

At Least 50 More Palestinian Prisoners Join Hunger Strike



Ramallah, May 4 (RHC)-- Dozens of Palestinian prisoners from various political factions are joining a hunger strike in solidarity with hundreds of Palestinians who have stopped eating their food portions in Israeli jails in protest at the administrative detention policy and harsh prison conditions.

The Center for Prisoners' Information announced that at least 50 Palestinian prisoners across the political spectrum -- including those from Hamas and Islamic Jihad resistance movements as well as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) -- have launched an open-ended hunger strike on Thursday.

The Arabic-language Safa news agency reports that the longest-held Palestinian prisoner Nael Barghouti, senior Hamas member Abbas al-Sayyed, former Palestinian commander Hasan Salama, Islamic Jihad leader Zaid Bisi and PFLP Secretary General Ahmad Sa'adat as some of the distinguished Palestinian inmates who will joined the hunger strike today.

More than 1,600 Palestinian prisoners have joined the protest action dubbed the Freedom and Dignity Strike since April 17th, which was initially called by imprisoned and former Fatah movement leader Marwan Barghouti. The strikers are demanding basic rights, such as an end to the policies of administrative detention, solitary confinement and deliberate medical negligence.

The much criticized administrative detention is a policy under which Palestinian inmates are kept in Israeli

detention facilities without trial or charge. Back in 2012, a similar hunger strike, involving some 2,000 Palestinian inmates, ended after an agreement was reached with Israeli authorities to terminate the policy of internment without trial or charge.

However, nearly 700 prisoners are currently held in the widely condemned administrative detention. Some of the inmates have been held in prison under the policy for up to 11 years.

According to prisoners' rights group Addameer, some 6,500 Palestinians were held in Israeli prisons as of January this year, including 53 women and 300 children. The Palestinian inmates regularly hold hunger strikes in protest against the administrative detention policy and their harsh prison conditions.

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