**Headline:** Israel’s Hellish Attack on the Palestinians on 18 March

By Vijay Prashad

**Author Bio:** This article was produced by [Globetrotter](https://globetrotter.media/) and [No Cold War](https://nocoldwar.org/). Vijay Prashad is an Indian historian, editor, and journalist. He is a writing fellow and chief correspondent at Globetrotter. He is an editor of [LeftWord Books](https://mayday.leftword.com/) and the director of [Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research](https://thetricontinental.org). He has written more than 20 books, including [The Darker Nations](https://smile.amazon.com/Darker-Nations-Peoples-History-Third/dp/1595583424/?tag=alternorg08-20) and [The Poorer Nations](https://smile.amazon.com/Poorer-Nations-Possible-History-Global/dp/1781681589/?tag=alternorg08-20). His latest books are [On Cuba: Reflections on 70 Years of Revolution and Struggle](https://thenewpress.com/books/on-cuba) (with Noam Chomsky), [Struggle Makes Us Human: Learning from Movements for Socialism](https://www.haymarketbooks.org/books/1869-struggle-makes-us-human), and (also with Noam Chomsky) [The Withdrawal: Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, and the Fragility of US Power](https://thenewpress.com/books/withdrawal).

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**[Article Body:]**

On 18 March 2025, Israel unilaterally broke the ceasefire agreement and bombed several sites in Gaza. It is estimated that at least 400 Palestinians, mostly civilians, died by Israeli bombs. Journalists in Gaza [report](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/03/israeli-air-strikes-kill-over-400-palestinians-across-gaza-following-unilateral-resumption-of-mass-attacks/) that of those dead, 174 are children. Once more, entire [families](https://english.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/155720) have been wiped out. The head of the United Nations organisation for Palestine (UNRWA), Philippe Lazzarini, [said](https://x.com/unlazzarini/status/1901926038394884358) that the Israelis have fuelled ‘hell on earth’. Amnesty International’s Secretary General Agnès Callamard described the situation as ‘the hellish nightmare of intense bombardment’. The word ‘hell’ is on everyone’s lips. It defines the situation in Gaza at present.

**Israel’s Attack**

Why did the Israelis break the ceasefire? There is no good reason. There was nothing done on the ground by the Palestinians that provoked this return to deadly violence. The prisoner exchange went as smoothly as possible and the process of verification of the ceasefire was intact. There are, however, three points of interest that could have drawn the Israelis back to the violence.

First, the Palestinians embarrassed the Israeli government on at least two issues: by marching northwards in the hundreds of thousands to reclaim northern Gaza on 27 January, and by allowing the Israeli prisoners to show empathy with their captors when they were released (to the point of Israeli soldiers kissing Hamas gunmen who had held them hostage).

Second, the Israeli government broke the ceasefire and then Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [welcomed](https://www.timesofisrael.com/cabinet-reappoints-ben-gvir-as-police-minister-ignoring-attorney-generals-objections/) back to his cabinet three members of the far-right wing Otzma Yehudit (Itamar Ben-Gvir, Amichai Eliyahu, and Yitzhak Vassirulov) who had resigned because of the ceasefire. Their return cements Netanyahu’s government. It is within the character of Netanyahu to murder Palestinians to maintain his own political power.

Finally, US President Donald Trump’s authorisation to attack Yemen’s government in retaliation for its defence of the Palestinians shined a green light to Israel for a resumption of hostilities. Yemen’s Ansar Allah was the only remaining group that continued to attack Israel because of its genocide (Lebanon’s Hezbollah and the Syrian factions have been largely silenced).

**Pregnant Palestinians**

According to the [United Nations Population Fund](https://www.unfpa.org/) (UNPFA), there are 50,000 pregnant Palestinian women in Gaza, with 4,000 ready to give birth next month (more than 130 per day). Currently, these women have no adequate medical care. The Israeli government has blocked for two weeks the delivery of fifty-four ultrasound machines and nine portable incubators (essential for premature babies). The cuts in electricity and water on top of the destroyed medical centres and hospitals have placed an inordinate burden on medical workers and therefore on the pregnant women.

Dr. Yacoub (name changed), a doctor at Kuwait Hospital in Gaza recounted two stories of importance as the bombs fell once more. A thirty-year-old woman who was twenty-two weeks pregnant came to the hospital from al-Mawasi in Khan Younis with a head injury caused by an Israeli airstrike. She died in the hospital. When the doctor examined her, he found that her baby was also dead. A second woman, in her twelfth week of pregnancy, suffered a miscarriage. She was in terrible pain when she arrived. Her mother told the doctor: ‘We barely managed to get to this hospital. We barely found transportation. The situation is unstable, with shelling and fear. We came here scared’. One of the two women died. Both of their babies are dead. ‘In times of war’, Dr. Yacoub said, ‘the devastation extends beyond the battlefield, affecting innocent lives, including those of expectant mothers and their unborn children’.

**Reopening Gaza**

Against all odds, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society [reopened](https://english.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/155729) the al-Quds Hospital in Gaza City’s Tal al-Hawa neighbourhood. The hospital had been bombed by the Israelis and closed since November 2023. The North Gaza Emergency Committee, set up by civilians three years ago, met to decide on the absolute necessity of trying to provide some medical care despite the dire context. They have been able to reestablish two operating rooms, an emergency department, and outpatient clinics.

It is important to remind readers that during this genocide, Israel targeted the Palestinians who had been leaders of the Emergency Committees and who had been involved in the entry of humanitarian aid. For instance, in March 2024, Israeli aircraft targeted and killed Amjad Hathat, a popular leader of an Emergency Committee in western Gaza, and Brigadier General Fayeq al-Mabhouh, the policeman who coordinated the entry of humanitarian aid through the UN Palestinian agency (UNRWA). The murder of people such as Hathat and al-Mabhouh has left the Palestinians in northern Gaza without those with the expertise to bring aid into Gaza and then distribute it amongst the Palestinians. Despite their loss, others have stepped into the breach, including the beleaguered UNRWA officials.

During the ceasefire, UNRWA opened 130 temporary learning spaces across Gaza to enrol a remarkable 270,000 boys and girls. As UNRWA head, Lazzarini, [wrote](https://x.com/UNLazzarini/status/1900841510276313503), ‘Education for children restores some hope. It helps them help and slowly reconnect with their childhood’. But he wrote this on 15 March. Israel began its bombardment again three days later.

The rubble will grow. The despair will increase. The genocide continues.