

Nearly 300 bodies discovered in mass graves at Gaza's Nasser hospital

Andre Damon
22 April 2024

Nearly 300 bodies were discovered in a series of mass graves near Nasser Hospital in southern Gaza, on Sunday and Monday. The dead include men, women and children, as well as people with clear indications of being medical patients. Some were discovered handcuffed, indicating that victims were killed in mass summary executions.

After the discovery of similar mass graves in Gaza's Shifa Hospital last month, the mass grave at Nasser Hospital presents further evidence that the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) has turned Gaza's hospitals into killing fields as part of its ongoing genocide against the Palestinians in the narrow enclave.

Palestinian journalist Bisan Owda visited the mass grave on Monday, documenting that "some bodies" were found "without organs or skin or heads."

Bisan pointed the camera at one of the hundreds of decomposed bodies strewn across the field where she was standing. The legs of the body were bandaged, suggesting the victim was a patient at the hospital. "He or she was injured. And the Israeli army killed him and buried him in a mass grave," she said.

On Monday, Col. Yamen Abu Suleiman, Director of Civil Defense in Khan Younis, told CNN that "73 bodies were recovered" on Monday, bringing the total number to 283.

Suleiman told CNN that some bodies were discovered with their hands and feet tied, pointing to summary executions. "We do not know if they were buried alive or executed."

Dr. Mads Gilbert, a Norwegian physician who had worked at Shifa Hospital, told The Young Turks that the massacre is a "moral collapse."

Gilbert condemned Israel's "ruthless massacres of unarmed civilian people in the hospitals." He said these were "places of sanctuary to protect life, and to give people a shelter when they are wounded or injured or sick. The Israeli occupation army used these places to perform

the most horrible, sadistic massacres of the Palestinian people."

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation responded to the discovery by calling for a war crimes probe, declaring that Israel had committed "horrific massacres." It added, "Hundreds of displaced, wounded, sick people and medical teams have been subjected to torture and abuse before being executed and buried collectively."

The US media has made a conscious and deliberate decision to downplay and cover up the discovery of the mass graves, with the three leading US newspapers—the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal*—not having reported the story, despite CNN's coverage.

This is because further revelations of Israeli war crimes would undermine the campaign by the entire US political establishment to smear opponents of the Gaza genocide as antisemites, which is being used to justify crackdowns against student protesters throughout the US. And any such reporting would expose their complicity in these crimes—on Saturday the US House voted overwhelmingly to provide Israel with \$26 billion in new military aid in conjunction with \$61 billion for Ukraine and \$8 billion for Taiwan.

The mass graves are being discovered as mass starvation in Gaza intensifies amid an intensified Israeli blockade. On Monday, Tlaleng Mofokeng, the UN special rapporteur on the right to health, declared, "Not only is Israel killing and causing irreparable harm against Palestinian civilians with its bombardments, it and their allies are also knowingly and intentionally imposing famine, prolonged malnutrition, and dehydration."

On Monday, Gaza's health ministry said that 54 people had been killed by Israeli attacks over the past 24 hours.

But the disaster is only set to intensify as Israel prepares to launch an offensive on Rafah, where over 1.5 million displaced Gazans are sheltering.

In a statement on Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged to “deliver additional and painful blows.”

“In the coming days, we will increase the military and diplomatic pressure on Hamas because it’s the only way to release our hostages and achieve our victory,” Netanyahu said on Sunday.

Over the weekend, dozens of people were killed in airstrikes in Rafah, bringing the official death toll from Israel’s genocide in Gaza to over 34,000, with tens of thousands more missing.

On Thursday, the US and Israel held high-level discussions planning out US operations in southern Gaza, in which the US endorsed Israel’s plans to “defeat” Hamas in Rafah.

In its readout of the meeting, the White House declared, “The two sides agreed on the shared objective to see Hamas defeated in Rafah.”

Last week, Israeli and Arab-language publications reported that the Biden administration had given Israel a green light to carry out an attack on Rafah.

On Monday, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Israel will begin imminently displacing the population of Rafah in preparation for a weeks-long onslaught against the city.

The newspaper reported, “Israel is preparing to move civilians from Rafah to nearby Khan Younis and other areas, where it plans to set up shelters with tents, food distribution centers, and medical facilities such as field hospitals, according to Egyptian officials briefed on the Israeli plans.”

It concluded, “That evacuation operation would last two to three weeks and be done in coordination with the US, Egypt, and other Arab countries such as the United Arab Emirates, the Egyptian officials said. They said Israel plans to move troops into Rafah gradually, targeting areas where Israel believes Hamas leaders and fighters are hiding. The fighting is expected to last at least six weeks, they said.”



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact