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Amsterdam: Jewish community in great distress

Dutch authorities refusing to allow Jewish community to aid elderly coronavirus victims, Amsterdam rabbis say.

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Nursing home

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Amsterdam Rabbi Eliezer Wolff and former Amsterdam Chief Rabbi Aryeh Ralbag spoke about how Holland's healthcare system is failing





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to treat elderly coronavirus patients.

In a Zoom conference with the Conference of European Rabbis (CER), the two described the health authorities' attitude towards coronavirus patients over 60 years of age.

"They don't provide medical aid, certainly not ventilators, and to our great sorrow we have again seen actual opposition, even in the Jewish nursing home. They don't evacuate patients who require hospitalization, and since we were called in to help, unfortunately, we have lost another four elderly. They also speed up their deaths, by giving them high doses of morphine," the two said.

Dutch authorities rejected the CER's offer to pay to hire a special doctor and purchase ventilators for the Jewish community.

"It's extremely saddening to hear that specifically a country considered to be 'progressive' is insensitive to the value of life and even determinedly refuses any aid offered by others, Moscow's rabbi and CER President Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt said.

The rabbis have decided to speak to the leaders of the community and the nursing home, expressing their sharp protest, and to declare that they will use any means available to them, if they are not allowed to aid the elderly patients.

Later in the meeting, Rabbi Ralbag discussed the CER's court in Amsterdam for women whose husbands refused to grant them a divorce, and the unprecedented ruling of the Dutch court: to arrest one of the divorce-refusing husbands for six months, due to his refusal to appear in the Jewish court.

"Even though he is not a resident of Holland, the court issued an arrest warrant for him, allowing any country which is a member of the European Union to enforce it," he said.

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