

At least 35 killed in Israeli attack on Gaza residential block

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Gaza City, April 10 (RHC)-- At least 35 people have been killed and dozens of others were wounded in an Israeli attack on a residential block in Gaza City's Shujayea neighbourhood, medical sources told Al Jazeera.

The Gaza Health Ministry said it expected the death toll from Wednesday's attack in northern Gaza to rise, as civil defence teams and residents dug frantically to locate dozens of missing residents believed to be trapped under the rubble.

The Israeli military said the raid targeted a senior Hamas fighter, but did not give his name, claiming that it had taken several steps to reduce harm to civilians.

Ayub Salim, 26, a resident of Shujayea, told Al Jazeera that some victims were "torn to pieces" by the attack with "multiple missiles" that sent shrapnel flying. "Dust and massive destruction filled the entire place. We couldn't see anything, just [heard] the screams and panic of the people," he said.

Reporting from Shujayea, Al Jazeera's Ibrahim Al Khalili said civil defence forces and local residents had come together to pull trapped civilians from under the rubble. Most of the victims had come to live in the block after being "forcibly displaced", he said.

Mahmoud Basal, a civil defence spokesperson, said that it was very difficult to reach the "dozens of people" trapped under the rubble as rescuers lacked the appropriate equipment as a result of Israel's blockade of the Palestinian territory, adding that more than 60 people were wounded.

Reporting from Deir el-Balah, Al Jazeera's Hind Khoudary said a doctor at Gaza City's al-Ahli Arab Hospital had told her that medics lacked the medication to treat "burned" victims. The hospital is in urgent need of blood supplies.

Paramedics, already struggling with a lack of fuel and medical supplies, had been unable to reach people in Shujayea because of the scale of destruction, with rubble on the roads preventing them from reaching those in need.

Israel resumed its aerial bombardment of Gaza on March 18th after a nearly-two-month truce with Hamas, and later expanded its ground assault across the territory. More than 1,400 people have been killed since Israel resumed its assault, according to Palestinian health authorities.

Mediators Egypt, Qatar and the United States have sought to resume talks over a ceasefire extension, but without success.

Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee said that its latest operations in Gaza had eliminated "gunmen" and destroyed weapons in Shujayea, destroying "tunnel openings and infrastructure" in Rafah.

Palestinian medical sources said the attacks, which were carried out amid a worsening hunger crisis as Israel blocks aid supplies into Gaza, targeted homes, shelters, and displacement camps.

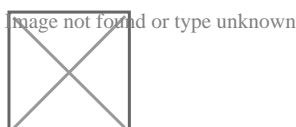
Medical sources told Al Jazeera that at least 10 other people were killed in attacks across Gaza on Wednesday, raising the daily death toll to at least 45 people.

Hamas, the armed group that governs Gaza, said that "ongoing massacres against our people, with American support, are a stain on the international community's face", slamming the "timid" response of Arab and Muslim nations.

Marwan Bishara, Al Jazeera's senior political analyst, described the attacks as "barbaric". "The way these attacks are conducted underlines that Israel wants to ethnically cleanse Gaza," he said.

Since late March, Israel has ordered people away from the edges of Gaza to create what it describes as a "security zone". Residents fear the aim is to permanently depopulate swaths of territory.

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