

Press Release

Between the Grinding Mill: Children of Gaza are dying from the Siege and Lack of Medical Treatment

(Translated)

Three newborns died in the neonatal intensive care unit at Shifa Hospital in the Gaza Strip this week after their medical permits were denied or delayed outside Gaza.

As 2 million Palestinian residents of the Gaza Strip enter their 11th year under the siege, their lives are becoming increasingly tragic. This includes extreme poverty, high unemployment, acute fuel shortages, continued power cuts, disruption of the sewage system, restrictions on travelling, as well as the disruption of the health system of the Gaza Strip and its near collapse, especially for the most vulnerable groups, especially children.

Gaza hospitals, which operate on a limited emergency fuel reserve recently donated by the United Nations, have closed a number of services due to fuel shortages, threatening the lives of newborns in intensive care – as what happened with these three children – and kidney dialysis patients. It can also damage cold blood and vaccine stocks. Earlier this month, the UN humanitarian coordinator Robert Piper in the occupied territories of Palestine expressed concern over further cuts in energy supplies to the Gaza Strip, warning that the situation would become catastrophic. He said, "A further increase in the length of blackouts is likely to lead to a total collapse of basic services, including critical functions in the health, water and sanitation sectors."

According to the World Health Organization's 2016 report, nearly 50 per cent of medical equipments in the Gaza Strip are outdated and more than a third of essential medicines are in "zero stock" and "the situation has worsened with the Authority's decision to stop the supply of medicines and medical supplies from the Ministry of Health in Ramallah. The proportion of the deficit in medicines until the end of last April reached, about 35%, while the proportion of the deficit in medical supplies is about 40%, and it was declared that 170 medicines and 270 types of medical supplies are out of stock."

Dr. Adnan Al-Wahidi, Executive Director of Human's Land organization, says that acute malnutrition with severe wasting signs among young children in Gaza is on the increase, as well as higher rates of infection among younger age groups with non-contagious diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, type 1 diabetes and cancer. He says that obesity among children is rising sharply because more families rely on cheap high-calorie foods because they cannot afford essential nutrient-rich foods.

In view of this catastrophic situation in Gaza, patients - especially cases dealing with tumors, pediatrics, hematology, ophthalmology and orthopedics - are referred to specialized hospitals in Jerusalem and the West Bank, and sometimes to hospitals in Jordan and the Jewish entity, but they need permits to leave Gaza. WHO showed a worrying decrease in the number of approved patient permits, while some patients died while waiting for these permits. Testimonies and data collected by Physicians for Human Rights also showed that the number of permit applications approved by the Palestinian Authority is constantly decreasing.

O Ummah of Islam, especially in Egypt, whose rulers contribute to the siege of Gaza:

Are you not moved by the death of these children as a result of the siege and lack of treatment?! Don't you have children and sons?! Don't you see the catastrophic situation, particularly the health situation in Gaza of Hashim?! Or are your hearts locked?

And you, the Palestinian Authority of shame in Ramallah:

By what right and by what law do you stop sending medicine and medical equipment to our people in Gaza?! And with what right do you delay in giving consent to patients to enter the West Bank hospitals, while you have no power in front of the Jews? Isn't their siege by the Jews enough? Or are you doing this on their behalf (the Jews)?! Woe to you ... You are using the lives of people as a pressure card to rule Gaza, and you fool yourselves that you have a state and authority?! Enough surrendering and humiliation and subordination to the colonialists, enough oppression towards your people. Know that the day of reckoning in this world is soon at the hands of the righteous Khilafah (Caliphate) on the method of the Prophethood, and the torment of the Hereafter is more severe and worse.

Allah (swt) says:

﴿قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ بَغْتَةً أَوْ جَهْرَةً هَلْ يُهْلِكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾

"Say, "Have you considered: if the punishment of Allah should come to you unexpectedly or manifestly, will any be destroyed but the wrongdoing people?" [Al-An'am: 47]

Allah (swt) says:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ﴾

"And never think that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them for a Day when eyes will stare [in horror]." [Ibrahim: 42]

**Women's Section
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