

UK denies Gaza children medical treatment

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A bloodied Palestinian child standing in the ruins in the aftermath of an Israeli bombardment, Gaza, Palestine, on Oct. 25, 2023. (AA Photo)

London, May 11 (RHC)-- The UK government allows the entry of people for medical treatment from various war-ravaged countries but denies service to Palestinians coming from the besieged Gaza Strip, in

a clear indication of the country's double standards in dealing with foreign patients.

According to reports, the UK government facilitated the evacuation of 21 Ukrainian children with cancer within weeks of Russia's 2022 "military operation" in Ukraine and coordinated their treatment through the National Health Service (NHS).

"I am proud that the UK is offering lifesaving medical care to these Ukrainian children, who have been forced out of their home country by the Russian invasion while undergoing medical treatment," Sajid Javid, the then-UK health secretary, said in March 2022.

This is while after only two children from Gaza were finally permitted last week to enter the UK for medical treatment after 17 months of persistent lobbying, with reports saying that the two suffered complications that had nothing to do with the Israeli war on Gaza.

"They were chosen not because they are among those most severely injured by Israel's onslaught in Gaza; quite the opposite. Their diagnoses appear more politically neutral, involving congenital conditions not directly related to Israel's ongoing violence in Gaza," said the Middle East Eye (MEE) news portal.

"These are the only two Palestinian children in need of medical care that the UK government has agreed to receive since Israel accelerated its assault on Gaza in October 2023."

Reports said their admission came as their treatment was arranged privately, funded entirely by donations and facilitated by a coalition of doctors, lawyers and volunteers through the NGO Project Pure Hope.

"The UK government hasn't just failed to help; it has actively blocked efforts to transfer severely injured children - those with blast wounds, amputations and burns - to UK hospitals for essential treatment," the MME added.

The report underlined that the Home Office and Foreign Office have consistently denied visas to Palestinian patients, citing supposed logistical, medical or security reasons, while the UK government has facilitated the transfer and treatment of children from Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan in recent years.

"Why are injured children from Gaza being denied treatment in British hospitals?" British newspaper The Guardian asked in February 2024. "The answer is now clear: because their wounds carry political weight. Because allowing them into the country would expose the UK's passive inaction and active complicity. Because their suffering is inconvenient."

Former UK Foreign Office adviser, Baroness Arminka Helic, also condemned the UK government's move, calling it a clear case of "double standards."

Israel launched a genocidal war on the Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023, which has so far killed over 52,750 Palestinians and injured over 119,250 others. Most of the victims have been women and children.

More than 18,000 children have been killed and thousands more are living with catastrophic injuries - without access to antibiotics, anaesthesia, surgical care, or even food after the collapse of Gaza's health system.

In November 2024, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the regime's former minister for military affairs, Yoav Gallant, for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

Tel Aviv also faces a genocide case at the International Court of Justice for its war on Gaza.

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