

Israeli forces in women's clothing: Commandos fail to retrieve captives after Gaza op goes awry

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A wagon reportedly used by Israeli troops in a failed special forces operation in southern Gaza's Khan Yunis, on May 19, 2025.

Khan Yunis, May 20 (RHC)-- Palestinian security sources and eyewitnesses have revealed that an operation conducted by Israeli forces disguised as women has failed to retrieve captives held in Gaza, before fleeing under Israeli aerial cover.

Eyewitnesses said they saw a white bus arrive in the al-Mahatta neighborhood near the center of the southern city of Khan Yunis on Monday, which appeared to be carrying displaced women.

According to the report, nine people dressed as women, some with uncovered faces and others veiled, got off the bus and entered a home belonging to the Sarhan family, previously damaged by Israeli attacks.

Shortly afterwards, gunfire was heard in the area, and the undercover Israeli unit quickly fled under heavy aerial cover. During the raid, Israeli forces killed Ahmed Kamel Sarhan, a commander in the Nasser Salah al-Din Brigades, and abducted his wife and child, the group said.

After the 20-minute gunfight, investigators found rifle shells, bullet casings, smoke grenades, women's clothing and belongings, and a disguised empty box made to look like displaced people's luggage.

Israel's Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper said the raid was aimed to abduct Sarhan and "interrogate him to extract information from him about the Israeli captives, but it failed."

The operation took place amid intensified airstrikes on different parts of Gaza, that killed six people and injured dozens others. It also came a day after the Israeli military announced a newly major offensive in areas in northern and southern Gaza.

Israel launched the campaign of genocide in Gaza on October 7, 2023. It has killed more than 53,000 Palestinians there so far. In January, the Israeli regime was forced to agree to a ceasefire deal with Hamas given the regime's failure to achieve any of its objectives, including the "elimination" of the Palestinian resistance movement or the release of captives.

The 42-day stage of the truce, which was marred by repeated Israeli violations, expired on March 1, but Israel is refraining from stepping into talks for the second stage of the agreement.

On March 18, the regime resumed the strikes on Gaza, breaking the nearly two-month-long ceasefire.

[SOURCE: ASSOCIATED PRESS and NEWS AGENCIES]

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