

# *Hundreds of Palestinian prisoners go on hunger strike*

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Ramallah, June 5 (RHC)-- Some 400 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are on a hunger strike against the Tel Aviv government's punitive measures. The Palestinian Prisoners' Society (PPS) indicated that the prisoners began the indefinite hunger strike in protest against the punitive measures imposed against them by the Israel Prison Services (IPS) following the escape of six prisoners from Gilboa prison in early September.

In a statement, the PPS added that the IPS administration began overnight to forcibly transfer the striking prisoners to separate cells because of their political affiliation, a move to which the prisoners objected. The prisoners' hunger strike is part of the struggle program recently approved by the National Emergency

Committee, whose members represent all factions, aimed at confronting the punitive measures of the IPS, he said.

Following the escape of six prisoners from the heavily fortified Gilboa prison on September 6, the IPS cracked down on Palestinian prisoners, particularly those belonging to Islamic Jihad, to which five of the escapees belonged. The escape triggered a massive manhunt for the escapees, including Fatah-affiliated member Zakaria Zubeidi.

Israeli government authorities recently announced new charges against the Islamic Jihad members who escaped from Gilboa, and five other inmates accused of aiding them in their escape plan.

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