# READING

**MSF: US TANK FORCED WAY INTO BOMBED AFGHAN HOSPITAL**

*(Al Jazeera*  October 15, 2015 1:12PM ET)

**Pre-reading activities**

1. **Before reading the text, make sure you understand these words.**

violate

contravene

presume

insurgent

seizure

lifeline

1. **Now match the expressions above with their definitions.**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to break through or pass by force or without right

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to take for granted or suppose

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a rope for saving [life](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/life), as one attached to a lifeboat

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ taking possession of an item, property, or person legally or by force

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to come or be in conflict with; deny or oppose

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a person who rises in forcible opposition to lawful authority

**Reading activities**

**US TANK FORCED WAY INTO BOMBED AFGHAN HOSPITAL**

The medical charity whose hospital in northern Afghanistan was bombed in an American raid said on Thursday that a U.S. tank forced its way through the closed gates of the compound, contravening an agreement that they would be informed. Doctors Without Borders, also known as MSF, said they were informed after the "intrusion" that it was by a delegation from a joint U.S.-NATO-Afghan team investigating the Oct. 3 airstrike on the hospital.

The incident violated an agreement with investigators that MSF "would be given notice before each step of the procedure involving the organization's personnel and assets." "Their unannounced and forced entry damaged property, destroyed potential evidence and caused stress and fear," it said in a statement, adding that an MSF team had arrived at the hospital earlier in the day. Authorities in Kunduz and the U.S. military did immediately respond to requests for comment.

The strike on the MSF trauma hospital in the northern city of Kunduz killed 10 patients and 12 staff. Another two staffers are now presumed dead, the group said this week, with all other MSF employees accounted for. MSF has called the incident an "attack on the Geneva Conventions" and [yesterday said that the Swiss-based International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/10/14/msf-ihffc-asked-to-probe-kunduz-hospital-bombing.html) (IHFFC) had been asked to investigate [the U.S. bombing](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/10/4/doctors-without-borders-leaves-kunduz-after-airstrike-hits-hospital.html). "We have received apologies and condolences, [but this is not enough](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/10/7/afghan-hospital-raid-was-attack-on-geneva-conventions1.html). We are still in the dark about why a well-known hospital full of patients and medical staff was repeatedly bombarded for more than an hour," said MSF International President Dr. Joanne Liu. "We need to understand what happened and why."

President Barack Obama apologized for the bombing, which the commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, [Gen. John F. Campbell, called a "mistake."](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/10/6/us-general-says-afghan-hospital-mistakenly-struck.html)

The bombing happened as Afghan forces battled Taliban insurgents who had stormed Kunduz on Sept. 28 and briefly held the city of 300,000, the first provincial capital they have overrun since being forced from power in 2001. Government troops have largely retaken the city, where authorities say life is returning to normal. Casualty figures have not yet been made public.

The seizure was a grave embarrassment for the government of President Ashraf Ghani. On Thursday, [Obama said he would keep nearly 10,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/10/15/obama-to-keep-troops-in-afghanistan-beyond-20161.html) through most of next year and 5,500 when he leaves office in 2017, throwing a lifeline to the struggling Afghan forces.

1. **Read the text and select the correct answers.**

1. What is the main topic of this article?

a) war atrocities in Afghanistan

b) battling Taliban insurgents

c) military strike causing collateral damage

d) violation of human rights

2. The MSF is calling for…

a) retribution

b) a formal apology

c) clarification of the situation

d) immediate withdrawal of soldiers

3. According to the article, which statement is NOT true?

a) The MSF-led hospital was attacked by a US army tank.

b) The number of casualties is still unclear.

c) An international commission has been entrusted to investigate this matter.

d) The MSF-led hospital was bombed by mistake.

1. **Read the text again and decide whether the statements are true or false.**

1. The intrusion turned out to be a joint-forces delegation. T / F

2. During the incident, potential evidence was found. T / F

3. The hospital was bombarded for several days. T / F

4. In 2001, Taliban insurgents were forced to leave Kunduz. T / F

5. The incident humiliated the Afghan government. T / F

1. **Based on the text, answer the following questions.**

1. What happened at the medical charity hospital?

2. What was the outcome of the incident?

3. How did US officials react?

**Post-reading activities**

1. **Discussion**

The paragraph below informs of an airstrike conducted by the U.S. amidst a firefight between Taliban and U.S. led coalition forces. Should this incident be viewed as an unfortunate mistake or as a war crime which should subsequently be punished? Debate the pros and cons of the issue and draw a conclusion.

KABUL — An airstrike apparently carried out by U.S. forces heavily damaged a charitable hospital in northern Afghanistan on Saturday, killing at least 19 people — three of them reportedly children — in an incident that a senior U.N. official equated to a war crime. The airstrike occurred before dawn when a Doctors Without Borders trauma centre in war-torn Kunduz was struck while doctors were treating dozens of patients. Hospital officials said they were assaulted from the air for 30 to 45 minutes, resulting in a large fire that burned some patients to death in their beds. Among those killed were 12 of the charity group’s staff members.

**Source:**<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/doctors-without-borders-airstrike-hits-afghan-hospital-killing-3-staffers/2015/10/03/2ed13104-b50a-48ec-9eb9-92db8ee3a876_story.html>

1. **Writing (250 words)**

One of your previous colleagues was one of the victims among the wrongful bombing of the Afghan hospital. You have been asked by a local newspaper to write a piece regarding your professional and personal experience alongside this colleague.

You wish to write a letter offering your condolences to the family of your colleague who passed away in the bombing. In addition, you have never met the family before and thus, in the correspondence, you should introduce yourself and your relationship to their deceased family member.

According to the article regarding the hospital bombing, investigators broke protocol by not following the agreed terms concerning certain procedures and processes. How important is it to follow protocol and what sort of consequences can occur if protocol is not followed. If it is found that protocol was not followed, what sort of punishment should be given?

The United Nations was formed in 1945 in response to the events that led to WWII and to help possibly avert another such tragedy. That aim was basically achieved and nowadays, “some commentators believe the organization to still be an important force for peace and human development, while others have called the organization ineffective, corrupt, or biased.“ In your opinion, is the UN indeed an asset or has it lost its purpose in the world?

Hiring mercenaries (private military firms) helps achieve a goal when a regular military is not able or willing to do so in certain situations. On the other hand, there is a certain risk when hiring mercenaries as there is the possibility of disregard for the rules, possible human rights violations etc. In an email to a parliament member, write a letter expressing why you either strongly support the practice or why you condemn the use of military firms to wage war.

**Answer key**

**Pre-reading activities**

*violate* - to break through or pass by force or without right

*presume* - to take for granted or suppose

*lifeline* - a rope for saving [life](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/life), as one attached to a lifeboat

*seizure* - taking possession of an item, property, or person legally or by force

*contravene* - to come or be in conflict with; deny or oppose

*insurgent* - a person who rises in forcible opposition to lawful authority

**Reading activities**

**III.**  1c 2c 3a

**IV.** 1T 2F 3F 4F 5T

**V.**  (suggested answers)

1. It has been accidentally bombed in an American raid…

2. damaged property, destroyed potential evidence, stress and fear …

3. US president apologized for the bombing, U.S. and NATO forces commander [called it a "mistake"](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/10/6/us-general-says-afghan-hospital-mistakenly-struck.html).