

28 premature babies safely evacuated from Al Shifa Hospital to Egypt

20 November 2023



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Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) is relieved to hear that 28 of the surviving premature babies, who were forced out of incubators at Gaza's Shifa Hospital by Israel's denial of generator fuel, have been safely evacuated to Egypt.

Three premature babies still remain at the Emirati Field Hospital in southern Gaza. Sadly, two babies died before their evacuation, as Israel's besiegement of Shifa Hospital deprived them of the care they needed.

We remain concerned for the health of the 31 surviving premature babies whose lives have been put at severe risk by Israel's ongoing assault and its siege of basic necessities like food, water, fuel and medical supplies. We urge that all efforts be made to ensure that they can be reunited with their surviving mothers and families at the earliest opportunity.

MAP's Gaza Director Fikr Shalltoot said: "We welcome the safe evacuation of these precious babies, but their lives should never have been put at such severe risk in the first place. No critically ill patient should be forced out of a hospital, which is supposed to be a safe place for the sick and vulnerable, let alone fragile premature babies."

"While we hope these babies will now recover and thrive, world leaders should reflect on what their futures will look like if Israel's assault on Gaza is allowed to continue unabated. Who will survive to care for them? Will they have a home to grow up in? And how will they access education and achieve their fullest potential?"

"These questions will only have an answer if a ceasefire is reached soon, the siege is lifted, and aid allowed to flow to all who need it in Gaza."

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