



Death rate of elderly people in northern Gaza Strip soars due to bombing, starvation, dehydration, and lack of healthcare



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📍 Israel-Palestinian Territory

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Occupied Palestinian Territory - With Israel still committing genocide against the Gaza Strip's

population for the fifth consecutive month, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor expressed grave concern over the high rate of deaths among the Strip's elderly. The rights organisation cited the following causes in particular: bombing, starvation, dehydration, malnutrition, and lack of access to medical care.

In a statement issued Sunday, Euro-Med Monitor stated that its field team is recording nearly daily deaths among the elderly due to Israel's systematic and pervasive crimes of starvation and treatment deprivation in the Gaza Strip, especially in Gaza City and the Strip's northern regions.

The majority of these cases do not reach hospitals, which are only partially operational in northern Gaza because of the difficulty of access given the ongoing Israeli military attacks. Consequently, after dying at home, the elderly are buried either close to their residences or in makeshift graves dispersed across the Strip. There are currently more than 140 such cemeteries.

Israel's attacks have directly resulted in more than 40,000 deaths since the start of its genocidal war five months ago. Of these victims, 92% were civilians and

7% were elderly people. Thousands of victims have died from starvation, malnourishment, and inadequate medical care; these are considered indirect victims as they were not registered in hospitals.

One of the few patients who successfully made it to a hospital recently is a 72-year-old man who died on 6 March at Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza; the cause of death was malnourishment and dehydration. Similarly, Gaza City resident Muhammad Shuhaybar told the Euro-Med Monitor team that eight elderly residents had passed away in the previous three days in his neighbourhood of Al-Sabra, due to a variety of complications brought on by malnutrition, a lack of access to healthcare, and the cold weather.

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 107,000 people in the Gaza Strip are over 60 years old, accounting for approximately 5% of the total population. All of these individuals have been victims of Israeli violations that have created a dangerous humanitarian situation for all segments of society. In addition, the impact of these violations on already vulnerable groups has doubled due to the ongoing systematic, large-scale, and unrelenting targeting of civilians as well as the spread of famine,

acute malnutrition, and deprivation of essential medical care.

“In addition to the destruction and killing that we have been experiencing for more than five months, we are now living through a severe war of starvation, the likes of which we have not witnessed in previous times,” an elderly woman called Shifa Salah al-Haj Saleh told the Euro-Med Monitor team, referring to the famine that the people of northern Gaza are experiencing. “My concern is always for my five children and my 14 grandchildren, as we are facing a real struggle to find a living.”

She added, “I have high blood pressure and always have to eat before taking medication, but I cannot find food, and when I do, I always say I have to feed it to my kids. During this war, I’ve lost my home, my daughter and her husband were killed, and my other daughter was injured.”

“Because I use a wheelchair, I was unable to evacuate to the southern Gaza Strip,” a 65-year-old man, “M.S.,” who requested anonymity due to safety concerns, explained to Euro-Med Monitor. “I stayed with my daughter while all of my [other] children were evacuated. With bombing everywhere, it is

hard to move around, and sometimes I go for two days without eating.”

Continued M.S., “I suffer from high blood pressure and diabetes, and there are no treatments available. We rely on the assistance of our neighbours and the occasional items that my daughter is able to obtain after making lengthy trips.”

Because of their frailty and incapacity to move around on their own, the Gaza Strip’s elderly population has paid a high price for the Israeli attacks. Seventy per cent of the elderly have chronic illnesses that make them even more susceptible to the effects of the Israeli attacks and the worsening humanitarian situation.

The Strip’s elderly are targeted in numerous ways, including deadly house bombings and even extrajudicial executions—either by sniper fire or quadcopter aircraft. Elderly people are also more seriously impacted by injuries, as because of their advanced age and lack of access to proper healthcare, they have a harder time recovering than the general population. Among the approximately two million displaced individuals across the Gaza Strip, the elderly are also particularly susceptible to

further suffering due to deteriorating health conditions brought on by the severe cold weather, food and water shortages, an absence of appropriate sleeping accommodations, and a lack of adequate medical equipment and supplies even within healthcare settings.

Anyone in the Strip who escapes death by Israeli fire remains at risk of dying as a consequence of Israel's other deliberate crimes, such as starvation, dehydration, and the illnesses that accompany these conditions, as all residents are being denied access to basic and essential medical care. Hundreds of thousands of civilians, especially elderly people and children, face a real and imminent danger of death attributable to the repercussions of the widespread famine crisis caused by Israel's comprehensive and illegal siege on the Strip, and the obstruction of humanitarian aid entry to the northern section of the Strip in particular.

The Israeli measures and collective punishments on residents of the Gaza Strip directly and clearly aim to starve the entire population and expose all Palestinians there to the actual risk of death. Israel uses starvation not only as a tool of war—a war crime in itself—but also as part of the crime of genocide that it has been committing against the residents of the Gaza Strip for five months now.

The current state of starvation has reached the point of famine and acute malnutrition, leaving children and infants also especially vulnerable. A ceasefire must be enforced immediately, humanitarian aid must enter the Gaza Strip swiftly and effectively, and adequate and urgent medical care must be provided, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor calls for the international community to put immediate and sustained pressure on Israel to stop its implementation of the crime of genocide, including starvation of the civilian population, and to completely lift the siege on the Strip. Effective and decisive international intervention is required to ensure safe, complete, and unhindered access to humanitarian supplies so that the rapidly spreading famine is addressed, aid reaches all affected people, and basic services and desperately needed humanitarian aid are provided. If not, it will soon be impossible to respond at the level needed to stop the famine catastrophe from worsening.



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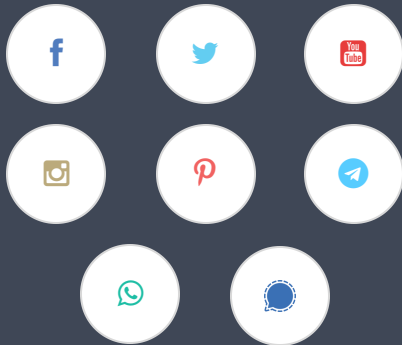
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