



In Gaza, some 83 percent of victims of Israeli attacks are civilians, and 39 percent are children



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Israel-Palestinian Territory



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Geneva - Approximately 83% of the total casualties of Israel's unprecedented and severe ongoing attacks on the Gaza Strip for the past two weeks were civilians, with 39% of the victims being children, said Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor.

Israel is waging a comprehensive, all-encompassing war against the over 2.2 million Palestinians in the Strip, stated Euro-Med Monitor, that constitutes a campaign of extermination. The human rights organisation noted that Israel has been flattening entire residential neighbourhoods in Gaza through its horrifying retaliatory attacks.

The Strip is considered the most densely populated area in the world, with a population density rate of 26,400 citizens per square kilometre, and a population density in refugee camps of 55,500 citizens per square kilometre.

Euro-Med Monitor warned that Israel's open war on Gazans takes various forms, including the systematic targeting of residential neighbourhoods and homes with inhabitants inside, and the shelling of public civilian gatherings. Also targeted by the Israeli military are places of worship; hospitals; schools, including those belonging to the United Nations; civilian headquarters; companies; and commercial stores; along with agricultural lands.

Additionally, Israel has imposed a comprehensive blockade on the Gaza Strip since the start of its wide-scale military offensive, cutting off the population's supplies of electricity, fuel, and food, and forcibly preventing the entry of humanitarian aid.

The Israeli Political-Security Cabinet approved a state of war on the Gaza Strip on 7 October, allowing the army to conduct extensive military operations. This decision came in response to an armed attack by Hamas, dubbed Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, which resulted in the killing of around 1,400 Israelis, and the capture of dozens more who were then transported to Gaza.

Since 7 October, the Israeli army has carried out thousands of airstrikes and artillery attacks around the clock, targeting residential neighbourhoods and multi-storey buildings inhabited by Gazan civilians.

Euro-Med Monitor confirmed that the Israeli army has violated the principles of international humanitarian law in its continuous attacks on the Strip, especially the principles of necessity and proportionality, given the absence of shelters or safe areas for civilians in Gaza.

According to documentation by Euro-Med Monitor's team, at least 4,122 Palestinians have been killed, including 1,590 children and 920 women, with a total of 3,420 civilians among them. More than 13,420 others have been injured in various ways, with more than half of them being children and women. Further, there are estimates that over a thousand missing individuals are trapped under the rubble of destroyed buildings at the time of this publication.

Israel has completely destroyed 28,200 housing units and partially damaged 104,000 housing units, stated Euro-Med Monitor. In addition, Israel has totally or partially destroyed around 103 health facilities (19 hospitals, 48 clinics, and 36 ambulances); 76 schools; 273 industrial facilities; 79 media headquarters; 26 mosques; and several churches.

Euro-Med Monitor emphasised that Israel continues to intensify its aerial and artillery attacks across all areas of the Gaza Strip, and that its destruction of entire residential neighbourhoods has targeted 512 families, 192 of which have lost four or more family members in horrific mass killings.

The international human rights group renewed its call to the United Nations, countries, and relevant powers to pressure Israel to immediately stop its unjustified attacks on civilians in Gaza, divert its military from operations there, and open all closed border crossings to ensure the flow of food as well as medical and logistical supplies to the Strip.

In light of the record-high casualties occurring around the clock, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor called for immediate international action to compel Israel to adhere to the rules of international humanitarian law (i.e. laws of war), citing its obligation to protect civilians by stopping its indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks and halting the deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure.

The organisation emphasised that international humanitarian law obliges the protection of civilians in all circumstances and considers the killing of civilians a war crime in both international and non-international armed conflicts, and that this act may amount to a crime against humanity.

Article 25 of the Hague Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land prohibits

“attacking or bombarding towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings which are not defended”.

Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that “Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organisations, is prohibited unless such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.”

According to Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, “extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity, and carried out unlawfully and wantonly”, is considered one of the most serious violations that trigger prosecution. These practices are considered war crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, said Euro-Med Monitor.



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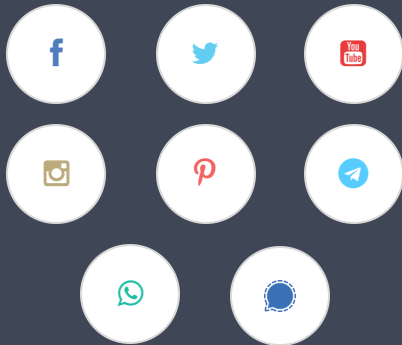
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