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Israel kills more than 60 Gazans in latest breadline massacre



Palestinians buy food at a local market next to a residential building destroyed by Israeli airstrikes [AP Photo/Fatima Shbair]

Israeli troops carried out yet another massacre of Gazans waiting to receive food aid Thursday, killing 60 people and injuring 160, the Euro-Med Monitor reported.

The shooting took place in the Kuwait roundabout on the outskirts of Gaza City. People seeking aid were targeted with gunfire from tanks, helicopters and drones.

Footage circulating on social media showed dozens of bodies lying close together, covered in blood.

The massacre appeared to be the largest since February 29, when Israeli forces killed 112 people and injured 700 more when they opened fire on people attempting to receive aid in the same location.

Commenting on the latest killing, the Euro-Med Monitor wrote, “Amid conditions of famine created by Israel’s government, the Israeli army continues to deliberately commit massacres in the besieged enclave. The Israeli targeting of civilians while they attempt to obtain humanitarian aid has persisted for the fifth consecutive day now, with the total number of casualties from the ‘Flour Massacres’ reaching over 500 deaths.”

Survivors of the massacre described how they were attempting to gather food for their starving families when Israeli forces abruptly opened fire. One survivor, Ibrahim Al-Najjar, said, according to the Euro-Med Monitor, that “he tried to get a bag of flour for his children at the Kuwait roundabout, but that he and others were subjected to live ammunition and artillery shells despite gathering in an area previously designated as safe by Israel’s army.”

In a statement, Gaza’s Health Ministry called the attack “a new, premeditated massacre.”

Thursday’s act of mass murder took place just one day after Israeli troops killed six Palestinians waiting for aid in the same location.

Also Wednesday, Israeli forces carried out a strike on a United Nations food distribution center in Rafah, killing six people and injuring 22 more.

UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said that the strike targeted “one of the very few remaining UNRWA distribution centres in the Gaza Strip ... as food supplies are running out, hunger is widespread and, in some areas, turning into famine.”

Since the start of Israel’s invasion of Gaza, UNRWA has recorded an “unprecedented number of violations against its staff and facilities that surpass any other conflict around the world,” according to the UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), with “at least 165 UNRWA team members killed, more than 150 UNRWA facilities struck, and over 400 internally displaced persons (IDPs) killed while seeking shelter in UNRWA facilities.”

Gaza’s Health Ministry said Thursday that at least 31,341 Palestinians had been killed in the enclave since October 7 and that 73,134 more had been wounded. Adding the number of people who are missing, the prospective death toll surges to over 40,000, according to the Euro-Med Monitor.

During March 13-14, 69 Palestinians were killed in Gaza because of Israeli military operations, the Ministry of Health said.

Almost the entire population of Gaza is facing hunger. At least 23 children are reported to have died from malnutrition and dehydration in northern Gaza over the past month, and the most basic food items are either unavailable or priced at unobtainable levels. The *New York*

Times reported that rice was being sold for \$11 per pound, more than 10 times the normal cost.

In a report published Thursday, Juzoor For Health & Social Development warned that the health care system in Gaza is at a breaking point. “The inability to continue renal dialysis, the lack of insulin, and other life-saving cardiac medications, fuel shortages, scarcity of clean water, and lack of electricity means thousands of people with cardiovascular diseases (CVD), asthma, kidney disease, or diabetes are unable to treat or control their conditions, which will result in the rapid increase in deaths,” it warned.

The Israeli government continues to reject any negotiated settlement of the war. On Wednesday, Hamas negotiators submitted a plan for a ceasefire to the Israeli government, which the office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called “unrealistic.”

The Israeli government has made clear that it intends to initiate an offensive on Rafah, the southernmost city in Gaza where over a million refugees are sheltering.

Behind the scenes, the United States is in active negotiations about publicly supporting a military action in Rafah, *Politico* reported.

In an article headlined, “The US privately told Israel the kind of Rafah campaign it could support,” *Politico* wrote that “the Biden administration would support Israel going after high-value Hamas targets in and underneath Rafah—as long as Israel avoids a large-scale invasion that could fracture the alliance.”

Such an operation would involve a massive aerial bombardment using bunker-buster bombs and involve a huge civilian death toll.

In an interview over the weekend, US President Joe Biden criticized Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s plans to invade Rafah, declaring, “You cannot have 30,000 more Palestinians dead.”

But the White House was quick to declare that Biden’s words did not imply any change in policy. “The president did not make any declarations, pronouncements, or announcements,” according to National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan in a press briefing on Thursday.

The White House has rushed to reaffirm that the US does not have any “red lines” for Israel. “I don’t think it’s productive to assign a ‘red line’ terminology to what is a very complex set of policies,” said Principal Deputy Press Secretary Olivia Dalton at a briefing aboard Air Force One on Monday.

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