

Israel kills dozens of displaced Palestinians in Gaza amid more evacuations



Gaza City, August 22 (RHC)-- Israel has killed at least 50 more Palestinians and wounded more than 120 in Gaza as its military has ordered new evacuations in central and southern parts of the enclave.

Gaza's Civil Defence agency on Wednesday said at least four people were killed and 18 wounded in the latest Israeli strike on Salah al-Din School, which is sheltering displaced Palestinians in Gaza City.

Agency spokesperson Mahmud Bassal said that 10 of the injured were children. A father told AFP news agency his child was killed in the strike while playing in the schoolyard. "We ran to see and saw my son dead," he said without giving his name. "What did this child do to deserve this? He had no missile, no plane, no tank."

The Israeli military said in a statement the air force “conducted a precise strike on Hamas terrorists who were operating inside a command and control centre” located in the school compound.

“Hamas operatives used the compound as a hideout and a base to plan and execute attacks against [Israeli] troops and the State of Israel,” a statement said.

Israel has targeted more than 500 schools in its 10-month offensive on Gaza, alleging Hamas was using them as hideouts. But it has not provided sufficient evidence to back up its claim while Hamas has denied the charge.

In Bani Suheila, a town near Khan Younis in southern Gaza, an Israeli air raid killed seven Palestinians, two of them children and five women, at a tent camp for displaced people, medics said.

In Rafah, a Civil Defence crew recovered the bodies of four other Palestinians. They were farmers working near al-Mawasi who were killed by Israeli tanks, which opened fire on them without warning, Al Jazeera’s Tareq Abu Azzoum reported on Wednesday.

Israel’s military has killed at least 40,223 Palestinians in Gaza, according to the territory’s Ministry of Health. Most of the dead in Gaza are women and children, the United Nations human rights office said.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military issued new evacuation orders on Wednesday for several neighbourhoods in Deir el-Balah, the enclave’s most densely populated area, signalling an expansion of the army’s ground operations from south to central Gaza.

Israeli forces fired into the crowds, killing at least one person and wounding several others, medics and residents in the central Gaza city said.

Al Jazeera’s Maram Humaid, reporting from Gaza, said “a wave of terror and panic has swept through the area” as people scrambled to leave following the orders. She said witnesses reported Israeli tanks near the al-Mazraa school area, southeast of Deir el-Balah.

“The tanks approached one of the schools and started shelling near civilians. Quadcopters were also shooting at people,” Dia Lafi, another Palestinian journalist, reported. “There’s no place to go, no transportation for those trying to flee.”

“The evacuation feels like a mass exodus. There’s nowhere to go. Deir el-Balah is the final station. We’ll end up sitting in the streets,” Yasser told Al Jazeera.

“If it weren’t for my children, I would stay, even if it meant dying here. My daughter was born and raised in this war. We have endured enough.”

Gaza’s Government Media Office said more than 1.7 million Palestinians have been displaced to so-called humanitarian zones. Only about nine percent of the Gaza Strip is now designated “safe” by the Israeli military. Israel has repeatedly carried out strikes in such areas, which lack basic infrastructure and water and are overcrowded.

The UN says at least 90 percent of Gaza’s 2.3 million people have been displaced at least once since the start of the war in October.

Philippe Lazzarini, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees known as UNRWA, denounced Wednesday’s strike on the Gaza City school, saying “some were burnt to death” in the “horrific attack on one of our UNRWA schools”.

“Is there any humanity left?” Lazzarini wrote on the social media platform X. “Gaza is no place for children anymore. They are the first casualty of this merciless war.”

“We cannot let the unbearable become a new norm. Enough. A ceasefire is beyond over due.”

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