

Israel escalates Gaza bombings, forcible displacement and famine as Trump tours Middle East

Andre Damon
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As US President Donald Trump continued his tour through the Middle East, Israel escalated its mass killings in Gaza, bombing two hospitals and killing at least 80 people in a single day.

On Tuesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to complete the military occupation of Gaza, pledging that “in the coming days, we will go in... with full force to complete the operation.”

He added, “There will be no situation where we stop the war.” Netanyahu doubled down on his plan to ethnically cleanse Gaza, declaring that his government has “set up a governing body that will allow [civilians] to exit” Gaza.

Despite multiple media reports of a “rift” between Netanyahu and Trump, who is not stopping in Israel as part of the trip, Trump made clear that his efforts to improve relations with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf monarchies are in Israel’s interests.

“This is good for Israel, having a relationship like I have with these countries; Middle Eastern countries, essentially all of them,” Trump said.

In a statement published Wednesday, White House National Security Council spokesman James Hewitt told *Politico* that “Israel has had no better friend in its history than President Trump.”

On Tuesday, Israel murdered Palestinian journalist Hassan Aslih in an airstrike on Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis. The strike killed two patients and wounded others. In a separate attack on Tuesday, Israeli forces launched nine missiles at the courtyard of the European Hospital in southern Gaza, killing 28 people and wounding 60 others.

Aslih is one of 160 journalists killed by Israeli attacks in Gaza since the start of the war.

In September, a UN inquiry commission concluded that Israel has repeatedly attacked hospitals as part of “a concerted policy to destroy the health-care system of Gaza.”

The massacres continued Wednesday, with 80 people killed since dawn. Northern Gaza’s Indonesian Hospital reported that it received 50 bodies overnight, including 22 children and 15 women following Israeli bombings of Jabalia.

Mohammad Awad, an emergency doctor at Indonesian Hospital, told the AFP news agency, “The bodies of the martyrs are lying on the ground in the hospital corridors.”

He added, “There are not enough beds, no medicine, and no means for surgical or medical treatment, which leaves doctors unable to save many of the injured who are dying due to lack of care.”

“These attacks are not merely aimed at physical infrastructure or health facilities alone,” the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor said in response to the hospital massacres. “Rather, they appear designed to engineer slow death, pushing Gaza toward total collapse by depriving civilians of even the most basic means of survival—and stripping them of any chance at life. This is part of a deliberate strategy to uproot Palestinian existence in Gaza from its foundations.”

During a meeting of the United Nations Security Council Wednesday, Tom Fletcher, the UN’s humanitarian chief, said that Israel is “deliberately and unashamedly imposing inhumane conditions on civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.”

He added, “I can tell you, from having visited what’s left of Gaza’s medical system, that death on this scale has a sound and a smell that does not leave you.”

He accused Israel of “placing their objective of depopulating Gaza before the lives of civilians” and “making starvation a bargaining chip.”

Israel also launched further mass displacement measures on Tuesday, giving a “final warning” to residents of Jabalia and nearby areas. The next day it announced further mass expulsions from Gaza City.

Israel’s recent expulsion orders have displaced a further 20 percent of Gaza’s population, with 70 percent of the Gaza Strip under forcible “evacuation” orders.

No food, water or electricity has entered Gaza since Israel unilaterally abrogated a ceasefire on March 2. As a result, all UN bakeries in Gaza have been shut down, and over 60 percent of Gaza’s 180 community kitchens have been closed.

On Monday, the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) warned that the entire population of Gaza is at “critical risk of famine.” It said, “The entire population is facing high levels of acute food insecurity, with half a million people—one in five—facing starvation.”

On Wednesday, Reuters reported that the US-backed organization planning to take over the distribution of all food in Gaza will begin its operations this month.

Reuters reported that the “Gaza Humanitarian Foundation” would begin distributing food from secure distribution sites patrolled by US security contractors, within the military oversight of the Israeli military.

The plan corresponds with a proposal announced by the Netanyahu government earlier this month to militarily occupy the whole of the Gaza Strip, providing starvation rations to the population in preparation for the expulsion of the population of Gaza from the strip.

In an interview with BBC, UN humanitarian spokesperson Olga Cherevko condemned the plan, saying that Israel was seeking to use “food and fuel as leverage, as part of a military strategy.” She added, “All aid would be channeled through a handful of militarized hubs.” The Oxfam charity, meanwhile, condemned the proposal as a “farce,” saying, “No logistical solution is going to address Israel’s strategy of forcible displacement and using starvation as a weapon of war.”

In a separate statement, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said the plan is part of “the creation of

conditions for the eradication of Palestinian lives in Gaza.” It called the plan “another tool in the ongoing campaign of ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian population” in Gaza.

It added, “MSF firmly rejects and condemns any plan that further reduces the availability of aid and subjugates it to Israeli military occupation objectives.” The statement noted that the organization has reported a 32 percent increase in the number of malnutrition cases reported in Gaza in the past two weeks.

It concluded, “The survival of Palestinians lies at the mercy of Israeli authorities, who are denying the entire population access to food, water, medical care, and shelter. Israel continues to pursue its campaign of ethnic cleansing by deliberately destroying the conditions necessary for life.” MSF said.

In a separate statement, Gisha, an Israeli NGO, condemned the creation of the US-backed foundation, declaring that it “is designed to bring about the forced displacement of the population, while exposing them to the risk of harm.” It added that “The plan is the next step in a string of moves aimed at consolidating control over the Strip and strangling the population and anyone trying to provide them relief.”

Amjad Shawa, head of the Palestinian NGO Network, added in an interview with *Al Jazeera*, “This military plan to distribute aid is to forcefully displace Palestinians from Gaza North to Rafah and to establish the so-called humanitarian bubbles.” He added, “It’s kind of militarization of aid to replace the humanitarian structure that has worked for one and a half years in full capacity.” He concluded that it was part of an “Israeli plan to destroy more and push Gazans to leave Gaza.”



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