

Details emerge of Israel's Nuseirat refugee camp massacre

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Details have begun to emerge of Israel's massacre at the Nuseirat refugee camp in Gaza Saturday, in which 274 people were killed and hundreds more were injured.

The *Washington Post* confirmed Sunday that Israeli forces used civilian vehicles in the military operation and that the operation was staged near the "humanitarian" port built by the US military. Gaza's Government Media Office reported that Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers pretended to be refugees before opening fire on the camp.

The massacre was carried out under the pretext of a "hostage rescue," although nearly as many hostages (three) were killed during the massacre as were rescued (four).

According to US media accounts, the massacre, which killed or injured nearly 1,000 and destroyed nearly 100 buildings, aimed to simply destroy everything in the path of the Israeli commando team. "The air force started shooting to give them a corridor, a wall of fire," retired IDF Maj. Gen. David Tsur told the *Washington Post*.

The IDF boasts of close US collaboration in the massacre. It reported that "the US hostage cell played a decisive role in freeing the hostages" and that it used "high-precision American technology that had not been used before in the process of freeing the hostages."

The Pentagon denied direct US military participation in the attack. "The pier facility, including its equipment, personnel and assets, were not used in the [Israeli military's] operation to rescue hostages in Gaza," said Pentagon spokesman Pat Ryder.

He admitted, however, "there was some type of helicopter activity" by the IDF near the pier, but claimed this was "not associated" with the US military.

The Euro-Med Monitor reported that "massive,

indiscriminate air and artillery attacks were launched by the Israeli army during the operation in order to conceal the withdrawal of Israeli forces."

The massacre sent a flood of wounded people into Gaza's overloaded hospital system. "We placed the injured along the internal corridors and in between beds. There is no room at all inside this hospital. We had them sleep in external tents," Dr. Khalil al-Dakran of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital told Al Jazeera, noting that there are four times more wounded people at the hospital than beds.

"It's a nightmare at Al-Aqsa," said Samuel Johann, a Doctors Without Borders coordinator in Gaza. "There have been back-to-back mass casualties as densely populated areas are bombed. It's way beyond what anyone could deal with in a functional hospital, let alone with the scarce resources we have here. How many more men, women and children have to be killed before world leaders decide to put an end to this massacre?"

"Israel committed a massacre in Nuseirat," said Khalil al-Degran, spokesman for Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital on Saturday. "In this terrible state ... the hospital cannot absorb the number of dead and injured. The hospital has been at full capacity for weeks."

Karin Huster of Doctors Without Borders told the Associated Press in an interview, "We had the gamut of war wounds, trauma wounds, from amputations to eviscerations to trauma, to TBIs (traumatic brain injuries), fractures and, obviously, big burns... Kids completely gray or white from the shock, burnt, screaming for their parents. Many of them are not screaming because they are in shock."

Some 274 Palestinians were killed during the massacre and another 700 were wounded. The dead included 64 children and 57 women. "The streets are

filled with dead bodies,” one witness told the Associated Press. Eighty-nine homes or residential buildings had been bombed during the massacre.

In an interview given to The Intercept, witness Abu Nasser declared, “The area turned to ashes... I couldn’t find my wife and started calling out to those around me to ensure they were still alive.”

Paraphrasing Nasser, The Intercept wrote, “The streets were filled by a swarm of quadcopter drones equipped with small arms. Tank tracks could be heard nearby. U.S.-made Apache attack helicopters hovered. Nearby homes were hit with missiles.”

Nasser continued, “We heard people crying for help in the bombed houses... They had martyrs and injuries, but we couldn’t help them... The street was filled with civilian body parts ... and many injuries bleeding out without ambulances being able to reach them.”

Martin Griffiths, UN under-secretary-general for Humanitarian Affairs, declared that the Nuseirat camp is the “epicenter of the seismic trauma that civilians in Gaza continue to suffer.” He added, “The images of death and devastation following Israel’s military operation there prove that each day this war continues, it only grows more horrific. Seeing shrouded bodies on the ground, we are reminded that nowhere is safe in Gaza. Seeing bloodied patients being treated on hospital floors, we are reminded that healthcare in Gaza is hanging by a thread.”

Since the start of the genocide, at least 37,124 Palestinians have been killed and 84,712 injured in Gaza, with countless more missing and presumed dead.

In a statement Sunday, Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) called for an independent international inquiry into Israeli massacres at Palestinian hospitals, where hundreds of mass graves have been discovered.

“Israel has attacked nearly every hospital in Gaza. Hundreds of health workers and patients have been killed and detained. The discovery of mass graves in two hospitals further demonstrates that the protected status of healthcare in Gaza under international law has totally failed, with harrowing results,” said MAP’s director of advocacy Rohan Talbot.

“The families of the dead deserve to know the truth of what happened to their loved ones, and to have justice wherever serious violations of international law have occurred. This can only be achieved through thorough, prompt and impartial investigations,” he said.

“The international community must therefore demand access to Gaza for independent investigators and forensic experts, so that evidence can be preserved and accountability pursued,” Talbot added.

Non-stop Israeli bombardment across the devastated Palestinian territory has continued in the aftermath of the raid. “Israeli bombardment from the air, land, and sea continues to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement, and destruction of houses and other civilian infrastructure,” the United Nations reported Monday.



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