

Famine claims lives of 289 Gazans as Israel attacks Gaza City

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24 August 2025

Gaza's Health Ministry said Sunday that 289 people, including 115 children, have died of malnutrition and starvation since the start of the US-Israeli genocide in Gaza. The announcement comes after the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) hunger monitor officially pronounced a famine in Gaza on Friday.

"This famine is entirely man-made, and it can be halted and reversed," the report warned. "The time for debate and hesitation has passed; starvation is present and rapidly spreading."

According to UN figures, nearly 12,000 children under the age of five were found to have acute malnutrition in July—a figure that has only continued to surge.

Munir al-Bursh, the director of Gaza's Health Ministry, said that in the past 24 hours alone, eight Palestinians, including one child, had died of starvation or malnutrition. "We are in a race against time to address famine, as the humanitarian response must be massive."

In a statement over the weekend, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) called the Gaza famine "man-made," saying it was "the result of systematic obstruction, indifference, and delay."

In a statement over the weekend, Philippe Lazzarini, the commissioner-general for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), pointedly compared the Gaza genocide to the Holocaust, declaring "'Never Again' has deliberately become again. This will haunt us. Denial is the most obscene expression of dehumanization."

The ongoing mass starvation comes as the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) expands its campaign to capture Gaza City, which aims to place the enclave under total

Israeli military control in preparation for transferring the population of Gaza to concentration camps in the country's south and its eventual expulsion to other countries. Last week, Israel called up 60,000 new reservists for the campaign.

On Friday, Defense Minister Israel Katz vowed to press on with the offensive in Gaza in the face of protests in multiple major cities around the world. He said, "The prime minister and I, in accordance with what we were authorized by the cabinet, approved the IDF's plans in Gaza and also praised them."

He added, "Soon, the gates of hell will open upon the heads of Hamas's murderers and rapists in Gaza—until they agree to Israel's conditions for ending the war, primarily the release of all hostages and their disarmament."

But just a day earlier, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the planned onslaught on Gaza City would take place regardless of any ceasefire agreement with Hamas, making it clear that all talk of a "ceasefire" by the US and international media has been a fraudulent cover for the genocidal plans of the Israeli government. "We're gonna do that anyway. There was never a question that we're not going to leave Hamas there," Netanyahu told Sky News. "I think President Trump put it best, he says Hamas has to disappear from Gaza," he added.

In other words, Israel plans to open "the gates of hell" regardless of anything its nominal military opponent—Hamas—does, including laying down arms. These statements make clear that the Israeli "war" in Gaza is, and has always been, an effort to annex and ethnically cleanse Gaza, using the actions of Hamas as a pretext.

Israeli warplanes carried out dozens of bombings in Gaza City on Saturday and Sunday, leveling buildings

and homes and killing vast numbers of people. Forty-two people were killed in Gaza on Sunday, according to Gaza's civil defense organization. The organization reported that more than 1,000 buildings had been destroyed in Gaza City since August 6, with hundreds of bodies trapped under the rubble.

Approximately half of Gaza's remaining population currently lives in Gaza City, and the assault will entail a vast relocation of the population to the country's south, with no food, housing or medical care to support them. According to the UN, Israel already occupies 90 percent of Gaza's territory.

A 52-year-old grocer, Karim Hamdan, told the *Financial Times*, "We don't have the money to be displaced... We're not going to be able to move. How will I arrange things? How am I going to be able to walk?"

Nearly 90 percent of Gaza's territory has been subsumed into Israeli militarized zones or is subject to forced displacement orders, according to the UN. Much of the rest of the enclave's 2.1 million population is already concentrated into Mawasi, a crowded coastal strip in the south and the only remaining place for Palestinians fleeing Gaza City to shelter.

Israel has begun construction of a series of massive concentration camps in the city's south, where the population of Gaza City will be forced to go by bombs and guns. "Many hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people would be forced to go into those already densely populated areas and scavenge and fight for dwindling resources," Chris McIntosh, a spokesperson for the Oxfam charity, told the *Financial Times*.

In a speech in Jerusalem over the weekend, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said that Israel was engaged in a "conquest of the land," and that plans to expand settlements in the West Bank approved by the Israeli government last weekend "practically erases the two-state delusion and consolidates the Jewish people's hold on the heart of the land of Israel."

The Israeli genocide has officially killed at least 62,000 people—the vast majority of them civilians—and the real death toll at this point likely exceeds 100,000 people. The vast majority of Gaza's homes, businesses, schools, and hospitals has been destroyed, and nearly its entire population has been internally displaced multiple times.



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