

Israel killed over 700 athletes in Gaza since October 2023

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Gaza City, December 25 (RHC)-- The Israeli military has killed at least 704 Palestinian athletes, including 400 footballers, since it launched its genocidal war on the Gaza Strip last October.

The Palestine Football Association (PFA) announced the figures in a statement released on Monday, saying at least 94 of the victims are children.

Israel unleashed its bloody Gaza onslaught on October 7, 2023, after Hamas carried out a historic operation against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

So far, the Tel Aviv regime has killed at least 45,317 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 107,713 others.

Earlier this year, the PFA called on FIFA, football's governing body, to ban the Israel football association, including its teams and clubs, because of the "violation of international law through the occupation of the Gaza Strip; Racism and discrimination against Palestinian athletes in two Israeli clubs and violation of FIFA statutes through the league participation of five Israeli clubs from illegal settlements on Palestinian territory."

However, the timeframe for a FIFA decision has been delayed multiple times. On October 3, the FIFA Council adopted the recommendations and conclusions reached from independent, legal analysis. It also decided that its disciplinary committee would be mandated to investigate the offence of discrimination raised by the PFA in May.

"The ongoing violence in the region confirms that, above all considerations, and as stated at the 74th FIFA Congress, we need peace," FIFA President Gianni Infantino said.

"As we remain extremely shocked by what is happening, and our thoughts are with those who are suffering, we urge all parties to restore peace to the region with immediate effect."

In an opinion piece published on Press TV, football journalist Nima Tavallaey Roodsari said, "It is evident that Infantino, who once famously claimed to feel 'African, Qatari, disabled, woman,' etc does not extend this sentiment to Palestinians."

He also accused FIFA of engaging in "sportswashing" of Israel's crimes, saying the soccer's governing body has "compromised the soul of this beautiful game, at least in the short term."

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