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www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

Andre Damon

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Entire Gaza population faces “critical risk of famine,” UN-backed monitor warns



Palestinians crowded together as they wait for food distribution in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip, Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023. Since the start of the its attack on Gaza, Israel has limited the amount of food and water allowed to enter the territory, causing widespread hunger across the strip (AP Photo/Hatem Ali) [AP Photo/Hatem Ali]

The entire population of Gaza is at “critical risk of famine,” according to a report published Monday by the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).

The report documents the effects of a policy of deliberate starvation as part of the US-Israeli genocide in Gaza. Since March 2, no food, water or electricity has entered the Gaza Strip after Israel unilaterally abrogated a ceasefire agreement.

“The entire population is facing high levels of acute food insecurity, with half a million people—one in five—facing starvation,” the report warned.

It found that 244,000 people in Gaza are already facing a food “catastrophe,” the worst classification for mass starvation. This is an 85 percent increase over the IPC’s earlier report in October 2024.

But this figure is expected to nearly double to 470,000, or one-quarter of the population, by the end of September.

The IPC report comes just one day before US President Donald Trump will visit the Middle East, overseeing the US-Israeli policy of ethnically cleansing Gaza in preparation for what he said would be its annexation by the United States. Trump will arrive Tuesday in Saudi Arabia, a dictatorial theocratic monarchy, before traveling to Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. In the process, Trump and his family members are expected to engage in personal real estate business in the region.

During the trip, Trump is rumored to announce the renaming of the Persian Gulf to the “Gulf of Arabia,” while Saudi Arabia is expected to announce over \$100 billion in US arms purchases, including aircraft, missiles and radar systems.

While the White House has in recent days attempted to put some distance between itself and the Netanyahu government, negotiating the release of a US-Israeli hostage using its own diplomatic channels, the Trump administration continues to fund, arm and defend the Gaza genocide and the ongoing deliberate mass starvation. While US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee said that he hopes for “the beginning of the end to this terrible war,” he added that “ Hamas alone is responsible for the continued death and suffering.”

in Israel’s onslaught on Gaza, which would entail the military occupation of the entire area and the forcible relocation of the population to the south, in preparation for the expulsion of the Palestinian population from Gaza.

In a statement on Trump’s visit, Israel’s far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir pointed to Trump’s blessing for the Gaza genocide. “We must not stop. President Trump has already given you backing to ‘open the gates of hell,’” he said. He called for the continued blockade of food and water into Gaza until it is “brought to its knees” in order to “encourage voluntary emigration,” Israel’s *Srugim* news site reported.

The US gives Israel \$3.8 billion in weapons each year. It has provided billions more since October 2023, including thousands of 2,000-pound bombs that have been used to level most of Gaza.

The IPC report found that over 70,000 children and 17,000 pregnant or breastfeeding women will require treatment for acute malnutrition in the next 11 months.

The IPC report condemned Israel's plan to take over all food distribution in the Gaza Strip within the framework of a military occupation. The report said the plan was "estimated to be highly insufficient to meet the population's essential needs for food, water, shelter, and medicine."

It added:

Moreover, the proposed distribution mechanisms are likely to create significant access barriers for large segments of the population. ... Immediate action is essential to prevent further deaths, starvation, and acute malnutrition, and a descent into famine.

Jonathan Crickx, a spokesperson for UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), said in a video statement:

We have treated more than 11,000 children since the beginning of the year. ... In the coming weeks, we fear we will see more children dying.

UNICEF shared a video of a five-month-old Palestinian girl named Sewar, who is "severely, acutely malnourished," Crickx said. He continued:

If you look at her little legs, she just has the skin on her bones. When she cries, you can barely hear the sound because she's so exhausted.

Reacting to the IPC report, the Oxfam charity wrote that

Gaza's starvation is not incidental—it is deliberate, entirely engineered—and has now created the largest population facing starvation anywhere in the world—a preventable famine unfolding in real-time.

Last month, the World Food Program was forced to shut down all of its bakeries in Gaza after running out of food and fuel, and dozens of community kitchens have been forced to close. Food prices have surged, with a bag of flour previously costing \$5 now hitting \$500.

Dr. Ahmed al-Farah, the director of children's health at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, said that the hospital is getting between 5 and 10 new malnutrition cases every day. He said:

We're seeing severe cases. ... Malnutrition appears in children in a horrifying and extremely visible way. ... We have nothing to offer them. They need proteins, but there are none.

Beth Bechdol, deputy director-general at the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, told the *Financial Times* that over 95 percent of Gaza's animals have already been slaughtered, and 80 percent of its agricultural land is inaccessible. "The destruction of Gaza's food systems is unprecedented in recent memory on a global scale," she said, adding, "It is the collapse of local food production."

Since October 7, 2023, Israel has killed at least 52,862 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 119,648, according to figures published by Gaza's Ministry of Health Monday.