

*UN humanitarian agency OCHA  
says Israeli aid blockade is  
making Gaza hungriest place on  
earth*

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United Nations, May 31 (RHC)-- The UN humanitarian agency says the besieged Gaza Strip is the hungriest place on earth and Israel's restrictions on humanitarian assistance have only exacerbated the crisis.

At a press briefing in Geneva on Friday, OCHA Spokesman Jens Laerke detailed the difficulties faced by the UN in delivering humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip. Israel was blocking all but a trickle of humanitarian aid from entering Gaza, he said, with almost no ready-to-eat food entering.

Laerke warned that such restrictions come amid a widening crisis, with the Palestinian territory's entire population now at risk of famine. "What we have been able to bring in is flour," he told a regular news conference on Friday. "That's not ready to eat, right? It needs to be cooked... 100% of the population of Gaza is at risk of famine." He said 900 trucks of aid had been authorized by Israel to enter the besieged territory, but due to the regime's restrictive measures, so far only 600 trucks have passed the border.

Earlier, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees also called for an unhindered, uninterrupted flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza. UNRWA said urgent international action is needed to open Gaza border crossings.

Israel imposed a total aid blockade on the Palestinian territory in early March, preventing the entry of food and medicine into Gaza. Meanwhile, a Palestinian had been killed and twenty more injured after Israeli forces fired at an aid distribution center in central Gaza.

This comes after similar attacks on Tuesday and Wednesday that left 10 Palestinians dead. According to reports, the victims were trying to reach a US-run aid distribution center to get humanitarian packages near the Netzerim corridor.

The U.S.-backed aid plan has been widely criticized for its unfair and inadequate distribution system.

Analysts, activists, and aid agencies have described the US-Israeli plan for aid relief in Gaza as a "mockery" of humanitarian law.

International aid agencies have already warned that Israeli plans to control aid distribution in Gaza, including the U.S.-backed proposal, will only add to the suffering in the devastated Palestinian territory.

Israel's far-right ruling coalition, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, has embraced Donald Trump's proposals on Gaza to displace Palestinians permanently outside the territory and turn it into a seaside real-estate development.

Separately, Tommaso della Longa, a spokesperson for the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, added that half of its medical facilities in the region were out of action for lack of fuel or medical equipment. Israeli troops have ordered the evacuation of al-Awda hospital, the last functioning hospital in northern Gaza.

Nearly 30 Palestinians were killed in the latest Israeli attacks across the Gaza Strip as the regime presses ahead with its genocidal war. Most of the casualties are coming from attacks on northern Gaza, where the Israeli military issued evacuation orders earlier. The total number of Palestinians killed in Gaza in the genocidal war since October 2023 has surged to around 54,250, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

[ SOURCE: REUTERS and NEWS AGENCIES ]

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