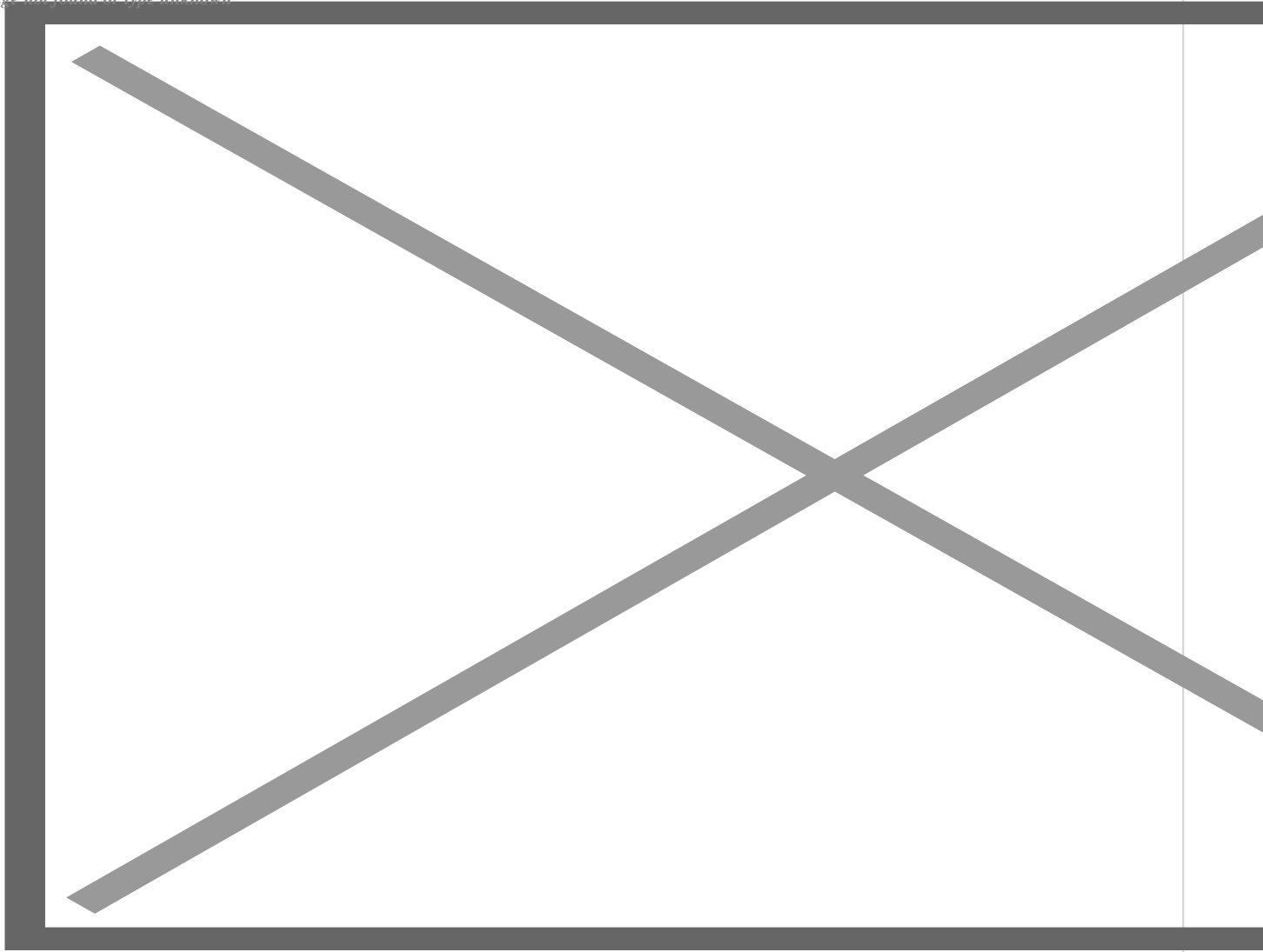


Israel launches military operation against Gaza's Shifa Hospital

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Men at al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, the Gaza Strip, inspect bodies left outside in its courtyard on November 10, 2023. (Photo by AFP)

Gaza City, November 14 (RHC)-- The Israeli regime has begun a military operation against al-Shifa Hospital in the Gaza Strip, which has come to house thousands of patients and displaced people seeking

shelter there from an unrelenting Israeli war.

"Based on intelligence information and an operational necessity, IDF (Israeli military) forces are carrying out a precise and targeted operation" against the hospital, the forces said in a statement on Wednesday.

Targeting hospitals and killing civilians is considered a war crime. Israel has been committing these crimes in the besieged Gaza Strip since early October. The regime has killed nearly 11,500 Palestinians, including more than 8,000 women and children, in Gaza since October 7, when it launched the war of aggression against the territory.

The regime has turned Gaza's hospitals into a specific target of its military campaign, alleging that the facilities serve to house Palestinian fighters and their equipment.

Al-Shifa, Gaza's biggest hospital, has taken the brunt of the Israeli assaults on healthcare targets across the coastal sliver, with the regime claiming that it houses a "command center" belonging to the Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas.

Also on Wednesday, Osama Hamdan, a senior Hamas official, said the movement had a vast network of underground tunnels in Gaza and did not need to use hospitals as bases.

"The goal sought by the occupiers by attacking the hospitals is to displace the Palestinian nation," he said, calling the regime's claim about Gaza's hospitals "naive" and "indicative of the mental status of a defeated army."

Hamas has asked the United Nations to form an international committee tasked with disproving the Israeli claim, Hamdan said.

On Tuesday, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned that al-Shifa was "nearly a cemetery" and unable to bury dead bodies as the facility was also tackling power cuts and a lack of fuel.

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