



Leader: Iran's permanent policy is to support Palestinian resistance

Israel's atrocities in Gaza

International Desk

Fighting raged in Gaza on Sunday for the 30th day as Israel's heavy bombardment of Gaza has intensified, particularly in the north where many civilians remain trapped and unable to flee.

Israel has relentlessly bombarded the Gaza Strip and sent in ground troops, with the Health Ministry in the Hamas-run Palestinian territory saying 9,770 people have been killed, nearly half of them – at least 4,800 – children.

The Hamas-run Health Ministry said at least 45 people were killed in an Israeli strike on the Al-Maghazi refugee camp in central Gaza late Saturday. Earlier on Saturday, the Health Ministry said at least 15 people were killed when Israel struck the Al-Fakhura school in Jabalia refugee camp, operated by the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA.

Thousands of displaced Palestinians were sheltering at the school in the north of the Palestinian territory when it was hit, a ministry spokesperson said.

Leaflets dropped by the Israeli Army again urged Gaza City residents to evacuate south between 10 a.m. (0800 GMT) and 2

p.m. (1200 GMT), a day after a US official said at least 350,000 civilians remained in and around the city that is now an urban war zone.

Support for resistance groups

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei told the top official in the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas that Tehran will continue to support groups fighting the Zionist regime as a matter of policy.

"Supporting the Palestinian resistance forces vis-à-vis the Zionist occupiers is the Islamic Republic of Iran's permanent policy," Ayatollah Khamenei said in a recent meeting with the chairman of the Hamas political bureau Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, according to a Sunday report by the official IRNA news agency. The leader said in the meeting that the Israeli regime is enjoying the support of the US and its allies in Europe in its ongoing war on Gaza. "The Zionist regime's crimes in Gaza are directly supported by the US and certain Western governments."

During the meeting, Haniyeh briefed the Leader about the latest developments in Gaza and the crimes committed by the regime in the besieged territory as well as the situa-

tion in the occupied West Bank.

West Bank violence

Israel is also killing Palestinians in the West Bank, where violence is flaring since the start of the Israel-Hamas war. Three Palestinians were killed on Sunday by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank. Two Palestinians, aged 22 and 20, were killed in Abu Dis, a suburb of East Al-Quds, while another was killed in Nuba, to the south, the ministry said.

The Israeli Army claimed in a statement the raids were part of its operations against the Hamas organization.

The Israeli Army claimed in a statement the raids were part of its operations against the Hamas organization.

Humanitarian aid plea

The World Food Programme appealed for more aid for Gaza, stressing that trucks allowed in so far are no match for needs on the ground.

The agency's head, Cindy McCain, said on Sunday after a visit to Rafah border crossing between Egypt and the Palestinian territory that "the suffering just meters away is unfathomable standing on this (the Egyptian) side of the border".

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who is in the region, faced a rising tide of anger in meetings with



People carrying some belongings reach the central Gaza Strip on foot via the Salah al-Din road on their way to the southern territory of the Palestinian territory on November 5, 2023.

MOHAMMED ABED/AFP

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (R) meets with Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the politburo of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, during a visit to Tehran last week.

Arab foreign ministers in Jordan on Saturday.

On Sunday, Blinken met with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in a surprise visit to Ramallah, as concern grows over rising violence in the occupied West Bank.

The pair discussed the need to stop extremist violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, a State Department spokesman said, while Blinken also stressed that Palestinians in Gaza "must not be forcibly displaced".

'Comprehensive political solution'

Abbas denounced "the genocide and destruction suffered by our Palestinian people in Gaza at the hands of Israel's war machine, with no regard for the principles of international law," according to the official Palestinian news agency Wafa. Abbas said Sunday the Palestinian Authority could return to power in Gaza only if a "comprehensive political solution" is found for the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Abbas told Blinken that the PA will "fully assume our responsibilities within the framework of a comprehensive political solution that includes all of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip".

Gaza legitimate gov't

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said on Saturday that Hamas is the legal, elected

and legitimate government of Gaza.

During a telephone conversation with Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre on Saturday night, Raisi welcomed Oslo's position on the need for an immediate end to Israel's killing of civilians in Gaza as well as international efforts to lift the siege on the coastal enclave and deliver aid to its residents.

"Hamas is the legal, elected and legitimate government of Gaza," he said. "The war against Hamas is a war on democracy."

Pro-Palestinian rallies

Pro-Palestinian protesters once again took to the streets of many cities across the world to demand an end to Israel's brutal attacks on the Palestinian territory. Demonstrators staged protests in London, Berlin, Paris, Ankara, Istanbul and Washington on Saturday to call for a cease-fire in Gaza and castigate Israel after its military intensified its assault against Hamas.

In London, television footage showed large crowds holding sit-down protests blocking parts of the city center, before marching to Trafalgar Square. Protesters held "Freedom for Palestine" placards and chanted "cease-fire now" and "in our thousands, in our millions, we are all Palestinians".

Police said they made 29 arrests for offences includ-

ing inciting racial hatred and racially aggravated public order.

Britain has supported Israel's right to defend itself after Hamas killed 1,400 people in an Oct. 7 assault in southern Israel.

Echoing Washington's stance, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's government has stopped short of calling for a cease-fire, and instead advocated humanitarian pauses to allow aid into Gaza.

Thousands of protesters marched down the streets of Washington waving Palestinian flags, some chanting "Biden, Biden you cannot hide, you signed up for genocide," before congregating at Freedom Plaza, steps away from the White House.

Speakers denounced President Joe Biden's support of Israel, declaring "you have blood on your hands". Some vowed not to support Biden's bid for a second term in the White House next year as well as campaigns by other Democrats seeking office, calling them "two-faced" liberals who were "not a refuge from right wingers".

Others lashed out at civil rights leaders for not condemning the killing of women and children by Israeli bombings.

Protests in Paris

In central Paris, thousands marched to call for a cease-fire with placards reading "Stop the cycle of violence"

and "To do nothing, to say nothing is to be complicit". It was one of the first, big gatherings in support of Palestinians to be legally allowed in Paris since Oct. 7. French authorities had banned some previous pro-Palestinian gatherings due to concerns about public disorder.

France will host an international humanitarian conference on Gaza on Nov. 9 as it looks to coordinate aid for the enclave.

Wahid Berek, a 66-year old retiree, lamented the deaths of both Israeli and Palestinian civilians.

"I deplore civilian deaths on both sides. Civilians have nothing to do with these actions. It really is shameful," he said.

In Berlin, demonstrators waved Palestinian flags, demanding a cease-fire. Hundreds of protesters also gathered in Istanbul and Ankara.

Turkey, which has sharply criticized Israel and Western countries as the humanitarian crisis has intensified in Gaza, supports a two-state solution and hosts members of Hamas.

Footage from Ankara showed protesters gathered near the U.S. Embassy, chanting slogans and holding posters which read: "Israel bombs hospitals, Biden pays for it".

Indonesians also took part in a mass rally in support of Palestinians in Jakarta on Sunday.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

