

Israeli airstrikes massacre hundreds across Gaza over the weekend

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The Gaza Health Ministry reported on Sunday that the Israeli military has killed hundreds and injured 400 others in multiple airstrikes on the Palestinian enclave since Saturday.

In one of the deadliest attacks of the nine-month Gaza genocide, a massive airstrike hit an area designated as a humanitarian zone at al-Mawasi on Saturday, killing 92 and wounding 300. Palestinians had fled to the coastal town in southern Gaza near Khan Younis and Rafah to shelter, mostly in tents and with few basic services or supplies.

Eyewitness accounts of the impact of the strike said it looked like an earthquake had hit the area. Reuters reported that:

Footage of the aftermath showed a huge crater, charred tents and burnt-out cars. Victims were carried on the hoods and in the hatchbacks of cars, on donkey carts and on carpets.

A report by the Associated Press said:

“The blast threw a 2-year-old child into the air and the mother was missing,” according to Louise Wateridge, a spokesperson for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees.

The AP report added:

Another boy had his feet blown off, while an 8-year-old boy was killed. “They told me to go

there to be safe,” his grieving mother told her of the area struck.

The Gaza Health Ministry said late Saturday, “A number of victims are still under the rubble and on the roads, and ambulance and civil defense crews are unable to reach them.”

Maha Hussaini, from the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, told *Al Jazeera* the attack was nothing new. “Areas where displaced Palestinians were forced to go have been under continuous bombardment. This has been ongoing for nine months straight,” she said.

The policy of forced evacuation and relocation of Palestinians into so-called “safe zones” has been used repeatedly by the Israeli government as a means of terrorizing defenseless civilian populations with murderous air assaults.

“BBC Verify” analyzed footage of the aftermath of the strike and confirmed that it took place within “an area shown on the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) website as a humanitarian zone.”

Al Jazeera reported that most cities in the occupied West Bank went on a general strike on Sunday and protests took place in the cities of Jenin, Hebron and Tubas on Saturday night to denounce the barbaric Israeli attack at al-Mawasi.

Reuters reported that many of those wounded in the strike, including women and children, were taken to the nearby Nasser Hospital, “which hospital officials said had been overwhelmed and was ‘no longer able to function’ due to the intensity of the Israeli offensive and an acute shortage of medical supplies.”

The Israeli government justified the massacre by claiming it was targeting Hamas commander Mohammed Deif. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu said “there still isn’t absolute certainty” that Deif was killed in the strike. Hamas rejected the claim that Deif was in the area, saying, “These false claims are merely a cover-up for the scale of the horrific massacre.”

The timing of the latest Israeli strikes suggest that the Zionist regime is aiming to shut down the truce talks that have been underway in Doha and Cairo. The Israeli government, with the backing of US imperialism, is determined to complete its criminal ethnic cleansing of Gaza.

The Gaza Health Ministry reports that Israeli ground offensives and bombardments have killed more than 38,400 people in Gaza and wounded more than 88,000. According to correspondence in the prestigious journal *The Lancet*, Israel has killed 186,000 Palestinians, based on a conservative estimate of “indirect deaths” caused by the siege of Gaza.

Responding to the al-Mawasi airstrike, a Hamas official said on Sunday that the Palestinian organization was withdrawing from the negotiations. Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas’s Qatar-based political chief, said the “decision to halt negotiations [was] due to the [Israeli] occupation’s lack of seriousness, continued policy of procrastination and obstruction, and the ongoing massacres against unarmed civilians.”

Based on video and photos from the scene, the destructive impact of the blast indicates that a very powerful weapon was used in the attack. Meanwhile, President Biden claimed at his press conference on Thursday, “I’m not providing the 2,000-pound bombs. They cannot be used in Gaza or any populated area without causing great human tragedy and damage.” The White House has sent Israel 14,000 of these weapons, the largest number of any of the bombs provided by the US government.

Other airstrikes in Gaza in the last week include:

- An attack on the Abu Oreiban School in the Nuseirat refugee camp that killed at least 17 people and wounded 80.
- A strike targeting a prayer hall in the Shati refugee camp to the west of Gaza City, which killed 20 people.
- At least eight people were killed Sunday in strikes on different parts of Gaza City, where the Israeli military said its operations were ongoing.
- An Israeli bombardment of Maghazi in the center of Gaza was reported on Sunday, although casualty

numbers were unavailable.

- Last Tuesday, an Israeli attack on al-Awdah school, east of Khan Younis, as people gathered to play and watch football, killed at least 30 people and wounded 53, most of them women and children. The attack was the fourth Israeli attack on a school being used as a shelter in four days.

On July 24, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has been accused of war crimes by the International Criminal Court, will address a joint session of Congress; essentially to deliver a progress report to his imperialist paymasters.

The *World Socialist Web Site* calls on workers and young people to join the demonstration and meeting in Washington on that day called by the Socialist Equality Party to provide a political perspective for building a mass movement based in the working class, to halt the genocide and end imperialist war through the fight for international socialism.



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