

Israeli fire kills at least 27 aid seekers in Gaza in yet another attack on hungry Palestinians

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Rafah, June 3 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have killed at least 27 Palestinians and wounded 90 more as they opened fire close to an aid distribution site in Rafah, according to the Ministry of Health in Gaza.

The latest killings came early on Tuesday at the Flag Roundabout, near an aid hub operated by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF).

It was the third such incident around the Rafah hub in as many days. Gaza's authorities report that more than 100 aid seekers have been killed since the United States and Israel-backed GHF started operating in the enclave on May 27, with reports of violence, looting and chaos rife.

The Israeli military said it had fired shots as “a number of suspects” deviated from the regulated routes, on which a crowd was making its way to the GHF distribution complex.

The “suspects” were about 500 metres (approximately 550 yards) from the site, the military said in a statement on Telegram, adding that it was looking into reports of casualties.

A spokesperson for the International Committee of the Red Cross, Hisham Mhanna, said 184 wounded people had been taken to its field hospital in Rafah, 19 of whom were found dead on arrival, and eight others died later of their wounds.

Gaza’s Government Media Office accused Israel of “a horrific, intentionally repeated crime”, saying it has been luring starving Palestinians to the GHF centres – controversially opened following an 11-week total blockade to take over most aid distribution from the United Nations and other aid agencies – and then opening fire.

It said Tuesday’s death toll brought the number of aid seekers killed at aid sites in the Rafah governorate and the so-called Netzarim Corridor since GHF launched operations to 102, with 490 others injured.

The United Nations on Monday demanded an independent investigation into the repeated mass shootings of aid seekers in Gaza. “It is unacceptable that Palestinians are risking their lives for food,” said Secretary General Antonio Guterres. “I call for an immediate and independent investigation into these events and for perpetrators to be held accountable.”

“We heard from witnesses that there was chaos,” said Al Jazeera’s Hind Khoudary, reporting about Tuesday’s killings from Deir el-Balah in central Gaza. “The Israeli forces just opened fire randomly, shooting Palestinians ... using quadcopters and live ammunition.”

Health Ministry officials and doctors said most of the wounded have been hit in their chest and head, she added. The bloodshed, she continued, had unfolded in the same way as on the previous two days, amid ongoing chaos around the aid distribution centres. “There’s no process. There’s no system,” she said. “You just need to run first to be able to get the food.”

Rasha al-Nahal told The Associated Press news agency that “there was gunfire from all directions”, and that she saw more than a dozen people dead and several wounded on the road.

When she finally made it to the distribution hub, there was no aid, al-Nahal said, adding that Israeli troops “fired at us as we were returning.”

Another witness, Neima al-Aaraj, from Khan Younis, described the shooting as “indiscriminate.” “I won’t return,” she said. “Either way, we will die.”

The Israeli military, in its statement on Telegram, said troops had fired warning shots as people deviated from “designated access routes” and “after the suspects failed to retreat, additional shots were directed near a few individual suspects who advanced toward the troops.” However, it denied firing on civilians or blocking them from accessing aid.

This account echoes statements around similar incidents on Sunday, when 31 aid seekers were reportedly killed, and on Monday, when three more were killed.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/384091-israeli-fire-kills-at-least-27-aid-seekers-in-gaza-in-yet-another-attack-on-hungry-palestinians>



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