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Israeli Tank Shelling in Gaza Sparks Global Ceasefire Calls Amid Rising Civilian Toll

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At least 12 Palestinians were killed and dozens more injured following Israeli tank shelling on a tent encampment in western Gaza City early Tuesday, according to local health authorities. The strike comes as Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) intensify their ground operations in central Gaza, particularly in southern and eastern Deir al-Balah, further compounding the crisis for civilians caught in the crossfire.

The renewed offensive follows months of escalating conflict and has prompted fresh international outcry. A coalition of 26 nations, including the United Kingdom, France, and Canada, issued a joint statement condemning what they described as the “inhumane killing of civilians,” particularly near areas designated for humanitarian aid. The group also called for an immediate ceasefire to allow critical relief efforts to reach the population.

Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs dismissed the condemnation, labelling it “disconnected from reality.” The ministry maintains that its military actions are aimed at neutralising Hamas positions and infrastructure, and that civilian casualties, while deeply regrettable, are often a result of Hamas embedding itself within civilian areas.

Further fuelling diplomatic tensions, two Israeli nationals attending a music festival in Belgium were briefly detained by local authorities following accusations of war crimes in Gaza. The complaint was filed by the Hind Rajab Foundation, a non-governmental organisation. Israel’s Foreign Ministry confirmed the incident and criticised the legal action, describing it as a politically motivated stunt.

The humanitarian situation worsened when airstrikes reportedly struck a World Health Organisation (WHO) staff residence and storage facility in Deir al-Balah. According to the WHO, the building was hit three times, resulting in severe damage, fires, and significant danger to staff and their families, including children. While no fatalities were reported at the site, the attack raises serious concerns about the safety of aid workers and the viability of ongoing relief operations in the area.

The current offensive has once again laid bare the fragile balance between military objectives and the need to protect civilian lives. While Israel continues to assert its right to defend itself and dismantle terrorist infrastructure, mounting civilian casualties and infrastructure damage have amplified calls for restraint and a more coordinated international response.

As diplomatic pressure builds and the humanitarian toll climbs, the path to de-escalation remains unclear. For now, the population of Gaza remains under siege, facing the dual threat of conflict and the collapse of essential services.