

# Relentless Israeli bombing campaign keeps Gazans on tenterhooks

Tue, 2021-05-18 22:11

GAZA CITY: Heavy Israeli airstrikes claimed more lives in Gaza on Tuesday as tensions flared during Palestinian "day of anger" protests in Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank.

According to Gaza's Health Ministry, Israel's intense bombing campaign has killed 213 Palestinians, including 61 children, 36 women and 16 elderly.

Israeli munitions have wounded more than 1,400 people in Gaza during recent clashes with Hamas.

"I fear the night more than any other time, even if it is calm, I feel terrified as soon as the night starts," said Hadyya Al-Sirsawi, a Gaza resident.

"The sounds of the bombing at night are very frightening. There is a continuous bombing, and it does not stop for a long time. My body shivers with the sound of everything, even if it is not bombing." Al-Sirsawi, 32, a mother of three, Arab News.

In the night raids, 42 Palestinians died on Al-Wehda Street on Sunday.

Al-Sirsawi is afraid that she and her family will join the dead under the rubble, and that the Ministry of Health will list them as another statistic. "The ministry does not even mention names, we will be a number like others."

She added: "I try hard every night to put my children to bed so that they sleep early, missing the frightening sounds of the constant nightly bombardment. Sometimes I succeed, sometimes they do not sleep, and sometimes they wake up to the sounds of bombing."

Israeli warplanes continued to strike various areas in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, including houses, agricultural plots and border areas.

The government media office in Gaza said that the damage to the strip has so far amounted to \$243 million.

War is especially galling for children, even after its conclusion. "I try to keep my children busy all the time so that they are not psychologically affected by the bombing going on around them," said Rawya Humaid, 38, a mother of two.

"During the daytime, we can withstand the sounds of the bombing, but the silence of the night makes the sounds more terrifying for me and my children," Humaid told Arab News, adding: "I can't sleep at night, I stay awake. In the early hours of the morning, I fell asleep for a few hours."

During the night, Humaid keeps herself busy by watching the news, checking her Instagram account on her mobile, or chatting with her friends and relatives over WhatsApp.

Despite Arab and international efforts to end the war and return to the ceasefire agreement, Gazans do not expect a conclusion soon.

Humaid said: "I hear about the news when talking about the calm, but what we are witnessing, hearing and living is horror. There is no calm yet on the ground, which is the most important.

"There will be a ceasefire at any time. This will not last forever, but the pain, sadness and destruction will remain in the Gaza Strip. We will need years to restore our health and our psyche."



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US reaches out to Arab leaders on Israel, Gaza fighting Truce calls mount as Israel-Palestinian conflict rages on, two Thai workers killed

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[\*\*Egypt sends medicines to Gaza,\*\*](#)

# prepares hospitals for Palestinians

Author:

Tue, 2021-05-18 22:21

CAIRO: Egypt has sent 65 tons of medical aid to the Gaza Strip after a week of Israeli strikes left more than 200 Palestinians dead and hundreds more injured, health officials have said.

With hospitals in Gaza overwhelmed by patients, the critical surgical supplies include specialist burn treatments as well as “ventilators, oxygen tanks and syringes,” Health Minister Hala Zayed said on Monday.

She said that the medicine and medical supplies are worth about 14 million Egyptian pounds (\$900,000).

Sources said that 26 trucks containing food items have also been sent to Gaza, on top of 50 ambulances to transport the wounded. Egypt also said that it will provide 11 field hospitals containing more than 900 beds.

The shipment includes anesthesia medicines, antibiotics, analgesics, medicines, ointments for burns, and medicines for blood pressure, diabetes, kidneys, chronic and chest diseases.

Khaled Mujahid, health ministry spokesman, said that cooperation between regional blood banks in the North Sinai and Ismailia governorates, and the Egyptian Blood Transfusion Service in Cairo, will supply Palestinian hospitals with urgent supplies of blood as needed.

He added that the hospitals of Bir Al-Abd, Al-Arish and Sheikh Zuweid in North Sinai – with a total capacity of 288 general beds, 81 intensive care beds, 233 doctors and 44 ventilators – are ready to receive injured Palestinians through the Rafah crossing.

Mujahid said that medical reinforcements have been sent to the three hospitals that will remain for three months, adding that the facilities are supported by 37 medical teams covering emergency and intensive care, and anesthesia, heart, brain, nerve, bone and vascular surgery.

He said that the Ismailia Medical Complex and Abu Khalifa Emergency Hospital in the Ismailia Governorate are also offering 385 general beds, 85 intensive care beds, and 1,145 doctors and nurses, and will receive patients from Palestine that require urgent medical treatment.

A central operations room has been set up at the Ministry of Health to follow up on medical services to Palestine, and to communicate between various sectors of the ministry and governorates, Mujahid added.

Israel launched its campaign on the Gaza Strip on May 10 following unrest in East Jerusalem.

