

Israel massacres another 60 Palestinians in Gaza, renews ground offensive

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19 March 2025

One day after Israel massacred over 400 people in a series of airstrikes in Gaza, the Israeli military continued its bombing campaign and launched a ground offensive into the territory.

Sixty people were killed on Tuesday, according to Al Jazeera, bringing the total number of people killed in the two-day period close to 500. The massacres and ground operations are in clear defiance of a “ceasefire” that Israel nominally agreed to two months ago.

The launch of a major new military offensive in Gaza has been accompanied by the largest US attacks on Yemen to date and increasing threats by the Trump administration to wage war against Iran. The aim of the region-wide military escalation is the ethnic cleansing and annexation of Gaza, as part of the creation of a US-Israeli-dominated “New Middle East.”

The 18-month-long Gaza genocide has officially killed 61,700 people, according to Gaza’s media office, and has leveled the entire region.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said that the airstrikes on Tuesday and Wednesday were “only the first step,” threatening the “complete destruction of Gaza.” He continued, “Israel will act with force you have never known before.”

He pledged, “Israel will act with an intensity that you have not seen.” He told the residents of Gaza, “What comes next will be much harder, and you will pay the full price.”

Large numbers of Palestinians had returned to their shattered homes and neighborhoods over the past two months and are now being displaced by force.

The Israeli military issued evacuation orders to 150,000 people in the North and East of Gaza, raising the prospect of an imminent ground invasion of those regions.

Farida al-Ghoul, a 28-year-old English teacher, told

the *Financial Times* she was forced to flee with her family from the northern town of Jabalia. “We could only bring some clothes and some canned food, but no water, because there isn’t even a donkey cart to take us, and we might need to carry the children. ... We are not just numbers, we have families and we have dreams.”

Responding to Tuesday’s massacre, Catherine Russell, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) chief said in a statement that Tuesday was the deadliest single day for children in Gaza in the past 12 months. “Reports and images emerging from the Gaza Strip following today’s attacks are beyond horrifying. Hundreds of people have reportedly been killed, including more than 130 children, representing the largest single-day child death toll in the last year.”

The United Nations said that one of its staffers was killed and five others were wounded in an attack Wednesday on one of its guesthouses in Gaza City. Jorge Moreira da Silva, head of the UN Office for Project Services, said that “Israel knew this was a UN premises, that people were living, staying and working there.” The massacre brought the number of UN personnel killed in Gaza since October 7, 2023 to 280. Bulgaria’s foreign ministry confirmed that the UN staffer was Bulgarian.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a statement that he “strongly condemns all attacks on UN personnel and calls for a full investigation.” He added, “The locations of all UN premises are known to the parties to the conflict, who are bound by international law to protect them and maintain their absolute inviolability.”

Gaza’s Government Media Office condemned the targeting of the UN facility by Israel. “This crime,” it said, “[is] part of a deliberate policy targeting UN and humanitarian institutions to prevent them from

fulfilling their duty to assist the Palestinian people.”

Alongside the bombardment, Israeli forces moved into Gaza to occupy the Netzarim Corridor, which it has used to bisect Gaza into a north and south and prevent Palestinians from moving freely.

In a statement, the Israeli military announced that its forces “have begun a focused ground operation in the center of the Gaza Strip and in the south with the aim of expanding the security area and creating a partial buffer between the north and south of the Strip.”

The massacres and ground operations take place against the backdrop of a total blockade by Israel of food, water, energy, and medical supplies into Gaza, which has now lasted for over two weeks.

In a statement, the Palestinian Ministry of Health said that the health system is facing total collapse. “In the Gaza Strip, hospitals are operating at double capacity, amid a continuous influx of wounded and injured patients. The health system is suffering from a severe shortage of medicines, medical supplies, and fuel needed to operate medical equipment and generators.”

It continued, “The direct targeting of health facilities has put more than 80 percent of hospitals and medical centers out of service, while the few remaining facilities are suffering from severe overcrowding, a severe shortage of medical staff, and the impossibility of performing urgent surgeries due to the lack of anesthesia and basic supplies.”

Marwan al-Hams, director of field hospitals at Gaza’s Health Ministry, told Al Jazeera that due to Israel’s blockade of medical supplies, “Anyone who sustains a serious injury in the Gaza Strip is doomed to die due to the lack of resources.” He added that Israel’s cutoff of electricity to Gaza’s main water desalination plant poses “a particular danger to kidney patients,” accusing Israel of carrying out an “act of revenge” by attempting to “halt medical services completely.”

A report by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics showed that Gaza’s water supply has fallen by 65 percent, leaving the average person with around just one gallon of water per day, around one-fourth of the World Health Organization’s minimum humanitarian standard for emergencies.

The attack on Gaza was accompanied by further Israeli military operations in the West Bank, where Israeli forces carried out arrests and forced over 80 families to flee the Ein Beit el-Ma refugee camp.

In a statement, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu raised the prospect of expanding Israel’s offensive against the West Bank, saying, “While we are waging a fierce war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, we are aware of the possibility of a larger and stronger front emerging here in [the occupied West Bank].”

The *Wall Street Journal* hailed the renewed massacres in Gaza in an editorial on Wednesday, titled, “No More Free Gaza Cease-Fire for Hamas.” It hailed the Trump administration’s plans to target Iran, declaring, “for the first time in the war, Iran is under U.S. pressure rather than protection.”

Wednesday, the United States carried out attacks throughout Yemen, following attacks over the weekend that killed dozens of people.

In a statement, US President Donald Trump threatened to “annihilate” the Houthi movement in Yemen and menaced Iran. “Watch how it will get progressively worse. It’s not even a fair fight, and never will be. They will be completely annihilated!” Trump wrote of Iran’s Houthi rebels. He added, “Iran must stop the sending of these supplies IMMEDIATELY.”

Separately, a US National Security Council spokesperson told the *Jerusalem Post* that Trump had sent a letter to Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei giving Iran a two-month deadline to shut down its nuclear program, adding that if this “were not possible, there would be other ways to resolve the dispute,” in a threat to directly attack Iran.



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