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Child Assaulted in Hospital Lift, Officials Dismiss Concerns

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On July 7, 2025, a 10-year-old boy was sexually assaulted by a lift operator at Dr Ruth KM Pfau Civil Hospital in Karachi, Pakistan, sparking outrage over hospital security failures. The suspect, arrested after the incident, allegedly bribed the child with 100 Pakistani Rupees (PKR) to stay silent. This article examines the assault, the hospital’s inadequate

response, and the urgent need for accountability in Pakistan's public institutions.

The incident occurred when the boy, accompanying his mother at the hospital's Medical Ward, was lured by lift operator Abdul Waheed to the third floor of the Operation Theatre (OT) complex. According to the First Information Report (FIR) filed by the boy's father, Rashid Ahmed, a daily wage worker, the child disclosed the assault after Waheed attempted to silence him with money. "My son told me everything despite the bribe," Rashid told police, as reported by *The Express Tribune*. Enraged, Rashid confronted Waheed, leading to the suspect's arrest. The case has exposed glaring lapses in hospital oversight, with no functional closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in the lift where the assault occurred.

Hospital officials have deflected responsibility, deepening public distrust. When questioned about CCTV coverage, the Medical Superintendent (MS) claimed, "There are too many lifts; how many cameras can we install?" as cited by *The Express Tribune*. The MS blamed the OT complex in-charge, Dr Bilal, who in turn pointed back at the MS, revealing a troubling lack of accountability. The administration's refusal to allow media access to the lift further fuels accusations of a cover-up. This incident follows a pattern of negligence, with similar cases reported in Pakistan's hospitals, often hushed due to social stigma.

The assault underscores a broader crisis of child safety in public spaces. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) notes that many such crimes go unreported, with victims silenced by shame or fear. The government must enforce stricter security protocols, including mandatory CCTV systems and background checks for hospital staff. As public anger

grows, this case demands a transparent investigation and severe punishment for the perpetrator to restore faith in Pakistan's institutions.