The Hamas-run local health ministry said that Israeli airstrikes have killed

213 Palestinians, including 61 children, and wounded more than 1,400 people in Gaza.

Jens Laerke, a spokesman for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said that almost 47,000 Palestinians have fled their homes during the airstrike campaign, The Associated Press reported.

Airstrikes have also destroyed the sole COVID-19 testing laboratory in Gaza, the local health ministry said.



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## [Fuel price hike sparks deadly Syria Kurd protests](#)

Author:

AFP

ID:

1621351885555026000

Tue, 2021-05-18 18:37

**QAMISHLI:** A decision to hike fuel prices sparked protests across Kurdish-held parts of northeastern Syria on Tuesday that turned violent and left at least one demonstrator dead, a monitor said.

The Kurdish administration, which oversees large swathes of Syria's northeast, said on Monday that it was doubling and in some cases tripling the cost of fuel.

On Tuesday, dozens of people took to the streets in the city of Qamishli and other areas calling on the authorities to reverse the price hike, AFP correspondents reported.

Clashes broke out when protesters and gunmen stormed a base in the town of Shadadi belonging to Kurdish security forces, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

One protester was killed and five others were wounded in the exchange of fire, said the Britain-based monitor.

The price hike saw the cost of diesel climb to 400 Syrian pounds (30 US cents at the official exchange rate) per liter from 150 and petrol to 410 pounds per liter from 210.

Cannisters of gas used in homes are now selling for 8,000 pounds, up from 2,500.

The price hikes come on top of an accelerating economic crisis that has weakened the value of the pound and plunged wide segments of Syria's population into poverty.

"The Kurdish administration was forced to raise prices because the previous ones didn't cover the cost of production," said Sadiq Al-Khalaf, a Kurdish administration official.

Kurds control some of Syria's largest gas and oil fields but authorities are not producing enough oil and gas to meet the demand.

Heating fuel, petrol and cooking gas have been in short supply in recent months and motorists have grown used to waiting in long queues to fill up.

Regional authorities have not explained the reason behind the shortage.

Amid protests, regime loyalists in the city of Hassakeh – parts of which are controlled by government forces – attacked a Kurdish security forces position, according to the Observatory.

Three people were injured, it said.

The Kurdish Asayish security forces released a statement condemning attempts to exploit peaceful demonstrations by "attacking military and civilian" infrastructure.

"It is creating a state of chaos," the Asayish said.

Syria used to produce almost 400,000 barrels of oil per day before its civil war erupted.

But 10 years of conflict have ravaged production, with oil sector's losses estimated at \$91.5 billion.



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Daesh claims responsibility for deadly car bomb in Syrian Kurdish town  
QamishliUS-backed Syrian Kurdish forces detain 71 militants in raid

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## [Gaza facing water, power crisis after deadly Israeli attacks lift death toll to 200](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-05-17 22:37

GAZA CITY: Residents of the Gaza Strip were awakened in the early hours of Monday by the heaviest Israeli bombardment since the conflict escalated a week ago as residential buildings were hit and vital power and water links destroyed.

The overnight attacks brought the Palestinian death toll to almost 200, including 59 children and 35 women, while more than 1,300 have been injured.

Israel targeted homes, apartments and commercial buildings, and also struck a car and a cafeteria on the seashore, resulting in deaths and injuries.

The relentless bombardment has severely hit electricity, water and sanitation services in Gaza, raising fears of a deepening humanitarian crisis for the 2 million people living there.

Gaza City mayor Yahya Al-Sarraj said that essential services had been cut back significantly in recent days due to limited resources and damage to roads, power lines and water pipes.

He accused Israel of deliberately targeting infrastructure and destroying main streets, including access to Al-Shifa Hospital.

Sanitation and water supply to the population have been badly hit, Al-Sarraj told Arab News.

"The only desalination plant in Gaza City has stopped working as a result of the Israeli bombardment of the surrounding areas and the inability of workers to reach it, and the continuous electricity cuts have affected the pumping of water in the wells into homes," he said.

Ziad Sheikh Khalil, 44, is trying to provide lighting for the house he shares with his wife and four children by charging batteries during the few hours that electricity is available.

"We hardly get three hours of electricity a day," he told Arab News.

"When the power is on, all the family members work quickly to charge mobile phones, as well as operate the washing machine and pump water to the tanks at the top of the building."

The Gaza Strip has suffered from severe electricity shortages for many years, but in recent days the crisis has worsened due to the lack of fuel and damage to the 10 power lines that come from Israel.

Six of Gaza's 10 electricity lines are down and supply has been more than halved, according to Mohammed Thabet, a spokesperson for the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company.

"There are some border areas completely cut off from electricity," he said.

Repair crews are unable to fix the lines due to continued attacks.

The closure of the Kerem Abu Salem crossing has also hit fuel supplies for the only power station in the Gaza Strip, he said.

