

*Israeli troops force medics,
patients, displaced from Khan
Younis hospital*



Khan Younis, February 15 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have stormed Nasser Hospital in Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis, where hundreds of displaced Palestinians and the ill and injured people are taking shelter. Local media reported the Palestinians were under attack inside and outside the facility on Thursday.

Israeli troops opened fire after they ordered the Palestinians to evacuate. Some of the Palestinians inside, health authorities in Gaza said, were forced out by the regime troops.

The Gaza Health Ministry says the situation at Nasser Hospital is "catastrophic" and the staff just can't move the bodies to the morgue due to the risks involved. The ministry's spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra said

Israeli troops were forcing nearly 100 medical personnel, close to 200 patients and more than 150 displaced people into an old squalid building at the facility without food.

“The Nasser Medical Complex is witnessing a catastrophic, worrying situation because of the dwindling medical capacity as fuel is set to run out in the next 24 hours, which directly threatens the lives of patients, including six on respirators in intensive care and three children in incubators,” the ministry said.

Doctors Without Borders has warned its staff in Gaza continue to treat patients “amid near impossible conditions.” The World Health Organization (WHO) has said the circumstances at Nasser Hospital are critical “for all of Gaza,” where only a few hospitals are even partly operational.

Footage showed rescuers trying to move the patients from the orthopedic ward – after it was reportedly struck – to safer rooms.

Nurse Mohammed al-Astal says the facility has been “besieged” for a month and facing deadly sniper fire. There is sewage in the emergency room, he said, and little to no drinking water. “At night, tanks opened heavy fire on the hospital, and snipers on the roofs of buildings surrounding Nasser Hospital opened fire and killed three displaced people.”

A doctor working at the facility posted a video of an Israeli tank creating a smoke screen to cover its movements.

Israel launched more strikes on southern Gaza on Thursday, after the regime’s head Benjamin Netanyahu said the military would press ahead with a ground invasion of the overcrowded city of Rafah – despite an international outcry. “We were displaced from Gaza City to the south,” said Ahlam Abu Assi. “(Then) they told us to go to Rafah, so we went to Rafah.” “We can’t keep going and coming,” she added. “There is no safe place for us.”

Australia, Canada and New Zealand were the latest of Israel’s allies to warn the regime not to launch the ground offensive, issuing a joint statement saying it would be “devastating” for 1.5 million trapped civilians. “There is simply nowhere else for civilians to go.”

The Gaza Health Ministry says Israel has killed more than 28,660 people, most of them women and children, in the besieged Palestinian territory since early October.

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