

Israel carpet bombs Beirut after Biden announces ceasefire

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The government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu carpet bombed Beirut and its southern suburbs on Tuesday, moments after US President Joe Biden announced a ceasefire between the Zionist regime and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Just before Netanyahu's security cabinet was scheduled to meet on the deal, the Israeli military launched what has been described as a relentless air assault on the Lebanese capital city, including strikes on residential buildings that house displaced people.

One of the strikes completely leveled a building in central Beirut's Nuwairi district less than an hour before the attacks on the suburbs began. Lebanon's National News Agency (NNA) said, "A fierce airstrike carried out on Tuesday by Israeli enemy warplanes targeted a building near Khatem al-Anbiyaa Mosque in Al-Nuwairi area of Beirut."

An NNA correspondent said the raid on Nuwairi targeted a four-story building and at least seven people were killed and 37 wounded, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. As rubble is removed and the search is underway for survivors, the death toll is expected to rise.

NNA said the apartment building that was struck was in central Beirut's Hamra district. Hamra is the capital's busiest commercial district and home to two American universities and multiple international nonprofit offices. NNA also reported "a hostile drone hit al-Qard al-Hassan in Zuqaq al-Blat," referring to a Hezbollah-linked financial institution.

A report by the *New York Times* said:

The first Israeli airstrike that rattled Beirut, the Lebanese capital, on Tuesday struck without warning, destroying a four-story building in the

heart of the city. Then a barrage of airstrikes struck the city's southern suburbs in quick succession: One strike, then two, then 20—all within minutes and all sending plumes of black smoke across the skyline.

Soon a city on edge was panicked, as the Israeli military issued warnings for four more imminent strikes in the capital. People jumped into their cars or took to the streets on foot trying to get out of the city, clogging the roads with crowds and bumper-to-bumper traffic. Few were certain of where to go or how to avoid the neighborhoods highlighted in the warnings.

Other press reports said that at least 25 were killed by the air strikes across Lebanon. The health ministry said at least 10 people were killed in central Beirut, six in the southern town of Shaqra, two in the southern town of Tyre, six in the Baalbek-Hermel region and one in Hadath in the Mount Lebanon area south of Beirut.

As per the modus operandi of Israel, the Zionist military justified its assault on unarmed civilians and refugees with references to "intelligence" about "nine terror targets that were components of Hezbollah's financial management and systems in the areas of Beirut, Sidon, Tyre, and Beqaa, in continuation of earlier strikes."

By around 4:00 p.m. US Eastern Time, media outlets began reporting that the Israeli security cabinet had approved the ceasefire. A statement from the prime minister's office said the cabinet approved it by a majority of 10 ministers against one. However, the statement went on to say Israel "maintains its right to act against any threat to its security." In other words, the US-backed ceasefire only applies to Hezbollah.

According to a statement by a senior Biden administration official, Israel will not immediately withdraw from Lebanon when the ceasefire begins, but “a 60-day period will start in which the Lebanese military and security forces will begin their deployment towards the south.”

A report by CNN said, “The Lebanese military will be ‘authorized and instructed’ by the Lebanese government to take positions in the south and ensure that Hezbollah both moves north and that all of their heavy weaponry is removed. The Lebanese military ‘will also be patrolling the area and ensuring that if there’s any remaining infrastructure or remaining weaponry, that it is removed and that no such infrastructure can be rebuilt again in that area,’ the official said.”

According to the latest figures released by the Lebanese Health Ministry, at least 3,768 people, including as many as 240 children, have been killed and at least 15,699 people have been injured by Israel since the simultaneous assault on the country to the north and the genocide in Gaza began on October 7, 2023.

While the Biden administration was claiming that the ceasefire in Lebanon will “create space” for a deal with Hamas in Gaza, the Israeli genocide against Palestinians continues. On Tuesday, Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip killed at least 14 Palestinians, pushing up the overall death toll since last year to 44,249, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

“Israeli forces killed 14 people and injured 108 others in three massacres of families in the last 24 hours,” the ministry said, adding, “Many people are still trapped under the rubble and on the roads as rescuers are unable to reach them.” A ministry statement also said that at least 104,746 other Gazans have been injured over the past 13 months of ethnic cleansing.

In Gaza City, at least 13 were killed by an Israeli air strike on a school sheltering displaced families on Tuesday. Medics said dozens were wounded that hit the Al-Hurreya School in the Zeitoun neighborhood, one of the oldest suburbs of Gaza City.

Later Tuesday, a second Israeli air strike on a house also in Zeitoun suburb killed seven people and wounded others, and another strike killed at least one man in the southern city of Rafah.

Meanwhile, the *Guardian* reported that Israeli settlers

are preparing to move into Gaza following the forced evacuation, starvation and mass murder of Palestinians from the area. The *Guardian* reported that a group of far-right Israeli settlers from the Nachala organization held a conference in the closed military zone of the strip’s periphery to discuss “moving into the Gaza Strip and taking over land there, to build their own homes.” *Guardian* Jerusalem correspondent, Bethan McKernan, attended the event and said members of the Israeli Knesset and cabinet ministers were present.

McKernan said although plans to “re-settle” Gaza are in the initial stages, the presence of politicians show the political support within the Israeli establishment that exists for the settler movement. McKernan explained that, while Netanyahu has claimed he does not support settlements in Gaza, “people in his own party, as well as the far-right elements of the government, his coalition partners have been talking about it like it is going to happen.”



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