

Israeli troops massacre 10 aid-seekers in two days as Netanyahu says food distribution plan aims to create “sterile zone”

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At least ten Palestinians desperately seeking food at distribution centers have been killed over the past two days, after Israeli troops opened fire on aid-seekers for a second day in a row Wednesday.

As hundreds of thousands of people queued up in a desperate attempt to receive food Wednesday, an Associated Press (AP) journalist reported hearing an Israeli tank and soldiers open fire, while the Israeli military admitted firing “warning shots.”

The massacres took place at distribution centers set up by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a project backed by Israel and the United States that seeks to displace Gaza’s established humanitarian organizations and gain control over the distribution of starvation rations to the Palestinian population.

The massacre of aid-seekers for a second day in a row confirms the warnings by the United Nations, Oxfam, and other humanitarian organizations that the US-Israeli aid distribution scheme is nothing more than a logistical component of Israel’s ethnic cleansing program.

The US and Israel have sought to present the creation of the GHF as an independent humanitarian organization aimed at feeding the starving population of Gaza. In reality, it is the logistical component of “Operation Gideon’s Chariots,” the ongoing Israel Defense Forces (IDF) offensive to completely conquer Gaza and transfer its remaining population to concentration camps in preparation for their forcible displacement from the enclave.

The GHF uses US military logistics suppliers for distribution and is guarded by US military contractors. It is unclear whether US contractors joined Israeli troops in opening fire on the aid seekers on Tuesday

and Wednesday.

On Wednesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the GHF is part of a plan to create “a sterile zone in the South of Gaza, where the entire population can move for its own protection.”

In a tweet on Wednesday, Avigdor Lieberman, Israel’s former Minister of Finance, made clear that the GHF is financed by the Israeli intelligence forces and the military. “The money for humanitarian aid comes from the Mossad and the Ministry of Defense. Hundreds of millions of dollars at the expense of Israeli citizens,” Lieberman said.

Footage from one of the distribution centers near Rafah showed aid-seekers penned into cage-like structures, where they had to submit to biometric scans before receiving rations.

In a statement, Gaza’s Government Media Office said Israeli forces “opened direct fire on hungry Palestinian civilians who had gathered to receive aid” at a distribution site in southern Gaza, wounding at least 62 people.

“These locations were transformed into death traps under the occupation’s gunfire,” the government media office said.

Commenting on the Israeli massacres of aid seekers, Jonathan Whittall, a senior UN humanitarian official, said the Israeli effort to seize control of food distribution was part of “an assault on their human dignity.” He added, “Yesterday, we saw tens of thousands of desperate people—under fire—storming a militarized distribution point established on the rubble of their homes,” Mr. Whittall told reporters in a news briefing on Wednesday.

In a statement on Wednesday to the National Press

Club in Japan, UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said that “The model of aid distribution proposed by Israel does not align with core humanitarian principles.”

He added, “We have seen yesterday the shocking images of hungry people pushing against fences, desperate for food. It was chaotic, undignified, and unsafe,” declaring, “I believe it is a waste of resources and a distraction from atrocities,” he added, referring to civilian deaths during Israel’s air and ground war in the small coastal territory.

He called on Israel to allow the UN and other humanitarian agencies to distribute food, which has been almost completely blocked by Israel since March 2.

The Trump administration has fully backed the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, with Acting US Alternate Representative to the UN John Kelley calling on the international organization to “work with the GHF and Israel to reach an agreement on how to operationalize this system in a way that works for all.” He claimed the foundation was “independent” and aimed to “provide a secure mechanism for the delivery of aid to those in need.”

Israel meanwhile continued its mass killings throughout Gaza, massacring at least 63 people on Wednesday. Since October 7, 2023, Israel has killed 54,084 Palestinians in Gaza and wounded 123,308 wounded, according to Gaza’s health ministry.

In a post on X, UNRWA chief Lazzarini accused Israeli troops of carrying out a “summary execution” of one of its staffers on March 23. Kamal, a member of the UNRWA staff, was killed along with eight medical workers from the Red Crescent. Lazzarini said, “Kamal was killed through one or multiple blows to the back of his skull. He was then buried next to the other @PalestineRCS team members” in a mass grave.

Despite the establishment of the US-Israeli aid scheme, mass starvation is ongoing. A report by the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification earlier this month estimated that almost 71,000 children under the age of five are expected to be “acutely malnourished” over the course of the next 11 months.

The report said, “The entire population is facing high levels of acute food insecurity, with half a million people - one in five - facing starvation.”



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