



When Doctors Become Martyrs: From Gaza to Tehran

The story of human and humanitarian rights violations in the Middle East is not new. It stretches back to the establishment of the Israeli regime in 1948. From the massacres in Sabra and Shatila in the 1980s to the present day atrocities in Gaza, human rights have been trampled with impunity (1,2).

When we hear phrases like “the end of times”, we often hesitate to associate them with unfolding real-world tragedies. Yet the ongoing massacre of the oppressed and defenseless people of Gaza forces us to confront a harrowing truth: the moral conscience of the modern world, particularly in the duplicitous West, has become desensitized, indifferent, or willfully blind.

In a recent 12-day invasion of Iran by the Israeli regime, over 5,000 civilians were injured and more than 1,100 were martyred, including six doctors and eighteen medical staff. Among the victims were two female physicians, specialists in gynecology and neonatology who were killed alongside their young child in their home. Seven hospitals were directly targeted. A medical student was killed at home, and another lost a limb in a drone attack.

Despite these blatant violations of international humanitarian law, the world remained silent. No meaningful response was issued by global organizations, not even the World Health Organization. This dark period also became a testament to the resilience and compassion of Iran’s healthcare community. In an extraordinary display of commitment, many medical personnel moved their families into empty hospital wards to ensure they could provide uninterrupted, 24-*hr* care to the war-wounded.

The Ministry of Health and Medical Education, along with thousands of dedicated health professionals, rose to the occasion with courage and solidarity. Their work in those twelve days deserves to be documented as a case study in human dignity and service under fire.

Among the most heartbreaking losses was that of Dr. Mohammad Hossein Azizi, a renowned otolaryngologist and Deputy editor of *Archives of Iranian Medicine*. He was martyred by an Israeli missile while walking through Tajrish Square, Tehran, casually speaking to a friend on the phone. A respected scholar in medical ethics and history, Dr. Azizi was a moral giant, kind, patriotic, and deeply ethical. As his

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friend of over 30 years, I bear witness to the immense goodness he embodied. May God grant him eternal peace. Iran has been attacked by invaders for over

2,500 years. And yet, Iran remains resilient, dignified, and unbowed. What will history say of a world that let such atrocities pass in silence?

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References

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A Number of Martyrs of Medical Community in the Brutal Attack of the Zionist Regime