

Israel-Hamas war

Israeli air strikes kill dozens in northern Gaza, health officials say

Women and children among dead in Beit Lahia as IDF continues offensive after killing Hamas leader



Palestinians in the town of Beit Lahia mourn relatives killed in Israeli air strikes © Islam Ahmed/AFP/Getty Images

Andrew England in Tel Aviv and **Raya Jalabi** in Beirut YESTERDAY

Israeli air strikes have killed scores of people in northern Gaza over the weekend as Israel continues its offensive against Hamas days after eliminating the group's leader Yahya Sinwar.

Palestinian health officials said that at least 87 people were killed or missing in the northern town of Beit Lahia on Saturday night and in the early hours of Sunday, with many still trapped under the rubble.

The estimated toll brings the number of Palestinians killed or missing in Gaza since Friday night to more than 100, according to officials in the strip.

Hamas said Israel had targeted residential buildings in Beit Lahia and that most of those killed were women and children.

The Israeli military said the death toll released by Gazan authorities was exaggerated, according to its initial assessment, adding that it had struck a Hamas target.

But Tor Wennesland, the UN's special co-ordinator for the Middle East peace process, said: "Horrible scenes are unfolding in northern Gaza."

"The nightmare in Gaza is intensifying," he said in a statement. "I condemn the continuing attacks on civilians. This war must end, the hostages held by Hamas must be freed, the displacement of Palestinians must cease."

Israel's strikes in northern Gaza come as western and Arab nations had hoped to use the [death of Sinwar](#), who masterminded last year's October 7 attack on Israel that triggered the war, to revive their efforts to press for a ceasefire and secure the release of hostages.

But Israel has continued to fight on multiple fronts, including in Lebanon, where it launched a strike on the southern suburbs of Beirut on Sunday and has pushed on with a ground offensive against Hezbollah in the south.

The Lebanese military said on Sunday that three of its soldiers had been killed in an Israeli strike on an army vehicle in southern Lebanon. The IDF said it had targeted a Hezbollah base and weapons storage in the strike on Beirut, but did not immediately comment on the army strike.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Saturday that Israel was "determined to achieve all our war objectives and change the security reality in our region for generations to come".

He accused Hezbollah of trying to "assassinate" him after the Israeli military said a drone fired by the Iran-backed group hit a structure in the northern seaside town of Caesarea, where Netanyahu has his private residence. The prime minister's office confirmed that the home was targeted but said Netanyahu and his wife were not present and no one was hurt.

Israeli authorities also said one person was killed on Saturday and 10 injured when Hezbollah rockets struck the northern towns of Kiryat Ata, Shlomi and Acre.

Hezbollah has vowed that "a new and escalating phase in its confrontation" with Israel was in the offing as it seeks to regroup after suffering a series of devastating blows in recent weeks, including last month's [assassination of its leader, Hassan Nasrallah](#).

Israel has continued to launch air strikes across Lebanon, including bombing the southern suburbs of Beirut for the first time in several days on Saturday and launching a drone strike on a Christian area.

In northern Gaza, the Israeli military has pressed on with military operations that have killed scores of people in recent days, including [at least 33 people in the Jabalia refugee camp](#) on Friday night, according to Palestinian health officials.

But in a sign of Hamas's continued military capabilities, an Israeli colonel was killed and other officers injured by an improvised explosive device in Jabalia, the IDF said on Sunday.

After Israeli forces killed Sinwar, Israel's most wanted man, in southern Gaza on Thursday, US secretary of state Antony Blinken said Washington would "redouble" its efforts to end the war in Gaza, which is viewed as crucial to efforts to halt the escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah.

But despite Sinwar's death, Hamas has continued to insist it would only agree to a deal to free the hostages and halt the fighting if there was a permanent ceasefire and Israeli forces withdraw from the strip.

Netanyahu has said that war will only end if the militant group lays down its weapons and releases the captives. There are estimated to be 101 hostages remaining in Gaza, though many are believed to be dead.

The Israeli prime minister has refused to accept a permanent ceasefire or to agree to pull troops

out of the strip, where the offensive has killed more than 42,000 people, according to Palestinian health authorities.

The Israeli military has been conducting a weeks-long offensive in devastated northern Gaza, which has been focused around Jabalia, one of the few places where people remain in the strip's north after most were forced to flee to the enclave's south.

Philippe Lazzarini, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, said another 20,000 people had to flee Jabalia on Saturday, adding that the last remaining hospitals were reporting a critical shortage of fuel and medical supplies.

The UN said two out of three hospitals operating in northern Gaza have been directly hit, warning that the "attacks are deepening an already alarming humanitarian crisis".

Cartography by Jana Tauschinski

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