

Israel launches air strike on school housing displaced Palestinian families in Gaza City

Kevin Reed
26 May 2025

Early Monday morning, Israeli airstrikes hit a school in Gaza that had been converted into a shelter for displaced families, killing at least 36 people and injuring more than 55, according to Gaza's Health Ministry and multiple eyewitness reports. Most of the victims were women and children.

The attack, which occurred as people slept inside the facility, set belongings ablaze and left scenes of devastation and chaos. "We were sleeping when the explosion happened. There were screams everywhere, people looking for their children in the dark," said one survivor interviewed by the *Washington Post*.

The school, located in the Daraj area of Gaza City, had become a refuge for dozens of families who had already been displaced multiple times by months of relentless bombardment and ground assaults.

According to Fahmy Awad, head of emergency services for Gaza's Health Ministry, the strike was sudden and without warning. "They targeted us where we thought we were safe," Awad said, as rescue workers pulled bodies from the rubble, and survivors searched for missing relatives.

The death toll is expected to rise as more victims are found beneath the debris. This latest attack comes amid a broader escalation of violence across the Gaza Strip, with Israeli forces intensifying airstrikes, as well as ground operations as part of the final phase of the ethnic cleansing operation dubbed Operation Gideon's Chariots by the Israeli government.

Health officials in Gaza report that, in the past 24 hours alone, at least 38 people have been killed in various strikes, including children. The cumulative toll since October 2023 is estimated at more than 53,800 Palestinians killed and over 122,000 injured, the majority women and children, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

Eyewitnesses have described a landscape of terror, displacement and mass murder. In Khan Younis, a southern city repeatedly targeted by Israeli airstrikes, families have been forced to flee their homes for the tenth or eleventh time. Ne'man Abu Jarad, his wife Majida and their six daughters now live in a makeshift tent among the ruins of their former neighborhood. "Each time you make the choice to depart, it feels like you are ending your own life," Ne'man told the Associated Press.

Majida, visibly thinner than in previous months, described the daily struggle to find food: "When one of my daughters says to me, 'Baba, I'm hungry,' I give her a bite or two so that her piece of bread lasts until the end of the day." Their story is echoed by nearly every family in Gaza—2.3 million people, the majority of whom have been displaced multiple times by Israeli military orders and the destruction of their homes.

Starvation has become a central weapon in Israel's genocidal campaign against the Palestinians. Since March, Israel has blocked the entry of food, fuel, medicine and other essential aid into Gaza, pushing the population into famine and starvation. Aid organizations report that supplies being allowed in are terribly insufficient. The director of Medical Relief in Gaza told Al Jazeera that only 92 aid trucks entered the Strip over three days, compared to 500 per day before the war.

"The health, water and food situation in the Strip is very difficult," he said, noting that Israel continues to restrict access. The International Food Policy Research Institute and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) have warned that Gaza is experiencing one of the world's worst food crises, with millions at risk of acute malnutrition.

Hospitals, already overwhelmed by casualties, have

been repeatedly targeted by Israeli strikes, further reducing their capacity to treat the wounded and sick. In addition to the school strike, a separate Israeli attack on a hospital in Gaza City killed 15 members of the same family, including women and children, according to the Health Ministry.

Artillery shelling has been reported around Al-Awda Hospital, with shrapnel falling in its courtyards. Medical staff is working under impossible conditions, often without electricity, clean water or adequate supplies.

Palestinians interviewed by Reuters and the Associated Press describe a life of constant terror and despair. Fadi Tamboura, sitting beside a crater left by an airstrike, wept as he asked:

Where should we go today? To the west? There's bombing in the west. To the east? They're killing people there. Me, my children, and my family, where should we go?

Another resident, Ismail, recounted a night of relentless bombardment:

The unending explosions and the airstrikes reminded us of the war's early days. The ground didn't stop shaking beneath us. We thought Trump arrived to save us, but it seems Netanyahu doesn't care, nor does Trump.

While the Israeli government claims that its operations are aimed at defeating Hamas and securing the release of hostages, leaked comments from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, reported by Al Jazeera, reveal that the forced displacement of Palestinians from Gaza is the central aim.

Netanyahu reportedly said in closed-door meetings:

We are destroying more homes; they have nowhere to return. The only inevitable outcome will be the desire of Palestinians to emigrate outside of the Gaza Strip.

This policy of rendering Gaza uninhabitable, blocking the entry of food and emergency aid, combined with the systematic destruction of homes, infrastructure and medical facilities, is central to the strategy of ethnic cleansing.

US President Donald Trump, after concluding his recent Middle East tour, said, "people are starving" in Gaza and said he hoped for "good things" in the coming month, which includes the forcible removal of Palestinians to other countries. Meanwhile, the US continues with diplomatic and military support for the ongoing assault.

The total occupation of Gaza and the transfer of the population to concentration camps are the prelude to plans for the displacement of the remaining population in Gaza. As Netanyahu declared in a recent press conference, his government "is ready to end the war, under clear conditions that ... we carry out the Trump plan. A plan that is so correct and so revolutionary." This Israeli and US plan is for the permanent removal of the Palestinian population from Gaza.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:
wsws.org/contact