

Health authorities in Gaza issue urgent appeal for help as Israeli army attacks key hospitals



A fire is seen through a window from Kamal Adwan hospital, in Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip, December 18, 2024 [Stringer/Reuters]

Gaza City, December 25 (RHC)-- The Israeli military is targeting three major hospitals in the northern Gaza Strip as doctors and authorities in the enclave request immediate intervention by the international community.

On Tuesday, weeklong Israeli attacks intensified on the besieged Kamal Adwan Hospital and Indonesian Hospital in Beit Lahiya, and the al-Awda Hospital located east of the Jabalia refugee camp.

Two explosive-laden unmanned robotic vehicles planted earlier by the Israeli military blew up in the vicinity of Kamal Adwan in the early hours of Tuesday, wounding approximately 20 patients and medical staff, hospital director Hussam Abu Safia told Al Jazeera.

This was the first time Israeli forces used the explosives outside Kamal Adwan, but there have been similar reports of them being used to detonate buildings in northern Gaza.

Reporting from Deir el-Balah in central Gaza, Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud said, "An eyewitness told us that much of the area around the hospital has been cleared from buildings, the infrastructure destroyed and severely damaged, impeding movement in and out of the hospital."

The hospital has been repeatedly bombed by the Israeli military, rendering various departments, including the intensive care unit, inoperable.

Al-Awda, a charitable facility providing free healthcare in the northern part of the enclave, was hit on its third floor by the Israeli military on Tuesday. Parts of the building caught fire, which also spread to nearby residential buildings.

The Indonesian Hospital, a larger health facility that also been experiencing increased attacks, was threatened by the Israeli forces to evacuate the entire facility.

Munir Al-Bursh, director of Gaza's Ministry of Health, said the Israeli army had ordered hospital officials to evacuate it on Monday, before storming it in the early hours of Tuesday and forcing those inside to leave.

Al Jazeera's Mahmoud said the two hospitals have been providing medical supplies to besieged Kamal Adwan and also transferring patients out of there when possible.

"The Indonesian Hospital has been crippled by the attacks in the past few months. Much of the facility has been damaged, forcing many to evacuate it. As of midnight, the Israeli military issued a warning to everyone inside the hospital, including the patients, to leave the building and be in the streets in the cold weather amid the intimidation by the tanks and quadcopters," he said.

Hospital directors, health authorities and rights organisations inside and outside Gaza have been condemning the attacks and calling for international help, but the situation in the north has only deteriorated.

Gaza's Health Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday that the Israeli military is trying to put all three hospitals in the north out of service, and appealed for intervention.

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) said more than 20 attacks on Kamal Adwan Hospital in recent days using drones, shelling and gunfire show that "genocide persists" in Gaza.

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