

Killing Palestinian History and Cultural Heritage: Targeting Archeological Sites, Churches, Mosques, Museums, Monuments

Of 325 Archaeological, Ancient Sites in Gaza, Israel 'Destroyed' 200

By [TRT World](#)

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The Israeli army has destroyed more than 200 archaeological and ancient sites out of 325 that were registered across besieged Gaza in the course of its devastating onslaught since October 7, authorities in the enclave said.

The Gaza Media Office said on Friday the sites include ancient churches, mosques, schools, museums and other different historical and archaeological sites and monuments.

"The ancient and archaeological sites destroyed by the army date back to the Phoenician and Roman ages; others date back between 800 BC and 1,400, while others were built 400 years ago," it said in a statement.

The Great Omari Mosque, the Byzantine church in Jabalia, the Shrine of Al-Khadir in Deir al Balah city in central besieged Gaza, and the Blakhiya Byzantine cemetery [The Anthedon of Palestine], northwestern Gaza City were among the sites.

It noted that other sites were severely damaged, including the Greek Orthodox Saint Porphyrius Church, the 400-year-old Al-Saqqa House and the Sayed al-Hashim Mosque, which is one of the oldest mosques in Gaza.

Deliberately Destroying Palestinian Heritage

Geneva-based rights group Euro-Med Monitor said on November 20 that Israel deliberately destroyed archaeological and historical monuments in besieged Gaza and accused it of “explicitly targeting Palestinian cultural heritage.”

Gaza is an ancient and historic city that came under the rule of several empires and civilisations, including ancient Egyptians [Pharaohs], the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines then the Islamic age, among others.

Since Hamas’ cross-border surprise blitz on October 7, Israel has continued relentless attacks on the blockaded enclave, killing at least 21,507 Palestinians — about 1% of Gaza’s population — and wounding 55,915, according to local health authorities. Thousands more bodies are feared to be buried in the ruins of obliterated neighbourhoods.

The Israeli onslaught has left Gaza in ruins, with 60 percent of the enclave’s infrastructure damaged or destroyed and nearly 2.3 million residents displaced amid acute shortages of food, clean water, and medicines.

The civilian deaths and the destruction in Gaza from the Israeli bombardment has caused a growing international outcry, and the United States’ international image has taken a beating over its continued backing for ally Israel.

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Featured image: A view of the damaged historical Greek Orthodox Saint Porphyrius Church, where civilians took shelter, after Israeli air strike in Gaza City, Gaza on October 20, 2023. [Ali Jadallah] / Photo: AA

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