

Nasser hospital targeted in Gaza, ten killed in the West Bank

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Israel's murderous campaign in Gaza claimed another 163 lives between Tuesday and Wednesday and injured another 350. Close to 25,000 people have now been officially recorded killed since October 7, and over 61,500 injured.

According to the human rights organisation Euro-Med Monitor, at least 120 mass graves have been established to bury the dead, including in residential neighbourhoods and courtyards, wedding halls, stadiums, hospital courtyards, schools and mosques.

At least 12 existing cemeteries have been attacked by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), Euro-Med reports, with graves bulldozed and bodies and tombstones destroyed or removed.

Hundreds of thousands more Palestinians face death by famine and disease. On Tuesday, the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights warned "every single person in Gaza is hungry. A quarter of the population is starving and struggling to find food and drinkable water, and famine is imminent."

Writing at the end of last year, Chair of Global Public Health at the University of Edinburgh Professor Devi Sridhar referred to a study in the *Lancet* in the early 2000s which found that crude mortality rates are on average increased sixty times by conflict and mass displacement. Applying that prediction to Gaza, Sridhar explained, "the world faces the prospect of almost a quarter of Gaza's 2 million population—close to half a million human beings—dying within a year."

This and more is the fascist Israeli government's intended outcome. According to Israel's *Channel 12*, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told heads of local councils located near the border with Gaza that he anticipated the war continuing into 2025.

The genocide is being sped along by the IDF's deliberate destruction of Gaza's health

infrastructure—21 of the 35 hospitals in Gaza are no longer functioning.

Early Wednesday morning, a staff member and a patient in intensive care were wounded by Israeli fire in the Jordanian field hospital in Khan Younis. Jordan accused Israel of a "flagrant breach of international law." The nearby Nasser hospital has also come under repeated attack.

Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud expressed Gazans' fear that the same destruction will be visited on the south as in the north of the Strip, where "the vast majority of healthcare facilities were attacked, destroyed and left severely damaged to the point that they're pushed out of service completely".

On Wednesday night residents reported the most intense assault on the area so far, with tanks just metres away from the hospital. "We were in terror. All the kids were screaming and crying," Yasser Zaqzouq told the BBC. "We are living in fear and terror," said another. One described fleeing "under fire" to the city of Rafah with "a few blankets" and now "not knowing where to go."

A nurse told *NBC News* the situation inside the hospital was "disastrous".

Al Jazeera's Tareq Abu Azzoum, reporting from Rafah, explained, "The strikes have not stopped over the last few hours across the Gaza Strip, despite the fact that Israel says that they're moving to a completely new phase with low-intensity bombing," referring to the United States government's lying claims that Israel is scaling back its offensive.

Israeli forces are also disrupting the distribution of extremely limited supplies of aid. According to United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric, between January 1 and 10, just three of a planned 21 deliveries of humanitarian aid were able to reach the northern part

of Gaza, with convoys blocked by the IDF.

Returning from his fourth visit to the Strip, head of the UN's Palestinian Refugee agency Phillipe Lazzarini described, "Hundreds of thousands of people living now in the street, living in these plastic makeshift tents, sleeping on the concrete... They don't see how they can continue to bring up their children in this type of environment. People start to have difficulties to project how the future will look like."

This is proceeding under another communications blackout, this one lasting six days—the longest since the war began—with "near-total" telephone and internet outages, according to monitoring group NetBlocks.

Palestinians in the West Bank are also being silenced, writes the Arab Centre for the Advancement of Social Media, "for simply expressing their views or opinions on various online platforms, through a variety of measures including censorship, surveillance and arrests."

Hundreds are also being killed in the West Bank—365 since October 7. At least another 10 were killed in drone strikes and shooting in the Balata and Tulkarem refugee camps on Wednesday, amid IDF raids.

Palestinian Red Crescent Society medical workers reported their ambulances being blocked and fired on in responding to the scenes of the strikes. Two staff were wounded in Tulkarem. Only a week ago, four PRCS medics and their two patients were killed in central Gaza when their ambulance was targeted by an Israeli strike.

Residents in Tulkarem described IDF soldiers going house to house, blowing doors off hinges, carrying out mass arrests and interrogating Palestinians. Reporting from the camp for *Al Jazeera*, Nida Ibrahim explained, "Israeli forces have been raiding Palestinian homes one after another. They took many Palestinians to two areas. What we've seen a lot of lately is the Israeli practice of taking Palestinians out and detaining them for hours and hours for what they call 'field interrogations'."

Elsewhere in the West Bank, raids were carried out in al-Eizariya, Beitin, the Jazalone camp and nearby towns. Checkpoints were expanded and tightened in East Jerusalem and Ramallah. At least 85 Palestinians were detained, according to the Wafa news agency.

Overall, nearly 6,000 have been taken into custody in the West Bank since October 7, with the IDF carrying

out 40 raids a day on average.

On Tuesday, Palestinian shopkeeper Abu Ras reported being used as a human shield during a raid in Dura—as he was marched ahead of an IDF soldier using his shoulder as a prop to balance his rifle. "He told me that he will use me as a human shield, that young people shouldn't hurl stones," Ras told *Reuters*, "'You will walk in front of me.' That's what happened and he took me toward the center of the town."



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