

Al-Shifa Hospital in ruins

written by Nora Barrows-Friedman

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A human rights group called the attacks on al-Shifa "one of the largest massacres in Palestinian history."

Israel has turned the largest medical facility in the Gaza Strip into a charred wasteland, a slaughterhouse, a cemetery.

During its two-week siege on [al-Shifa Hospital](#), Israel destroyed “all buildings and departments without exception, in a clear crime that shames humanity,” Gaza’s government media office [stated](#).

The army withdrew at dawn on Monday, after facing fierce battles from Palestinian resistance factions.

When the families of patients, medical staff and displaced persons – who were trapped inside the hospital and its grounds during Israel’s raid and massacre – returned to retrieve their loved ones, many found bodies in fragments, flattened under bulldozer treads.

Children’s corpses were discovered burned beyond recognition.

Families in a state of profound shock!!

Since early morning, they've come to Al-Shifa Hospital in [#Gaza](#) searching for their loved ones, only to be met with hundreds of decomposing bodies, including children, women, and the elderly, bound and unrecognizable !![#Gaza_Genocide](#) pic.twitter.com/5gfpxInh9m

— Nour Naim|نور (@NourNaim88) [April 1, 2024](#)

Since we are continuously live streaming our genocide , here is the footage I captured today during my visit to Al-Shifa Hospital. These were just a few of the bodies; many of them are now only fragments that we are trying to gather . This thread I will post more pictures and... pic.twitter.com/SBpjtuk5Pj

— حسام شبّات (@HossamShabat) [April 1, 2024](#)

“Inside the complex and its surroundings, the occupation army killed more than 400 martyrs and attempted to hide its abominable crime by executing hundreds of civilians, the wounded, and the sick within the walls of the al-Shifa Medical Complex,” the media office added.

“They covered the bodies with piles of sand, bulldozed them, buried them, and mixed them with the ground of the Complex. Moreover, more than 300 prisoners were arrested, while over 100 Palestinian civilians are still missing as a result of the occupation’s shocking crime.”

I have been working nonstop for the past 6 months covering what’s happening in Gaza, but what I saw today while visiting Al-Shifa hospital was unlike anything I’ve ever witnessed before :

Israeli occupation forces executed 300 Palestinians in and around the hospital, and this...

— حسام شبّات (@HossamShabat) [April 1, 2024](#)

Hundreds of bodies inside al-Shifa complex and in the surrounding area have been found burned and mutilated, including corpses “with their heads and limbs severed,” [stated](#) the Geneva-based Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor.

The group called Israel’s destruction and slaughter at al-Shifa “one of the largest massacres in Palestinian history.”

<https://lt.co/43XeU5DzC2> مستشفى الشفاء يسجل إحدى أكبر المذابح في التاريخ الفلسطيني

— المرصد الأوروبي المتوسطي (@EuroMedHRAr) [April 1, 2024](#)

Since morning, this scene has unfolded at Al-Shifa Hospital and its surroundings.

It's a massacre of unprecedented scale, annihilating not just lives, but also the very fabric of the environment.

The number of victims is beyond quantification.

The casualties exceed those of... pic.twitter.com/hRo1ey6S5L

— Ramy Abdu | رامي عبده (@RamAbdu) [April 1, 2024](#)

During the 14-day raid, Israeli forces carried out [summary executions](#), arrests and detentions while forcing medical staff to abandon their patients.

I received this message from a colleague in northern Gaza:

It's day 14 of the siege imposed on Al-Shifa Medical complex. Based on testimonies from the medical staff inside, the situation as follows;

— Ghassan Abu Sitta (@GhassanAbuSitt1) [March 31, 2024](#)

The bodies of physicians Ahmad al-Maqadmeh, a plastic surgeon, [was found](#) alongside his mother, Dr. Yasmine al-Maqadmeh, inside al-Shifa Hospital. [According](#) to Dr. Ahmad al-Maqadmeh's colleague, the British Palestinian surgeon Ghassan Abu Sitta, they were shot by Israeli soldiers as they tried to flee the hospital.

They killed my friend and colleague Dr Ahmad Maqadmeh at Shifa Hospital. A

beautifull soul and a great surgeon. We worked together in the Great Marches of Return and the 2021 war and then this recent war. His dedication was unlike anything I have ever seen. We will never forgive. pic.twitter.com/jkZ2aDd9tE

— Ghassan Abu Sitta (@GhassanAbuSitt1) [April 1, 2024](#)

□*HORRIBLE: The Israeli army killed Dr. Ahmed Al-Maqadma, a plastic surgery specialist, and his mother inside Al-Shifa Hospital.*

Their family only discovered this after the army withdrew from the hospital this morning. <https://t.co/tN1xjDWiF>

— Nour Naim|نور (@NourNaim88) [April 1, 2024](#)

More than 20 patients were found dead in their hospital beds “as a result of the Israeli siege of the complex and the deliberate deprivation” by Israeli soldiers of medical care, food and water, Euro-Med [stated](#) on Monday.

