

Health officials say hospitals in northern Gaza completely out of service



Gaza City, November 22 (RHC)-- Hospitals in northern Gaza are now completely out of service, according to the besieged enclave's Ministry of Health. Ashraf al-Qudra, Gaza's health ministry spokesperson, said in an interview with Al Jazeera on Tuesday that the occupancy rate in hospitals in Gaza's north has reached 190 percent.

Israel bombed and destroyed parts of al-Shifa Hospital, the largest in Gaza, where more than 700 people are still held captive under a siege by the Israeli army, according to al-Qudra.

Last week, Israeli forces seized the hospital to search for what they said was a Hamas tunnel network and command center built underneath the complex. Hamas has firmly denied the allegations.

A group of 28 premature babies were evacuated from the al-Shifa Hospital to Egypt to receive treatment on Monday, according to the Palestinian authorities and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Al-Qudra also said that about 120 people were evacuated from northern Gaza's Indonesian Hospital to Nasser Medical Complex in the south of the Strip.

There are still more than 400 injured people inside the Indonesian Hospital, in addition to about 200 medical staff and more than 2,000 others taking refuge, he added.

The Israeli army has put those inside the hospital in a "circle of death," targeting anybody who moves around the hospital or inside it, al-Qudra said. Gaza's health ministry had said on Monday that at least 12 Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded by attacks on the hospital funded by Jakarta, which is currently surrounded by Israeli tanks.

The WHO said on the same day that the Indonesian Hospital was only able to provide basic services, with the lives of those with severe injuries and other medical emergencies being at immediate risk.

Al-Qudra also said that Israeli air strikes targeted the house of Gaza's deputy undersecretary of the health ministry on Tuesday morning, adding that there were 56 of his relatives in the house who had been displaced from different areas of Gaza.

Rescue teams managed to find 17 bodies while the rest are still under the rubble, according to the spokesperson.

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