

Israeli forces launch deadly West Bank raids, pound Gaza ahead of UN vote

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Israeli forces during a raid in Jenin [Issam Rimawi/Anadolu via Getty Images]

Ramallah, December 13 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have carried out deadly raids in the occupied West Bank while shelling and bombing many areas in the Gaza Strip in advance of a United Nations General

Assembly (UNGA) meeting to discuss an “immediate humanitarian ceasefire”.

At least four Palestinians were killed on Tuesday in the most intense raid in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin, where the Israeli army fired a missile at youths, the Palestinian Ministry of Health reported.

Meanwhile, 20 people – including seven children and at least five women – were killed in Israeli attacks on Rafah, in southern Gaza on the border with Egypt, while two people were killed in Khan Younis in Israeli artillery shelling, according to Palestinian medical sources.

Al Jazeera’s Nida Ibrahim, reporting from Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, said the raids in Jenin were ongoing, as some residents put up roadblocks to deter Israeli forces. “Palestinians say these raids are continuing without any real deterrence and that the Israeli forces have been given an open hand,” said Ibrahim.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society said Israel’s military was blocking ambulances from the Jenin refugee camp, which was targeted in the raid, to treat the wounded. Israeli forces also launched raids in other West Bank towns, arresting some 50 people in Ramallah, Bethlehem, Nablus, and Tubas, the Palestinian Wafa news agency reported.

Israeli incursions into the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem have also escalated since the outbreak of war. Israeli forces or settlers have killed 270 Palestinians since October 7, bringing the total number of killed this year to 487.

As Rafah and Khan Younis reeled from overnight air raids, concerns grew for people feared trapped under the rubble. Reporting from Rafah on Tuesday morning, Al Jazeera’s Hani Mahmoud said the search for survivors continued but it was “very basic and simple.” “There are no machines or equipment to help people,” he added.

More than two months of Israeli bombardment on Gaza has killed about 18,200 Palestinians, including 7,729 children, and displaced 90 percent of its population. Humanitarian aid officials warn of a collapsing health system and “apocalyptic” conditions in the small pocket of southern Gaza, where most Palestinians are now crammed.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces raided Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza, a Health Ministry spokesperson said, after besieging and shelling it for several days. In a post on Telegram, Ashraf al-Qudra added that Israeli forces were gathering males – including the medical staff – in the hospital courtyard, who he feared may then be arrested.

“We call on the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the International Committee of the Red Cross to act immediately to save the lives of those in the hospital,” he said.

The new attacks and mounting casualties come ahead of a vote in the UNGA later on Tuesday on an “immediate humanitarian ceasefire.”

The last time the assembly met on this issue was on October 27, when 120 countries voted in favour of a Jordanian resolution calling for an “immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities.”

Egypt and Mauritania invoked Resolution 377A (V) to call for an emergency meeting, which states that if the UN Security Council is unable to discharge its primary responsibility of maintaining peace, the UNGA can step in.



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