

UNRWA calls for immediate action as famine unfolds in northern Gaza

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A displaced Palestinian woman feeds children in front of a tent at the al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip on November 10, 2024. (Photo by AFP)

United Nations, November 11 (RHC)-- The United Nations agency responsible for Palestinian refugees has warned of an imminent famine in the northern Gaza Strip, calling for immediate action "within days to avert and alleviate this catastrophic situation."

"Immediate, safe, and unimpeded humanitarian access and a ceasefire now are needed more than ever," the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) said in a post on X on Sunday.

The humanitarian situation in #Gaza is rapidly deteriorating, and famine is imminent in areas within the northern Gaza Strip. Experts say that action is required within days to avert and alleviate a catastrophic situation.

The warning came a day after UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said that “famine is likely happening in northern Gaza.” “This is man-made,” he added, raising the alarm about the Israeli regime forces using starvation as a weapon to kill the remaining Palestinians in Gaza.

“Hunger has been weaponized by [Israel]. This deprives people in Gaza of the basics including food to survive,” Lazzarini said. He added that the aid that was being allowed into Gaza by the Israeli forces, which is an average of 30 trucks a day, is “not enough” to keep these people alive.

He pointed out that the aid trickling into Gaza is just enough to cover the necessary daily rations of only “six percent” of the people in northern Gaza.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has estimated that between 75,000 and 95,000 people are still trapped in northern Gaza, facing the dual risks of being killed in Israeli strikes or starving to death.

The WHO chief also warned on Saturday about the escalating crisis in northern Gaza, noting that a famine is imminent there. “Deeply alarming,” WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on X, referring to new findings from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).

The data, he noted, indicates that “there is a strong likelihood that famine is imminent in areas within the northern Gaza Strip.” “We call for an immediate scale-up and safe access for humanitarian aid — primarily food and medicines for severe malnutrition — within days not weeks.”

The Israeli regime's genocidal war on Gaza, which began on October 7, 2023, has killed approximately 44,000 Palestinians, injured another 102,700, and displaced almost 2.2 million people.

Israel has also imposed a blockade on free movement, which has led to severe shortages of food, clean water, and medicine. A committee of global food security experts also said that there is a “strong likelihood that famine is imminent in areas” of northern Gaza.

“Immediate action, within days not weeks, is required from all actors who are directly taking part in the conflict, or have an influence on its conduct, to avert and alleviate this catastrophic situation,” the independent Famine Review Committee (FRC) said in a rare alert on Friday.

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