

Gaza's Humanitarian Crisis Deepens as Casualties Mount and Healthcare System Struggles

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The Ministry of Health in Gaza stated that the toll of the Israeli occupation aggression on the Gaza Strip reached **11,451** martyrs, with **80%** of them being women, children, and the elderly. The Ministry affirmed that the occupation forces deliberately terrorized the healthcare system in Gaza and its workers, warning of a major health catastrophe shortly.

The government media office in Gaza reported on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, that **25** hospitals and **52** health centres were out of service as a result of the Israeli occupation aggression. Moreover, the Israeli occupation killed **202** health personnel and **36** civil defence personnel, in addition to wounding more than **200** health personnel. More than 60 ambulances were attacked, **55** of which were damaged and put out of service.

The Director of Al-Shifa Medical Complex, Mihammad Abu Salmiya, has asserted that dozens of martyrs have been buried in a mass grave on the hospital grounds due to the continued Israeli occupation siege and aggression on the Strip for the **39th** day. Abu Salmia said that at least **179** bodies were buried in a mass grave at the hospital yesterday, explaining that among them were **7** children who died due to power outages.

Thousands of patients require life-saving medical care, including those in need of dialysis, advanced cancer treatment, insulin for diabetic patients, and over **50,000** pregnant women facing challenges in accessing healthcare.

With the ongoing power outage and fuel shortages, all sectors, especially the healthcare sector, are on the verge of collapse, tantamount to a death sentence for the wounded and sick. The scarcity of drinking water, unavailability of personal care supplies, and the deterioration of parts of the sewage system led to the spread of infectious diseases, signaling an impending health catastrophe, especially with the continuous blockade of water and medicine.



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The Ministry of Health in Gaza has declared the collapse of the healthcare system due to the acute shortage of medical supplies, their prevention from reaching Gaza, and the depletion of healthcare supplies and medications. Hospitals cannot admit any more patients or wounded due to the lack of resources and beds, reaching a point where surgeries are performed by the light of mobile phones and without anesthesia, creating a tragic situation beyond human imagination.

Despite the psychological and physical pressures and the lack of resources, medical and healthcare professionals continue to provide their services, resorting to prioritization in treatment due to the catastrophic conditions. Hence, the Ministry of Health in Gaza has called upon the retired medical staff to join the workforce due to the shortage of personnel immediately, the increasing numbers of wounded and sick, and the difficulties in accessing treatment areas due to roads destroyed by bombings.

Thousands of Palestinian displaced families who had been sheltering at Al-Shifa, along with patients and wounded who were not able to move or escape, had been trapped inside the hospital under heavy bombing and shootings by the Israeli occupation troops surrounding the hospital.

The Israeli occupation forces last night raided Al-Shifa Hospitals, firing smoke bombs into the emergency department before carrying out armed military intrusion. Doctors said not a single shot was fired from within the medical complex, but they heard Israeli forces shooting into it everywhere. So far, it's unclear if or how many people were killed or injured in the raid, as communications channels were blocked as it was taking place.

These heinous crimes of the Israeli occupation's ongoing aggression, including the deliberate targeting of medical facilities, are blatant violations of international humanitarian law, ethical values, and principles that cannot be ignored or tolerated.