During the siege, Euro-Med added, Israeli forces “obstructed the arrival of relief teams and representatives of international organizations to the complex to carry out humanitarian missions.”

□*Heartbreaking: injured child Rafiq, who was besieged in Al-Shifa Hospital without food or any medical treatment for two weeks, looked as if he had emerged from the grave !*

His appearance alone speaks volumes, conveying the magnitude of atrocities committed by Israeli army !! pic.twitter.com/VeRyhomHvI

— Nour Naim|نور (@NourNaim88) [April 1, 2024](#)

Palestinian resistance forces had engaged in [fierce battles](#) with Israeli soldiers during the raid on al-Shifa.

Saraya al Quds fighter uses a Yassin 105 vs an IDF Namer troop carrier, which appears to be kitted with a Carpet thermobaric mine-clearing system, during the battle of Shifa. [Islamic Jihad 27/3] pic.twitter.com/Xvmdvj3Mwi

— Jon Elmer (@jonelmer) [March 28, 2024](#)



Executions of children

Last week, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor [documented](#) “systematic and horrifying military operations” by Israeli forces inside and around the al-Shifa complex.

Among these operations, the group explained, were at least 13 executions of Palestinian children between the ages of four and 16 years old.

“Some of the fatal shootings occurred during an Israeli army siege while the victims’ families were inside their homes; others occurred when the victims attempted to escape via routes that the Israeli army had designated as ‘safe’ after forcibly evacuating them from their homes and places of residence,” Euro-Med reported.

Islam Ali Salouha, who lives near al-Shifa, said that Israeli forces killed his two sons, nine-year-old Ali, and six-year-old Saeed, on 24 March “in front of their families and fellow locals. They specifically targeted the children, he said, with live bullets,” Euro-Med stated.

Salouha told the human rights group that Israeli forces ordered residents of the area to leave. His young sons walked just meters “before they were suddenly exposed to intense gunfire, which targeted the two children, Ali and Saeed, in particular. The children then fell in front of them, their bodies covered in blood.”

As family members “attempted to pull the two kids off the ground, he said, the Israeli forces opened fire on them again, forcing them to leave Ali and Saeed on the ground and to continue walking.”

Israel denies targeting of civilians

Israeli lawmakers and political figures have repeated claims that the hospital complex was used as a Hamas and Islamic Jihad command center.

Naftali Bennett, Israel’s former prime minister, called the destruction of al-Shifa an “amazing battlefield achievement.”

“Hamas used staff and patients as human shields in order to cause maximum civilian casualties as to create more criticism and pressure on Israel,” Bennett claimed, adding that “not one civilian was killed. Not one.”

Amazing battlefield achievement.

The IDF has just completed a 2 week operation on a Hamas command center that Hamas embedded within the Shifa Medical Center.

Hamas used staff and patients as human shields in order to cause maximum

civilian casualties as to create more...

— Naftali Bennett נפתלי בנט (@naftalibennett) [April 1, 2024](#)

Israel's military chief of staff Herzl Halevi boasted on Saturday that the army's siege of al-Shifa sends a "very, very important message here, a hospital is not a safe place."

הרמטכ"ל הרצי הלוי: "ההישגים הם הישגים מאוד גבוהים יש כאן מימוש של רעיון תחבולני שהוא מאוד מרשים, יש כאן מסר מאוד מאוד חשוב, בית חולים הוא לא מקום בטוח" [ItayBlumental pic.twitter.com/NPaooYd59k@](#)

[@kann_news](#) (כאן חדשות) [March 30, 2024](#)

Last week, Francesca Albanese, the United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in Palestine, included Israel's crime of "medical shielding" in her [report](#) on the genocide in Gaza.

"Targeting medical facilities while accusing the enemy of shielding within them had already been employed by Israel as a strategy of 'medical lawfare' in previous wars," Albanese writes in "Anatomy of a Genocide."

"In the current assault, Israel has invoked this legal strategy to justify genocide through the complete destruction of life-sustaining infrastructure," her report states.

*"Medical Shielding" is part of Israel's genocidal techniques in Gaza.
The context is fully explained in my last report, [#AnatomyofGenocide](#).
<https://t.co/sLTsJtsgsN>*

— Francesca Albanese, UN Special Rapporteur oPt (@FranceskAlbs) [April 1, 2024](#)

On Monday, Albanese called on the International Criminal Court's lead prosecutor, Karim Khan, to take action over Israel's "genocidal campaign."

Each heinous crime the Israeli army is committing against exhausted and traumatised civilians in Gaza is part and parcel of a genocidal campaign.

Looking forward to @KarimKhanQC's action. This is the greatest moment of truth in the ICC history. <https://t.co/JiEjyRpkoW>

— Francesca Albanese, UN Special Rapporteur oPt (@FranceskAlbs) [April 1, 2024](#)

"This is the greatest moment of truth in the ICC history," Albanese stated.

Source: [Electronic Intifada](#)