Thabit added: "Electricity networks inside the Gaza Strip also have been hit by the Israeli bombing of residential areas. It increases the difficulties facing the company."



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Blinken has not seen evidence Hamas operated from bombed Gaza media tower  
Jordan MPs launch diplomatic assault on Israel with call for envoy's expulsion

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## [Jordan MPs launch diplomatic assault on Israel with call for envoy's expulsion](#)

Mon, 2021-05-17 21:47

AMMAN: Jordanian MPs on Monday called for Israel's ambassador in Amman to be expelled in response to "Israel's crimes against humanity."

Almost all lawmakers who took the podium during Monday's special session on the violence in Gaza and the occupied West Bank urged the government to expel the envoy following Israel's actions in Jerusalem and subsequent bombing



campaign.

Jordan is the custodian of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem's Old City.

Ninety MPs out of Jordan's 130-strong lower house of parliament signed a memorandum requesting the expulsion of the Israeli ambassador in Amman as a sign of protest and rejection of Israel's "brutal and barbaric" attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque and Gaza.

The petition, a copy of which was seen by Arab News, calls on the government to adopt a bold stance toward cutting diplomatic ties with the "Zionist entity" by expelling the Israeli envoy and recalling Jordan's ambassador in Tel Aviv.

Last week, the Jordanian government said it had summoned the Israeli charge d'affaires in Amman to object to the "Israeli assaults against Al-Aqsa Mosque worshippers and East Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood."

Other MPs demanded the cancelation of all agreements with Israel, including the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty and the gas deal between the two countries.

In 2016, Jordan's National Electric Power Company signed a 15-year agreement with Noble Energy, a Houston-based company that holds the largest share in the Israeli Leviathan gas field, to buy \$10 billion of natural gas.

The government at the time said it would import 250-300 million cubic feet of natural gas per day from Noble Energy, adding the deal would save the kingdom around \$990 million. Under the agreement, Jordan will receive 3 billion cubic meters of gas per year.

Other deputies, mostly of Islamist leaning, hailed Hamas' "acts of resistance," and called for action against Israel in the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Prime Minister Bisher Al-Khasawneh, who attended the session, said that Jordan has its own legal and diplomatic toolbox to deal with the Israeli attacks on Gaza, Jerusalem and the West Bank, adding: "All options are on the table."

Al-Khasawneh said that some of these diplomatic options will be used to protect Palestinians' rights and others to highlight Israel's violations.

The prime minister accused Israel of committing crimes against humanity, and said that Jordan's unwavering position on the long-running conflict is rooted in the three "no's" declared by King Abdullah: No to giving up Jerusalem, no to dropping the right of return for Palestinians, and no to the resettlement of Palestinians in Jordan.

With some MPs threatening the government with a no-confidence motion if it fails to expel the ambassador, Al-Khasawneh said that the "government will examine all options and will take the right action that serves the national

interests once it receives the parliamentary petition.”

## Sheikh Jarrah

A group of MPs also requested that a parliamentary delegation visit Sheikh Jarrah to deliver a message to the world’s parliaments on what they termed the “injustice exercised against the Palestinians” in the East Jerusalem neighborhood.

In a memorandum submitted for immediate action, 100 MPs demanded that a parliamentary delegation be formed to visit Sheikh Jarrah with the aim of supporting the Palestinian presence in Jerusalem and reaffirming Jordanian custodianship of the Old City’s holy shrines.

Al-Khasawneh said that the government has provided the Palestinian Authority with documents on Sheikh Jarrah to help the Ramallah-based government address Israeli “demographic change” practices in Jerusalem.

During a visit to Ramallah on April 22, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi submitted documents to PA President Mahmoud Abbas proving Palestinian ownership of Sheikh Jarrah.

Jordan administered the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, until the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, but remains custodian of the holy sites in Jerusalem.

Safadi’s trip to the occupied West Bank came after families were reportedly given court orders to leave their homes in the predominantly Palestinian neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah by May 5 or face eviction.

“We have provided all the documents that we have that can help the Palestinian residents to preserve their full rights. Jerusalem is a red line for Jordan, the king and our people, as it is a red line for the state of Palestine. We will confront any effort to undermine the existing historical and legal status of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem,” Safadi was quoted as saying following his meeting with Abbas.

In response to some deputies who claimed that the government has failed to submit all registration documents to the Palestinians, Safadi said: “This is untrue. The government has checked every relevant paper in the (national) archives and has submitted all documents to the Palestinian people and government, and has also attested all the documents handed to the Sheikh Jarrah’s residents proving their ownership of their neighborhood.”

At a meeting with MPs on Sunday, King Abdullah said that “no country is more supportive of the Palestinians than Jordan,” adding that intensive talks were underway with active international stakeholders to stop the Israeli escalation, and safeguard Palestinian lives and property.



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Jordanians march to border in solidarity with Palestinians  
Jordanian police disperse protesters near border with West Bank