

Children among those killed after Israel bombs two schools in Gaza

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Gaza City, August 5 (RHC)-- At least 30 people have been killed and many others injured in Israeli strikes on two United Nations-run schools in the west of Gaza City. The latest death toll was reported to Al Jazeera by Dr Marwan al-Hams, the director of hospitals in the Gaza Ministry of Health.

According to the Palestinian Civil Defence in Gaza, 80 percent of those killed and injured in the strikes on Sunday on the Hassan Salama and al-Nasr schools were children.

Reporting from Deir el-Balah, Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud said that the schools, which have been used as shelters by displaced Palestinians, have been severely damaged. "This is the same exact scenario that we've seen in the past few days. What we know for a fact right now is that there is [a] concentration of attacks on evacuation centers. What's really concerning about that is ... that the Israeli military is not giving any prior warning to people inside these evacuation centres," Mahmoud said.

The correspondent noted that most of the buildings used as shelters for the displaced in Gaza are schools, as they are the only large spaces available now to house a significant number of people.

"This is happening in an unpredictable way, causing severe casualties and increasing the trauma of a population already displaced in some cases up to five, six or seven times across the northern part of the Gaza Strip," Mahmoud said.

Sunday's attacks followed the bombing of a school on Saturday by the Israeli army. Following Sunday's attacks, at least 15 people were killed in Israeli air raids on the Hamama school in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood in Gaza City, which was sheltering displaced Palestinians.

Following the strikes on Sunday, Nebal Farsakh from the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) told Al Jazeera that the attacks were "again another proof that there is no safe place in Gaza". "These two schools are housing displaced civilians who have been forced to leave multiple times, and now even they have been forced to flee another time after this attack," she said. "Israel has been systematically targeting civilians," Farsakh said.

The Israeli military claimed – without providing evidence – that the "schools were used by Hamas's Al Furqan Battalion as a hiding place for its terrorist operatives and as command centres used to plan and execute attacks".

Reporting from Amman, Al Jazeera's Hamdah Salhut said that these claims from the Israeli army have been seen "time and time again." "The military says and continues to claim that Hamas is using these places, but we have never seen any evidence," she said.

"The [Israeli] military claims they take precautionary measures to make sure minimum damage will be caused to civilians through their strikesbut you see time and time again Palestinian civilians injured or picking up bodies from rubble, so there is no warning," Salhut added.

Earlier on Sunday, the Israeli military also issued a new order for Palestinians to leave the southern and southeastern parts of Khan Younis in Gaza, as the army widens its offensive, according to Al Jazeera's Hind Khoudary in Deir el-Balah.

She said the announcement affects the neighbourhoods of Jurat al-Lot, al-Manara, Maan, Kizan, Kizan Abu Rashuan, al-Najjar, as-Salam, and al-Hashash. The residents of these areas were warned that "any presence of civilians in these areas is dangerous and of high risk," she said.

Earlier this month, the United Nations said more than 86 percent of Gaza has already been impacted by Israel's so-called evacuation orders, with most people asked to live in small "safe zones" that have also repeatedly come under Israeli attacks.

At least 39,583 Palestinians have been killed since Israel launched its Gaza offensive in October, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, after a Hamas-led attack on southern Israel killed at least 1,139 people on October 7th last year.

Israeli forces killed 33 people and injured 118 others in the past 24 hours alone, the ministry said on Sunday.

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