

Gaza Official Says Israel Strikes On Hospital 'Terrifying'

AFP- An official from one of only two functioning hospitals in northern Gaza told AFP on Monday that Israeli forces were continuing to target his facility and urged the international community to intervene before "it is too late."

Hossam Abu Safiyeh, director of Kamal Adwan hospital in the city of Beit Lahia, described the situation at the medical facility as "extremely dangerous and terrifying" owing to shelling by Israeli forces.

An Israeli military spokesman denied that the hospital was being targeted.

"I am unaware of any strikes on Kamal Adwan hospital," he told AFP.

Safiyeh reported that the hospital, which is currently treating 91 patients, had been targeted on Monday by Israeli drones.

"This morning, drones dropped bombs in the hospital's courtyards and on its roof," said Safiyeh in a statement.

"The shelling, which also destroyed nearby houses and buildings, did not stop throughout the night."

The shelling and bombardment have caused extensive damage to the hospital, Safiyeh added.

"Bullets hit the intensive care unit, the maternity ward, and the specialised surgery department causing fear among patients," he said, adding that a generator was also targeted.

"The world must understand that our hospital is being targeted with the intent to kill and forcibly displace the people inside.

"We face a constant threat every day. The shelling continues from all directions... The situation is extremely critical and requires urgent international intervention before it is too late," he said.

On Sunday, Safiyeh said he received orders to evacuate the hospital, but the military denied issuing such directives.

Located in Beit Lahia, the hospital is one of only two still operational in northern Gaza.

The area has been the focus of an intense air and ground campaign by Israeli forces since October 6, aimed at prevent Hamas from regrouping.

Most of the dead and injured from the offensive are brought to Kamal Adwan and Al-Awda hospitals.

The United Nations and other organisations have repeatedly decried the worsening humanitarian conditions in Gaza, particularly in the north, since the latest military offensive began.

Rights groups have consistently appealed for hospitals to be protected and for the urgent delivery of medical aid and fuel to keep the facilities running.

Israeli officials have accused Hamas militants of using the hospitals as command and control centres to plan attacks against the military.

The war in Gaza broke out on October 7 last year after Hamas militants launched an attack on southern Israel that resulted in the deaths of 1,208 people on the Israeli side, most of them civilians, according to an AFP tally based on official Israeli figures.

Israel's retaliatory military offensive in Gaza has killed at least 45,259 people, a majority of them civilians, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry, figures the UN says are reliable.

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