

The New York Times Reports Gaza Civilians ‘Are Being Killed at Historic Pace’

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The New York Times [reported](#) on Saturday that “experts say that even a conservative reading of the casualty figures reported from Gaza shows that the pace of death during Israel’s campaign has few precedents in this century.”

ScheerPost publisher Robert Scheer commented on the importance of the piece, stating,

“The so-called paper of record finally acknowledges the unprecedented degree of violence visited upon civilians in Gaza by the Israeli government.”

Using U.S.-made bombs that weigh 2,000 pounds “that can flatten [apartment towers],” Israel has killed “roughly 10,000 women and children” according to the *Times*. Women and children make up almost [70 percent](#) of all deaths reported in Gaza.

According to Rick Brennan, the regional emergency director for the World Health Organization’s Eastern Mediterranean office, the opposite is typically expected. “In past clashes between Israel and Hamas, for example, about 60 percent of the reported deaths in Gaza were men,” according to the *Times*.

Further, “U.S. military officials often believed that the most common American aerial bomb — a 500-pound weapon — was far too large for most targets when battling the Islamic State in urban areas like Mosul, Iraq, and Raqqa, Syria,” according to the *Times*. As the *Times* reported:

“‘It’s beyond anything that I’ve seen in my career,’ said Marc Garlasco, a military adviser for the Dutch organization PAX and a former senior intelligence analyst at the Pentagon. To find a historical comparison for so many large bombs in such a small area, he said, we may ‘have to go back to Vietnam, or the Second World War.’”

The paper also reported that

“People are being killed in Gaza more quickly...than in even the deadliest moments of U.S.-led attacks in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, which were themselves widely criticized by human rights groups.”

Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, the Israeli military spokesperson, claims that civilian casualties are inevitable because of Hamas’s alleged strategy of deliberately embedding itself within the civilian population of Gaza. Gaza is, however, one of the most densely populated cities on Earth, standing 25 miles long and 5 miles wide.

The Israeli military claims that the numbers of dead Palestinians reported by the Palestinian Health Ministry cannot be trusted because the Ministry operates under Hamas. Conricus claims

“We do a lot in order to prevent and, where possible, minimize the killing or wounding of civilians.”

As the *Times* reported, international experts do not share the same skepticism of the Palestinian Health Ministry’s numbers that the Israeli government does:

“[Brian Castner, a weapons investigator for Amnesty International and a former explosive ordnance disposal officer in the U.S. Air Force,] said Israel appeared to be moving too quickly to reduce harm to civilians...”

“After initially [questioning the death toll](#) in Gaza, the Biden administration now concedes that the true figures for civilian casualties may be even worse.

Barbara Leaf, the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, [told a House committee](#) this month that American officials thought the civilian casualties were ‘very high, frankly, and it could be that they’re even higher than are being cited.’”

“While the experts urged caution around public statements about the specific number of people killed in a particular strike — [especially in the immediate aftermath](#) of a blast — they said the aggregate death tolls reported by the Gaza Health Ministry have typically proved to be accurate.”

The Intercept previously [uncovered](#) evidence that the Gaza Health Ministry numbers were accurate, and possibly underreported.

Further, since Israel began its [bombardment](#) of [hospitals](#) in Gaza, recording the death toll has become increasingly challenging since the Gaza Health Ministry, according to international experts the *Times* spoke to, “gathers death figures from hospitals and morgues across the enclave, which tally the dead and report the names, ID numbers and other details of people killed.” The majority of Gaza’s hospitals have been shut down by Israel, which has necessitated “other government officials [to begin] updating the number of killed instead of the ministry,” according to the *Times*.

The numbers will likely rise in the coming weeks. After Hamas’s October 7 attack on Israel, Israel [launched](#) a “complete siege” of Gaza, cutting off food, water, electricity, and fuel. Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu [stated](#) that “this will be a long war.”

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