Khan Younis. “Then they hit with the second one, which was a little closer to the entrance of the Red Cross,” she said.

The ICRC condemned the attack on the camp and said the location of its humanitarian office, which was struck, was known to warring parties. It reported that 22 people had died and 45 were wounded.

“Firing so dangerously close to humanitarian structures, of whose locations the parties to the conflict are aware and which are clearly marked with Red Cross emblems, puts the lives of civilians and Red Cross staff at risk,” it said in a statement.

“The strike damaged the structure of the ICRC office, which is surrounded by hundreds of displaced civilians living in tents, including many of our Palestinian colleagues.” A survivor of the attack told Al Jazeera that fire was “consuming” them “from every direction.”

“We had just eaten and were about to sleep and take some rest, and the next we knew was the sound of resounding explosions destroying our places. We find ourselves alone not knowing what to do. We still can’t process what happened,” the survivor said.

Reporting from Deir el-Balah, in central Gaza, Al Jazeera’s Tareq Abu Azzoum noted that in the last 24 hours since the al-Mawasi assault, there has been an increase in Israeli attacks. “Witnesses said Israeli tanks carried out a sudden and unexpected incursion in al-Mawasi, launching a number of artillery shells towards the evacuation centres and makeshift tents,” he said on Saturday.

“The entire area of al-Mawasi is an evacuation centre. It’s a very tiny strip of land where more than 100,000 Palestinians have been taking refuge. It’s the place where field hospitals have been established and it’s a centre for humanitarian organisations,” he added.

The Israeli military has claimed there is “no indication” that it was responsible for Friday’s camp attack, but said it was under review. Earlier, the military said its forces were conducting “precise, intelligence-based” actions in the Rafah area.

Abu Azzoum also reported that the Israeli military targeted a residential neighbourhood in the Shati refugee camp on the western side of Gaza, where displaced Palestinians from the north of the territory were told to seek refuge.

According to the Health Ministry on Saturday, more than 37,500 people have been killed and 85,900 wounded in Israel’s war on Gaza since October 7. The revised death toll in Israel from the Hamas-led attacks stands at 1,139, with dozens of people still held captive in Gaza.



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