

Israeli attacks kill scores of Palestinians in southern and central Gaza

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**Aftermath of Israeli strike on UN school sheltering displaced people
Palestinians inspect a UN school sheltering displaced people, following an Israeli attack, amid
Israel-Hamas conflict, in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip [Ramadan Abed/Reuters]**

Rafah, July 16 (RHC)-- Scores of Palestinians have been killed in Israeli air raids in southern and central Gaza, including one that struck an Israeli-designated "safe zone" crowded with thousands of displaced people, Palestinian health officials said.

An air raid on Tuesday hit a main street lined with market stalls outside the southern city of Khan Younis in al-Mawasi, at the heart of the zone that is packed with shelters for displaced people. Officials at Khan Younis's Nasser Hospital said 17 people were killed.

At least 23 Palestinians were killed and 73 others wounded in an attack on the UN's Al-Razi school in the Nuseirat camp in central Gaza, according to Gaza's Government Media Office. Video footage verified by Al Jazeera's fact-checking agency Sanad showed a young man carrying what appear to be remnants of the rockets that targeted the school.

"I cannot describe the scene from the horror of the bombing," he said.

Among those killed was local journalist Mohammad Meshmesh, taking the number of journalists killed in the conflict to 160, the Hamas-run Gaza Government Media Office said.

Reporting from Deir el-Balah in central Gaza, Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud said that there were chaotic scenes inside the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital on Tuesday after the arrival of people wounded in the Nuseirat attack.

"The Israeli attack on Al-Razi middle school in the heart of the camp – such a busy area – happened during a rush hour when the streets around the overcrowded school were full of people," Mahmoud said. He noted that six UNRWA schools in Gaza have been attacked in Israeli air raids in recent days.

Nearly seven out of 10 UNRWA-run schools have been bombed in Gaza since the beginning of the war, according to the UN agency for Palestine refugees. "Over 95% of these schools were used as shelters when hit. 539 people sheltering in UNRWA facilities have been killed," UNRWA said on X. "Nowhere is safe. The blatant disregard for UN premises and humanitarian law must stop."

Hamas also issued a statement denouncing Israel's "deliberate bombing of displaced people in UNRWA's al-Razi School in the Nuseirat camp, and the Al-Mawasi area west of the city of Khan Younis, which was declared a safe area".

"This is a brutal and shameful act that is a scar on humanity," the group said, reiterating that the US's Biden administration is a partner to its staunch ally Israel, "which continues to carry out genocide" in Gaza.

Israeli air raids in recent days have brought a constant drumbeat of deaths of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, even as Israel has pulled back or scaled down ground offensives in the north and south. Several attacks have hit the al-Mawasi "safe zone" covering some 60 square kilometres (23 square miles) along the Mediterranean coast, where Israel told fleeing Palestinians to take refuge to escape ground assaults.

At least 90 people were killed in an Israeli attack on al-Mawasi on Saturday. Israel said it was targeting two senior commanders in the military wing of Hamas, including Mohammed Deif. Israel said it could not confirm if Deif had been killed in the attack.

The attacks come as Israel and Hamas continue to weigh the latest ceasefire proposal. Hamas has said talks aimed at halting the nine-month-long war would continue, even after Israel targeted Deif.

Israel has said will continue pursuing Hamas fighters who are hiding among civilians after offensives uprooted underground tunnel networks.

At least 38,713 people have been killed and 89,166 wounded in Israel's war on Gaza since October 7. The death toll in Israel from the Hamas-led attacks on October 7 is estimated at 1,139, and dozens of

people are still held captive in Gaza.

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