

News Middle East

UPROAR

Is Israel using Indian-made killer drones in Gaza?

Adani Group's drone export to Israel 'very disturbing,' says analyst

Sanjay Kumar New Delhi

Indian activists are calling on their government to cease military ties with Israel amid fears India-made combat drones are set to be used in attacks on Gaza.

The Hyderabad-based Adani Elbit, a joint venture between one of India's largest conglomerates Adani Group and Israel's defense electronics company, supplied the Israeli military with 20 Hermes 900 drones last month, according to reports.

The facility in southern India is the first outside of Israel to manufacture the Hermes 900, a type of drone which has been actively used in the ongoing Israeli onslaught on Gaza that has killed more than 31,000 Palestinians and displaced

an estimated 1.7 million people.

"The Human Rights Forum strongly condemns Adani's recent agreements with Israel that include the sending of advanced drones with the clear potential to be deployed in aid of the ongoing genocide of Palestinians in Gaza," the HRF said in a statement issued over the weekend.

"We demand that the Indian government cancel, with immediate effect, all such deals with Israel"

India has strong defense ties with Israel, as New Delhi is also one of the largest buyers of Israeli military equipment, and reportedly purchased about \$2 billion worth of weapons from Tel Aviv over the last decade.

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Many parts of Gaza, including residential areas and previously

busy shopping streets, have been left ruined and reduced to rubble. Israeli air raids have relentlessly targeted crucial public facilities over the last five months, including universities, hospitals, and refugee shelters.

"We want the Indian government (to issue) an outright rejection of what is being done by Zionist Israel towards Palestinians, particularly in Gaza," V.S. Krishna, who signed the HRF letter, told Arab News on Monday.

"We are already at a historic low, morally, not having actively opposed what Israel is doing ... I think India should have a drastic change of course in policy that we historically (already had), but over the years it has changed," he added, referring to India's historic

support for Palestine.

Pamela Philipose, a journalist and senior fellow at the Indian Council of Social Science Research, also called attention to India's historic closeness to Palestine.

"It is time that the people of India woke up to what is happening ... Whether it was from Gandhi to Nehru to Mrs. Gandhi, all of them have stood out and said that the rights of the Palestinians need to be protected and India stands by Palestine," Philipose told Arab News.

She said the Adani Group's drone export to Israel is "very disturbing," especially when

India is not adequately supporting Palestine but actually contributing to the attacks on Gaza, which the International Court of Justice has characterized as

a plausible genocide.

"Given this, it is important for people of the country to speak out and it is good that civil society organizations also begin to speak out because we need people to be engaged with this issue."

Aban Raza, an artist and activist, said India is "also complicit" and "very responsible" for Israel's onslaught on Gaza.

"If you are supplying weapons to a country that is committing genocide, then nothing can be more shameful," Raza told Arab News.

"As a citizen I would like to demand that it cease all ties with Israel, especially the military. It should completely declare the deal between Adani and Elbit as void and in fact, it should take action to help with the humanitarian aid."