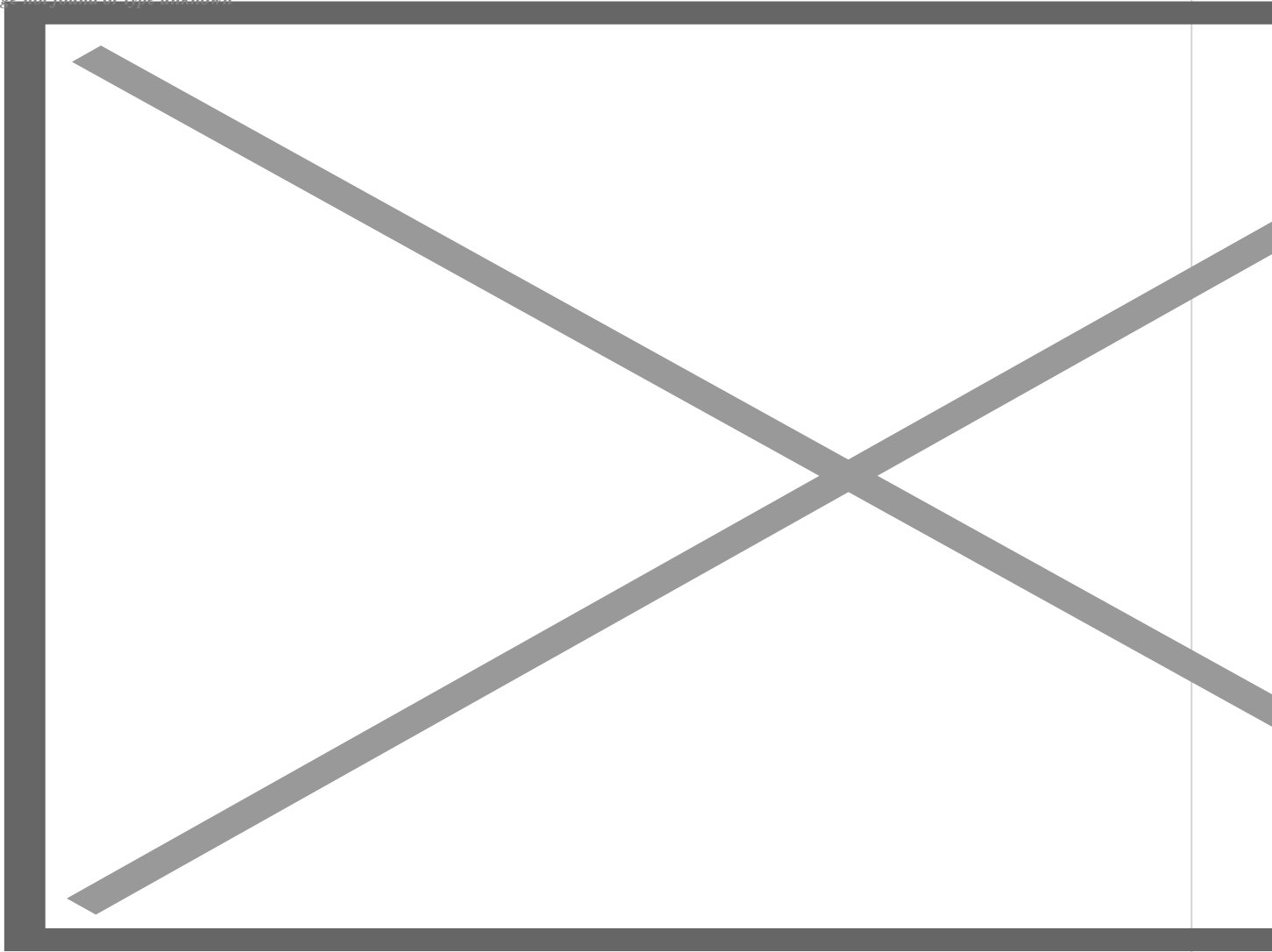


WHO chief decries decimation of Gaza health system

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**Wounded Palestinians receive treatment at al-Shifa Hospital in Israeli-bombarded Gaza Strip.
(Photo by AP)**

Geneva, December 29 (RHC)-- The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) has said the health system in Gaza is being destroyed as Israel intensifies its aerial and artillery strikes on the besieged

Palestinian territory.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a social media post on Sunday that the decimation of the Gaza health system was a tragedy. He also reiterated his call for an immediate ceasefire. "The decimation of the Gaza health system is a tragedy," WHO chief posted on X, formerly Twitter. "We persist in calling for CeasefireNow."

"In the face of constant insecurity and inflows of wounded patients, we see doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and more continue striving to save lives," Tedros said.

The UN health agency has long been sounding the alarm about the state of health care in the besieged territory.

The remarks come as hospitals, protected under international humanitarian law, have repeatedly been hit by Israeli strikes since the war erupted.

Of Gaza's original 36 hospitals, only nine are now partially functional, all of them in the south and all of them overwhelmed. After missions last week to two badly damaged hospitals in the north, WHO staff described unbearable scenes of largely abandoned patients, including young children, begging for food and water.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the WHO chief also hailed Gaza's medical workers who continue their work under increasingly dire circumstances.

The U.S.-Israeli genocidal campaign in the Gaza strip is in its third month, with the unending bloodshed claiming more and more Palestinian lives. According to Gaza officials, at least 166 people have been killed in the past 24 hours. The latest attacks targeted the southern city of Khan Yunis and the northern city of Jabalia.

Meanwhile, a human rights monitor says Israel has turned Gaza schools used to shelter displaced people into makeshift military barracks and sites for field execution. The Euro-Med human rights group said the regime has carried out field executions in many schools.

It cited the killing of 15 people at a school near the Jabalia refugee camp where 15 civilians were shot at point-blank range after interrogation.

According to the monitoring group, schools have also been turned into targets of the Israeli army and are being struck on a daily basis.

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