Israeli attack on UN school used as shelter in Gaza kills at least 16

Image not found or type unknown

Palestinians gather at the site of an Israeli attack on a UN school sheltering displaced people in Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, July 6 [Ramadan Abed/Reuters]

Gaza City, July 7 (RHC)-- At least 16 Palestinians have been killed in an Israeli attack on a United Nations-run school sheltering displaced people in the Gaza Strip, the Gaza Government Media Office said, as Israel continues to pound the besieged coastal territory.

In a statement on Saturday, the Government Media Office said more than 75 people also were injured in the attack on al-Jaouni school in central Gaza's Nuseirat refugee camp.

"We condemn the Israeli occupation [for] committing these ongoing crimes and massacres against civilians, children and women," it said. The Nuseirat facility, run by the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), is the latest school to be bombed by the Israeli military since the Gaza war began in early October.

At least 38,098 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks across Gaza since October 7 and the besieged enclave faces dire shortages of food, water, medicine and other humanitarian supplies.

On Saturday, dozens of Palestinians, including five journalists, were killed as the Israeli military stepped up its bombardment of the territory.

Footage shot at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in nearby Deir el-Balah and verified by Al Jazeera's Sanad agency also showed children and young people being rushed from ambulances. They included a girl with a bandaged arm, another with a bloodied face and a boy bandage across his head. Emergency workers also tried to cover two bodies as they were quickly brought into the medical complex.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza said in a statement that 50 injured Palestinians were taken to the hospital. In a statement shared on social media on Saturday night, the Israeli army said its air force "struck several terrorists" in the area of al-Jaouni school.

Reporting from Deir el-Balah, Al Jazeera's Hind Khoudary said hundreds of Palestinian families had sought shelter at the school after they were forced to flee Israel's bombardment in other parts of Gaza. The families "chose the middle area [of the Gaza Strip] because Israeli forces said the middle area is a safe zone," Khoudary said.

"Everyone in the Gaza Strip believes that they are not safe, wherever they go."

Last month, an Israeli attack on an UN-linked school – also in Nuseirat refugee camp – killed at least 40 people and injured dozens more, according to local authorities.

Musab, a 17-year-old survivor of the early June bombing of the UNRWA Nuseirat Boys' Preparatory School, told the UN agency that his father was killed after "missiles rained down" on the family. "Concrete slabs fell on us, and suddenly, we found ourselves surrounded by the dead and injured. All of my family members were either injured or killed," Musab said in testimony shared by UNRWA.

"We were sleeping, and at two in the morning, missiles rained down on us. They pulled us from under the rubble, and all we saw were shrapnel, debris, and dust. I am in shock and can't comprehend that my father is dead! How can we go on? How will we live?"

Radio Habana Cuba