

# Israeli tanks, bulldozers and ground troops have entered Gaza City

**Kevin Reed****17 September 2025**

The Israeli assault on Gaza City reached a new level of intensity on Wednesday as air strikes were accompanied by tanks rolling down what is left of the streets of the last urban area in the enclave not controlled by the Zionist military.

For nearly two years, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have mounted an ethnic cleansing operation that has decimated the Palestinian population alongside the destruction of infrastructure and nearly every structure in Gaza.

Israeli ground troops, supported by relentless artillery and air power, have succeeded in penetrating the heart of Gaza City. Eyewitnesses have described the latest round of terror unleashed, with hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles methodically advancing through dense residential neighborhoods.

Video and photographic evidence obtained by Reuters, the *New York Times*, Al Jazeera and the BBC, shows columns of tanks and bulldozers entering Sheikh Radwan, a district that was once home to tens of thousands, now reduced to rubble and dust.

Wahid abu Ramadan, a local resident, told Reuters, "We spent the night in darkness, the sounds of bombs and screams all around. When morning came, the tanks were everywhere, the air was unbreathable from the smoke, and my neighbor's house, where they had all fled, was destroyed in seconds."

A report by the *New York Times* chronicled residents' futile attempts to secure safety as missiles "destroyed multiple high-rise buildings" and "ambulances ran from strike to strike as bodies were pulled from destroyed homes."

Al Jazeera spoke to Samia Jamal, who survived the bombardment: "Buildings collapsed while entire families were still inside. The army just keeps shelling and advancing."

Israel's latest attacks, carried out under the military

strategy of "total victory," killed at least 65 people across the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, according to Gaza's Health Ministry and corroborated by journalists.

Thirty-seven of these deaths were in Gaza City following an airstrike that obliterated a school in Sheikh Radwan, where dozens of displaced civilians had sought shelter. One eyewitness recounted to Al Jazeera: "We had just finished morning prayers when the missiles hit. Children, women, old men—everyone was screaming for help. We found at least 12 bodies under the tents and rubble."

The carnage emerged as missile strikes targeted the premises of al-Ahli Hospital and Tuff neighborhood, while overnight shelling in central and southern sectors of the city killed entire families. Journalists for the *New York Times* and Al Jazeera described the grisly aftermath: "Blood covered the floors of the hospital, many killed as they tried to bring the wounded to safety."

The Palestinian Health Ministry listed and named dozens of those killed, including children, teachers and healthcare workers. The targeting of medical institutions is now routine for the barbarians of Tel Aviv. So are attacks on journalists who are bringing news about the atrocities to the world.

The latest scenes of annihilation unfold as the Gaza Health Ministry's official statistics record over 65,000 Palestinians killed since the genocide began in October 2023. Although the United Nations and monitoring organizations recognize these figures as accurate, it is well known that the death toll exceeds 200,000 people with two-thirds of them left unRecovered and uncounted in the rubble.

The casualties, combined with the near-total destruction of civilian homes, schools and hospitals, have forced 90 percent of Gaza's population into perpetual displacement. Famine and lack of medical care have claimed hundreds more lives in recent weeks alone.

Amid this systematic devastation, Israel announced the opening of a new temporary evacuation route out of Gaza City, offering a “window” of 48 hours purportedly to permit civilians to flee before what Israeli politicians call the “final occupation” of the city.

Another measure of the savage mass murder of Palestinians by Israel are the bombings and gunfire along all major highways south, which are forcing desperate Gazans to navigate a gauntlet of tanks, snipers and unmapped minefields.

“We tried to leave when the leaflets were dropped, but the bombs followed us down the coastal road,” said one survivor. “If we turn back, we die. If we go forward, we may still die.” The Israeli military claims 350,000 people have already fled Gaza City, yet up to half a million remain trapped amid siege and bombardment, unable or unwilling to abandon their homes and relatives.

In the words of a Gaza schoolteacher to Al Jazeera: “I prefer to die here in my neighborhood than become a refugee again.”

The ground offensive is unprecedented in scale and firepower, featuring at least three armored formations operating “in the heart of Gaza City,” according to direct reporting by ABC News and multiple international outlets. Plumes of smoke and fire rise above entire districts, while drone and artillery strikes hit areas designated by Israel as “terror sites.”

Commanders interviewed by ABC News confirmed that columns of tanks have encircled the city center and Israeli media has celebrated the entry of special units into the ruins of municipal government compounds, with no discussion of withdrawal plans other than “the total dismantling of Hamas.” The Israeli Defense Minister declared, “Gaza is burning.”

The massive crime by Israel, which has been clear to the world’s population for 23 months now, was finally recognized by US Senator Bernie Sanders on Wednesday, who declared for the first time on the Senate floor that Israel “is committing genocide in Gaza.”

Sanders referenced the United Nations Commission of Inquiry’s report on genocide and mounting legal and human rights findings that document the Israeli assault as a policy of deliberate extermination and displacement. “The intent is unmistakable,” Sanders said, “the conclusion is undeniable.”

Sanders’ statement was echoed by others such as Vermont Democratic Party Representative Becca Balint, herself of Jewish heritage, who wrote, “The suffering transcends the tragic loss of life typical of war; at this

juncture, the actions of the Netanyahu administration appear to be a calculated, intentional obliteration of the Palestinian people.”

The use of the word “appear” undermines the charade of such statements. Meanwhile, these words from Sanders and other Democratic Party officials arrive as the Zionist military moves to complete the ethnic cleansing operation that has been directed by both the Biden and Trump administrations.

Like the report on Gaza released by Democratic Senators Van Hollen and Merkley one week ago, these statements are part of an eleventh-hour effort by a section of the Democratic Party to save face while Palestine is being wiped off the face of the earth.

One day earlier US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, standing next to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, described Palestinians as “barbaric animals,” which is the language that echoes the Nazi extermination of Jews in World War II.

The imperialist plans of Israel and the US is for the forced expulsion of all Palestinians from Gaza, followed by privatization and reconstruction of the region for elite tourism and corporate development.

The proposal for a “Gaza Riviera,” detailed in leaked State Department documents and confirmed by media such as CNBC and CNN, envisages the relocation of over two million residents, digital “voluntary” resettlement exchanges, and the building of “AI-driven smart cities” to replace the ruins of Palestinian communities.

In a grotesque AI-generated promotional video, Donald Trump boasted of a beachfront resort to be built atop the devastation. The refusal to allow the return of refugees, the ongoing destruction of records, and the refusal to allow journalists or aid agencies into Gaza all point to a monstrous crime that points to the future that humanity faces in the twenty-first century under world capitalism.



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