

One thousand Yemeni children die daily due to Saudi-led attacks



Sanaa, December 12 (RHC)-- The Yemeni minister of public health and population has warned about the catastrophic toll that the ongoing Saudi-led military onslaught and blockade has taken, stating that it is estimated that 1,000 children die in the crisis-hit and impoverished Arab country on a daily basis.

“We are facing a massacre being carried out by the (coalition of) aggression against Yemeni children, where at least 1,000 children die every day. Some 6,000 women have lost their lives as a result of complications either during pregnancy or childbirth,” Taha al-Mutawakel said at a press conference in the capital Sana'a.

Since the onset of the Saudi-led war on Yemen in 2015, more than 3,600 Yemeni children have been killed and 800 others paralyzed, a recent report shows. Taha al-Mutawakel called for the opening of a humanitarian medical air bridge for Yemeni civilians, who are suffering from conditions that cannot be treated inside the war-battered country.

Mutawakel further noted that 93 percent of medical equipment and devices in Yemen are either out of service, or have exceeded their expected useful lifespans. He highlighted that his ministry, at the beginning of the current year, appealed to international humanitarian organizations to provide it with necessary equipment, medicines and medical personnel; but only 19% of the requests fulfilled so far.

The Yemeni health minister says it is estimated that every ten minutes a child under five dies from extreme hunger in Yemen. The Yemeni health minister also argued that international organizations have reneged on the terms of agreements signed with his ministry, emphasizing that Yemen is currently in need of \$500 million for curative care and another \$400 million for primary health care.

Separately, Yemeni army forces, supported by allied fighters from the Popular Committees, have intercepted and targeted an unmanned aerial vehicle belonging to the Saudi-led military coalition in retaliation to the alliance's relentless airstrikes against their homeland.

The spokesman for Yemeni Armed Forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, wrote in a post published on his Twitter page that Yemeni forces and their allies had shot down the drone while flying in the skies over al-Sawh area of Saudi Arabia's southwestern border region of Najran on Wednesday evening, and conducting "hostile acts."

The development came only a day after Yemeni air defense forces and fighters from Popular Committees targeted a Saudi-led drone as it was on a reconnaissance mission over al-Kasarah area of the same Saudi region, situated 844 kilometers (524 miles) south of the capital Riyadh.

Yemeni army forces and their allies have targeted a Saudi-led spy drone as it was flying over an area in Saudi Arabia's southern border region of Najran.

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a devastating campaign against Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power and crushing the Houthi Ansarullah movement.

The U.S.-based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict-research organization, estimates that the war has claimed more than 100,000 lives over the past four and a half years.

The war has also taken a heavy toll on the country's infrastructure, destroying hospitals, schools, and factories. The United Nations says over 24 million Yemenis are in dire need of humanitarian aid, including 10 million suffering from extreme levels of hunger.

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