

Israel kills another UNRWA staff member in Deir al-Balah

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UN vehicles escort a destroyed truck used by workers of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), which was fired upon by Israeli forces earlier, as it is carried by a trailer vehicle along Gaza's main Salah al-Din road outside Deir el-Balah in the centre of the Gaza Strip on October 23, 2024. (AFP)

Gaza City, October 24 (RHC)-- The UN agency for Palestinian refugees says Israel has killed one of its staff members in Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip. "I can confirm that an UNRWA car was hit. One UNRWA colleague was killed," spokeswoman Juliette Touma said. The man's brother was also killed, medical sources said.

Israel has killed more than 220 UNRWA staffers in Gaza since October 2023. The regime has also damaged or destroyed two-thirds of the agency's facilities in Gaza.

Many displaced Palestinians have sought shelter in UNRWA facilities including schools. Israel has also conducted strikes on the schools-turned-shelter.

UNRWA saw funding cuts earlier this year after Israel accused a dozen of its Gaza employees of involvement in Operation Al-Aqsa Flood. Available evidence collected by the UN and independent probe teams proved the accusation was unfounded. UNRWA was created in 1949 to support Palestinian refugees.

The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees says the death toll exacted on the agency's staff since the onset of the Israeli war on Gaza amounts to the largest in the world body's history.

On Wednesday, Israeli strikes killed 20 people in Gaza, 18 of them were killed in northern Gaza, where the regime is pursuing a systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing. Hospitals in the north have either stopped providing medical services or are hardly operating.

The Gaza Health Ministry has said hospitals are running out of blood for transfusions, as well as coffins and shrouds for the dead.

"We call on the world, which has failed to provide protection and shelter for our people and has been unable to deliver food and medicine, to make an effort to send shrouds for our fallen," the ministry said in a statement.

Health ministry official Majdi Dhair has said the polio vaccination campaign has been halted under the existing dire circumstances. "We have not been able to launch the campaign to vaccinate 120,000 children in Gaza City and northern Gaza today because of the siege and the Israeli aggression."

Palestinian residents said no aid has been allowed into Jabalia, Beit Hanoun, and Beit Lahiya, three towns on the northern edge of Gaza. Israel's B'Tselem rights group has called for action against the systematic ethnic cleansing of northern Gaza.

Backed by the United States to the hilt, Israel keeps massacring Palestinians in Gaza. Since October 2023, it has killed close to 43,000 Palestinians. More than 100,000 are injured, in need of treatment which is absolutely tough to receive.

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