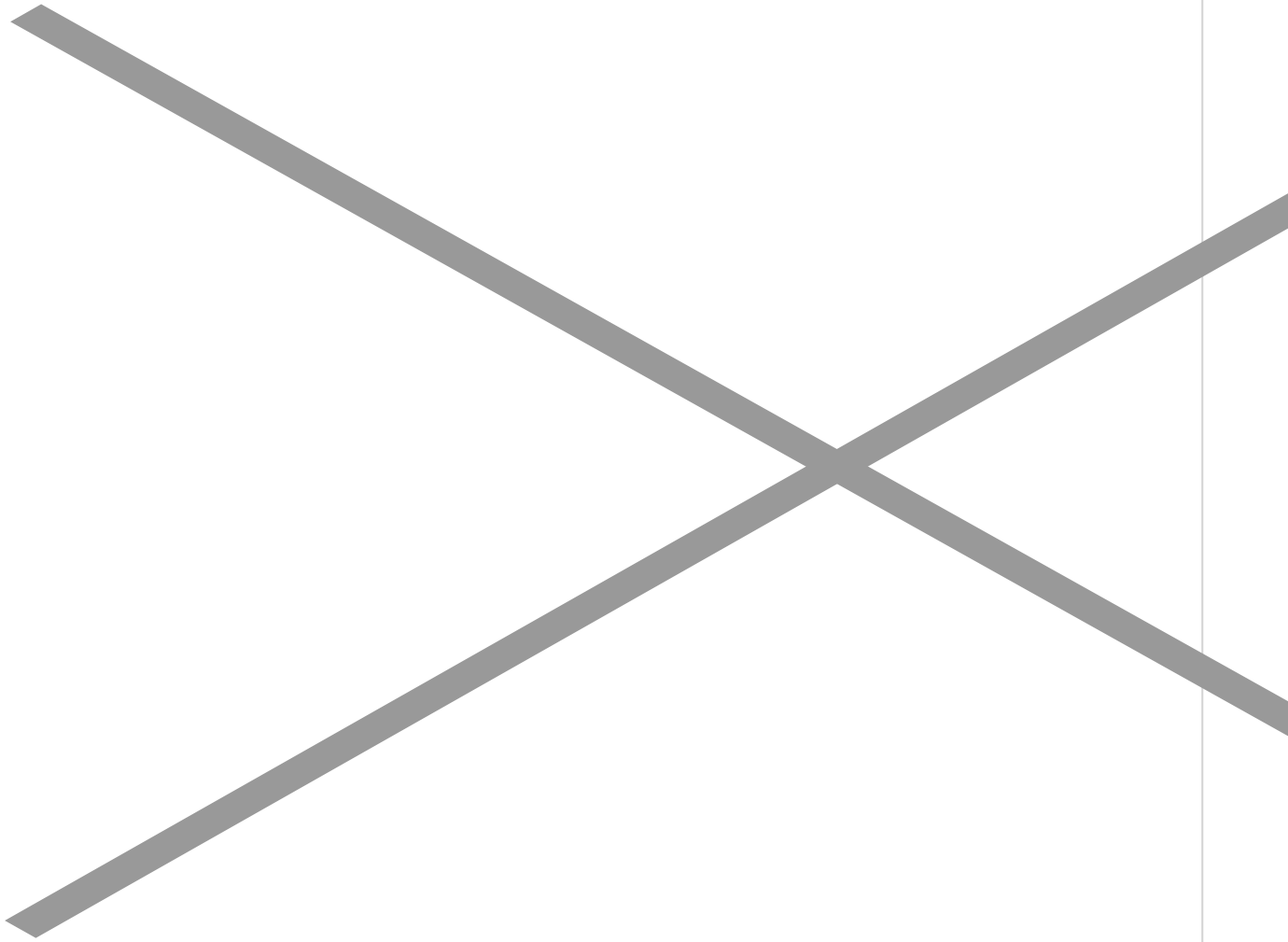


Suicides among Israeli occupation forces surge amid Gaza war

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Tel Aviv, January 3 (RHC)-- The Israeli military evacuates soldiers wounded in battles in Gaza, December 18, 2023. The Israeli army has reported a sharp rise in suicides among soldiers since the regime launched a campaign of death and destruction against the besieged Gaza Strip.

In a statement released on Thursday, the military said that at least 28 Israeli soldiers had committed suicide since October 2023. "The figure is higher than 2023 when 17 soldiers were killed in 'suspected suicides' including seven after the outbreak of war," it added.

Another 10 suspected suicides took place in 2023 before the October onslaught. The suicide numbers represent a sharp uptick from previous years. In 2022, the Israeli military recorded 14 suspected suicides, and in 2021 the number was 11.

Overall, the number of deaths in the military in 2023-2024 was the highest in decades due to war.

According to figures released by the army, at least 891 Israeli soldiers have been killed and 5,569 others wounded since the outbreak of the war on Gaza.

The army said 363 soldiers were killed in 2024, down from 558 in 2023. In 2022, 44 Israeli soldiers were killed.

According to the data, suicides have become the second-leading cause of death within the Israeli military, trailing behind operational duty, but surpassing illnesses and accidents.

Palestinian resistance groups say that the fatalities are much higher as the Israeli regime maintains strict censorship and does not release the real figures of its military casualties amid fear of public discontent over the war.

Palestinians in recent months have stepped up their resistance operations in the face of intensified Israeli aggression in northern Gaza and elsewhere across the besieged region.

In addition, the figures underscore the heavy toll the war has taken on the physical and mental well-being of military personnel. The Israeli regime said it was working to prevent suicides in the military, including by opening a 24/7 helpline, which has received over 3,900 calls since it was established in October 2023.

The military has also called up over 800 reservist mental health officers amid the war to help soldiers.

The developments come as the regime's military is reported to be facing a critical manpower problem as it runs short of thousands of forces.

The military also said thousands of reservist soldiers had apparently stopped serving in combat roles due to mental stress. It did not provide any further data or details on the phenomenon.

The high number of reservist suicides was also thought to be tied to the military's call-up of nearly 300,000 reservists during the war.

In October, over 130 Israeli soldiers, including reservists and conscripts from various military branches, signed an open letter calling for an end to the war and stating they refused to serve unless the government worked on a ceasefire and captive release deal.

The soldiers argue that continuing the war endangers the lives of the captives held by Palestinian resistance groups in Gaza, with many feeling that more of them have been killed by Israeli airstrikes than rescued.

Meanwhile, internal dissent within the army is growing, with soldiers increasingly refusing to report for duty. Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu is facing an arrest warrant over war crimes and crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court and has been accused by many Israelis and the families of captives of continuing the war for his political ambitions.

Meanwhile, Gaza's humanitarian crisis continues to worsen, with about 45,600 Palestinians, mostly women and children, killed since October 2023.

The devastation of civilian infrastructure, combined with the ongoing Israeli bombardment, has left many without access to food, water, or medical supplies.

Hospitals in the Strip are overwhelmed, and critical services are struggling to keep pace with the growing number of casualties.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV]

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