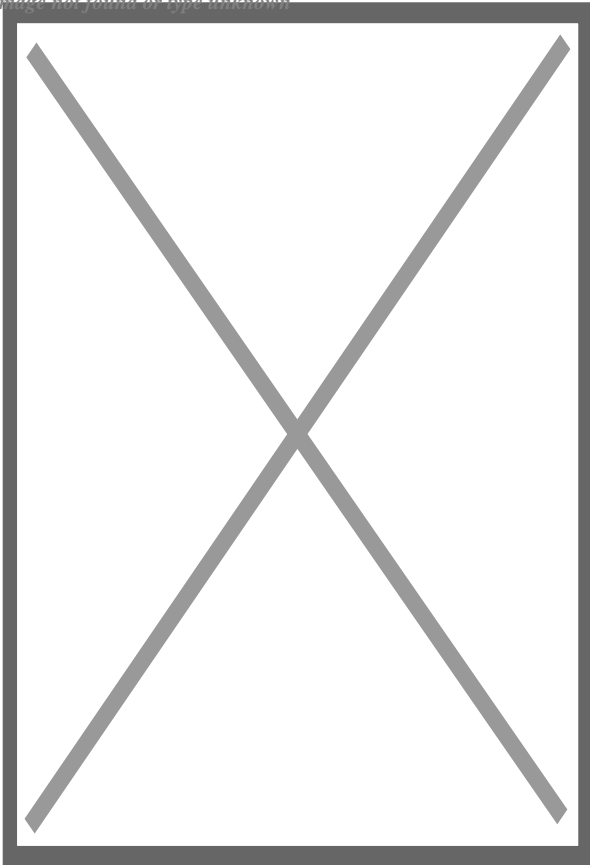


Intense Israeli air strikes incessantly pulverize Gaza

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Gaza City, November 21(RHC)-- Israel has kept up its relentless bombardment of the besieged Gaza Strip amid growing signs that talks about a truce between Israel and Hamas are making progress.

In Khan Younis, a city in southern Gaza where hundreds of thousands of residents of the north have fled to escape Israeli bombing, neighbours said on Tuesday that an overnight strike on an apartment had killed seven people, mostly children.

In Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip and in Rafah in the south, Tuesday morning brought tragically familiar scenes of adults and children wounded in bombardments being rushed into overcrowded hospitals.

The Hamas government press office said there was a communications blackout in Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip after an Israeli strike hit telecommunications towers.

Israel has bombarded Gaza since October 7 after Hamas fighters carried out attacks that day on southern Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking about 240 captive, according to Israeli officials.

More than 14,000 people have been killed in the Israeli air and ground assault on Gaza, including 5,600 children, according to Palestinian officials.

The leader of Hamas said a truce with Israel was close to being finalised, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he hoped for good news soon about the captives in Gaza. The statements were the most optimistic signals so far of a deal to pause the war in Gaza and free prisoners.

U.S. President Joe Biden told reporters that an accord to release some of the people held by Hamas was near. "My team is in the region shuttling between capitals. We're now very close, very close to bringing some of these hostages home very soon," he said.

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