



Palestinian sisters Samar and Sahar cry as they search for their missing mother Amira Al-Breim at the rubble of a house hit in an Israeli strike, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

More than half of Gaza structures damaged

Says UN after preliminary satellite data analysis

AFP, Geneva

Some 55 percent of all structures in the Gaza Strip have been destroyed, damaged or possibly damaged since the Israeli offensive began in the Palestinian territory eight months ago, according to preliminary satellite analysis by the UN.

The analysis showed more than 137,000 buildings affected, UNOSAT, the United Nations satellite analysis agency, said on X, formerly Twitter.

The estimate is based on a satellite image taken on May 3, and compared with images taken in May a year earlier, last September, and on October 15.

The fresh satellite image was also compared to images taken during several dates in November, then again during the first months of this year, UNOSAT said.

"According to satellite imagery analysis, UNOSAT identified 36,591 destroyed structures," the agency said in a statement.

In addition, it said it had seen "16,513 severely damaged structures, 47,368 moderately damaged structures, and 36,825 possibly damaged structures for a total of 137,297 structures".

The analysis showed more than 137,000 buildings affected: UNOSAT

"These correspond to around 55 percent of the total structures in the Gaza Strip and a total of 135,142 estimated damaged housing units," it said.

UNOSAT said the image comparisons showed the governorates of Deir Al-Balah, in the centre, and Gaza, in the north, had suffered the worst damage between April 1 and May 3.

Comparing satellite images on those dates indicated that an additional 2,613 structures had been damaged in Deir Al-Balah, while another 2,368 had been damaged in Gaza governorate in just over a month.

Within Deir Al-Balah, the Nuseirat municipality suffered the greatest number of newly damaged structures during that period, at 1,216, UNOSAT said.

The agency stressed that the findings were still part of a preliminary analysis, which had yet to be validated in the field.

Philippe Lazzarini, the head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), has described images from Jabalia as horrific. Thousands of displaced people had no choice but to live amid the rubble and in destroyed UNRWA facilities, he said in a June 1 post on X.

More than 36,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive, according to Gaza health officials.



People inspect a damaged building amid ongoing cross-border hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces in Houla village near the border with Israel, southern Lebanon yesterday. Hezbollah said yesterday it had launched a squadron of drones towards the headquarters of the Israeli military's Galilee formation.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Mexico elects Sheinbaum as first woman president

REUTERS, Mexico City

Claudia Sheinbaum won a landslide victory to become Mexico's first female president, inheriting the project of her mentor and outgoing leader Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador whose popularity among the poor helped drive her triumph.

Sheinbaum, a climate scientist and former mayor of Mexico City, won the presidency with between 58.3 percent and 60.7 percent of the vote, according to a rapid sample count by Mexico's electoral authority. That is set to be the highest vote percentage in Mexico's democratic history.

The ruling coalition was also on track for a possible two-thirds super majority in both houses of Congress.

WAYANAD CONSTITUENCY IN INDIA

Exit poll predicts massive slump in Rahul's vote share

TNN, New Delhi

In a bitter-sweet prediction for India's Congress party, an exit poll carried out by the VMR-Manorama News has suggested a massive erosion in Rahul Gandhi's vote share in the recently-concluded election in Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency.

The exit poll has predicted a clean sweep by the United Democratic Front (UDF), which has an alliance with the Congress, in the Lok Sabha election in Kerala. It has predicted 16 seats for UDF and two seats for the LDF while it's neck and neck race in two seats.

The exit poll has predicted that if Rahul had secured 64 percent vote in 2019, his vote share will come down to 50 percent this time.

Interestingly, BJP will have to settle without any seat this time too as per the prediction. As per the exit poll, results in Alathur and Kannur could go either way. The exit poll has predicted BJP will come second in two constituencies Thiruvananthapuram and Pathanamthitta.

Meanwhile, senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi said "The INDIA Opposition bloc is hopeful that the results of the 2024 Lok Sabha election will be "completely opposite" to exit poll predictions that have predicted another big victory for the BJP-led NDA.



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