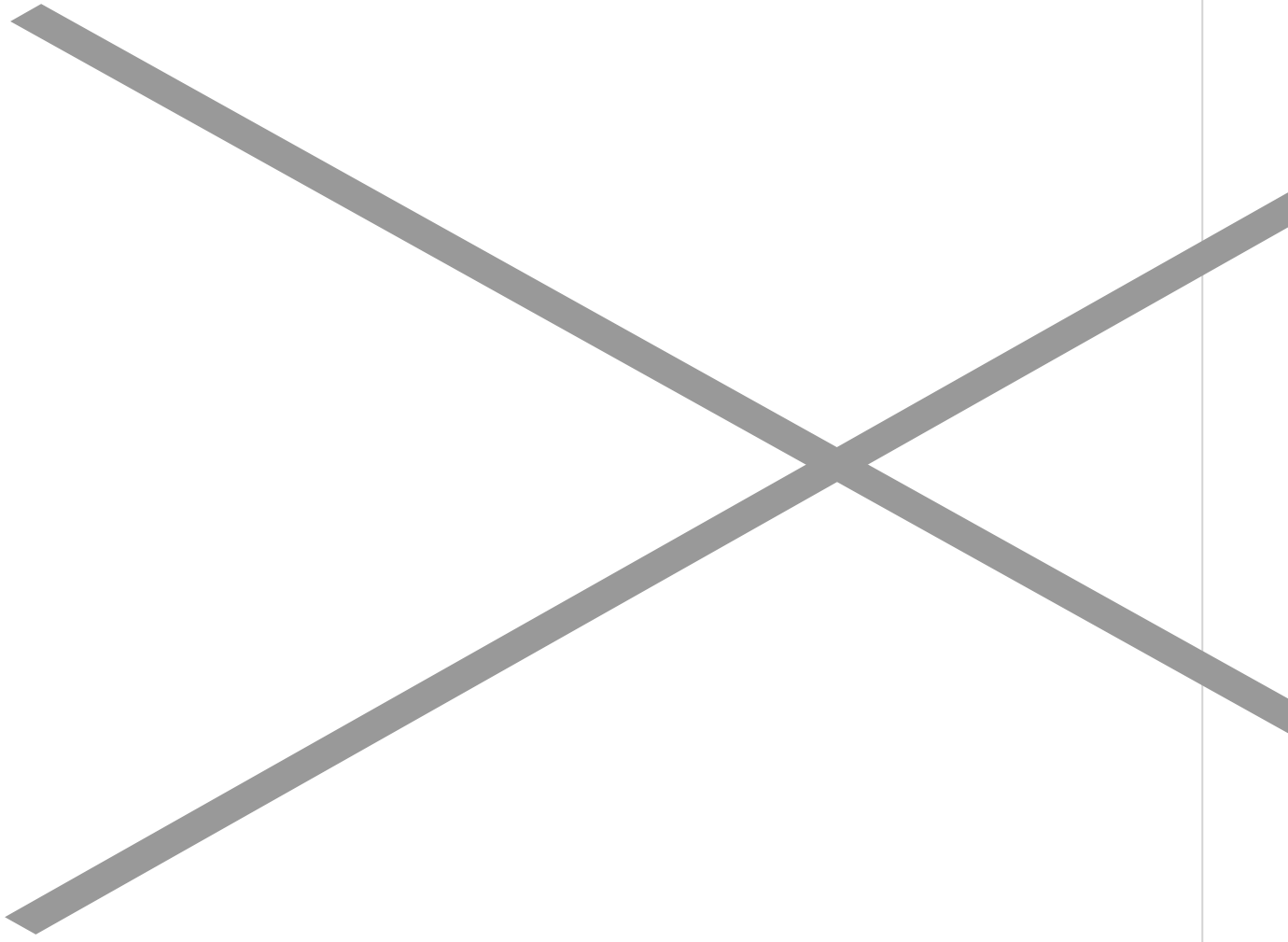


More Palestinians killed in early morning Israeli strikes across Gaza Strip

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Gaza City, October 21 (RHC)-- At least 53 Palestinians were killed Saturday morning and many others injured after Israeli military aircraft carried out a fresh round of airstrikes against various residential neighborhoods across the besieged Gaza Strip.

The official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported that the warplanes bombarded several buildings in the town of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip early on Saturday, killing at least 14 people and wounding others.

The aerial raids also left several people missing beneath the rubble, according to the news agency.

At least 14 people were also killed in Jabalia town in the north of the Gaza Strip.

Moreover, Israeli fighter jets struck the eastern flank of the Bureij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, killing and wounding several people.

Israeli warplanes also pounded a number of residential buildings in the northwestern Sheikh Radwan district of Gaza City, as well as the eastern and northern parts of Beit Lahiya, Wafa reported.

Houses were hit in Khan Yunis city as Israeli aircraft pounded the southern Gaza Strip with more air raids.

There were no immediate reports about the exact number of casualties and the extent of damage caused.

The United Nations says about half of Palestinians in Gaza have been rendered homeless while still trapped inside the enclave, which is known to be one of the most densely populated places on earth.

Health officials in Gaza say the Israeli bombardment has killed at least 4,137 people since October 7, when fighters from the Hamas resistance movement launched an unprecedented large-scale attack against the occupying Israeli regime. Another 13,162 individuals have also been injured.

Ashraf al-Qudra, a spokesman for Gaza's health ministry, confirmed that nearly 1,400 people, including 720 children, are still missing under the rubble. Qudra also noted that 352 Palestinians were killed and 669 others wounded over the past 24 hours, including 16 victims who lost their lives in the aerial strike on the Greek Orthodox Church.

Seven general hospitals and 21 health centers are now out of service, he explained, calling for international protection of hospitals and health facilities in Gaza in light of the intensified Israeli aggression.

The senior Palestinian health official further said that 46 medical personnel were killed and 85 others injured during Israeli airstrikes. At least 23 ambulances were destroyed as well.

Meanwhile, international human rights organizations have slammed Western governments over their hypocrisy and double standards in the face of Israeli atrocities in the Gaza Strip.

Tom Porteous, the deputy program director at an international rights agency, said in a statement that while the United States and European countries denounced Russia's military campaign in Ukraine, there was no clear condemnation of Israel's actions in Gaza.

"Where is the clear condemnation of the cruel tightening of the 16-year closure of Gaza that amounts to collective punishment, a war crime? Where is the outrage at statements by Israeli political leaders that seek to blur the all-important distinction between civilians and combatants in Gaza even as they order ever more intense bombardment of this densely populated territory, reducing city blocks and neighborhoods to rubble? Where are the clear and unequivocal calls for Israel to respect international norms in its attack on Gaza, let alone for accountability?" he said. He further described the West's hypocrisy and double standards as "flagrant and obvious."

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