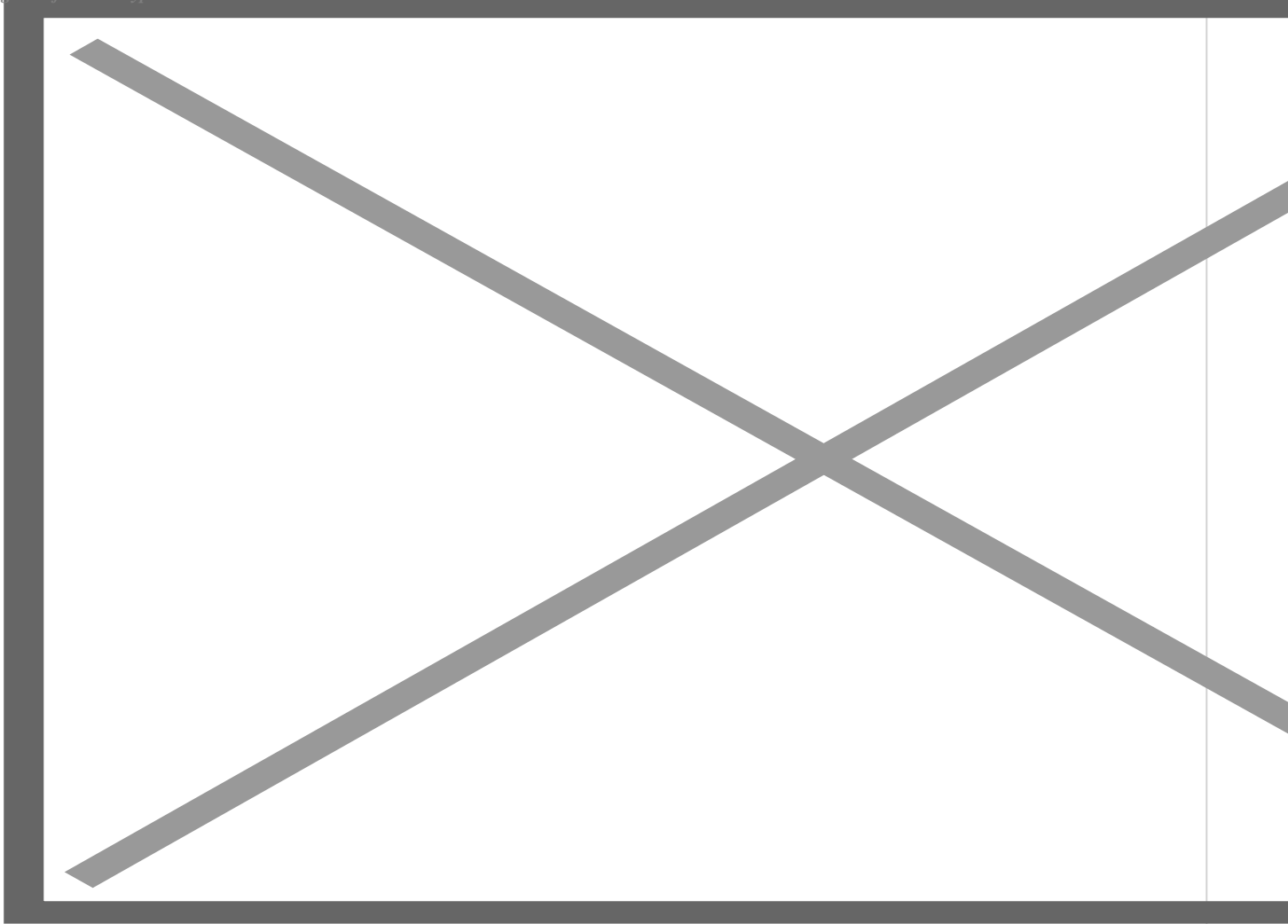


Israeli warplanes strike western Gaza Strip in fresh act of aggression

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The Israeli military has carried out new airstrikes against the Gaza Strip, as the Tel Aviv regime continues its acts of aggression against the besieged Palestinian coastal enclave.

Gaza City, July 16 (RHC)-- The Israeli military has carried out new airstrikes against the Gaza Strip, as the Tel Aviv regime continues its acts of aggression against the besieged Palestinian coastal enclave.

The military alleged in a statement that it targeted a Hamas underground facility in the early hours of Saturday morning. Palestinians new sources reported that several strikes hit areas near Gaza City shortly before 5 a.m. local time (0200 GMT).

Videos and pictures on social media showed large fireballs rising following the strikes on unspecified targets.

According to the Arabic-language Palestine Today news agency, Israeli warplanes launched eight missiles at a site for Hamas resistance movement near al-Baydar area, west of Gaza City. The report added that Israeli gunboats also fired at Palestinian fishermen's boats in the northern Gaza Strip.

The developments came shortly after U.S. President Joe Biden visited the occupied territories, and toured the Israeli military's various air missile systems, including the so-called Iron Dome and still-in-development Iron Beam laser system.

The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli blockade since 2007 when Hamas took control of the coastal enclave. The siege has inflicted severe hardship on residents. The poverty rate among Gaza's population has reached 53 percent, while "extreme poverty" stands at 33.8 percent, according to statistics by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS).

About 68 percent of families do not have enough to eat, while 80 percent of Gazans are dependent on aid. The area's unemployment rate stands at 45.1 percent, according to PCBS.

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