

Israeli court rejects early release of cancer-stricken Palestinian prisoner

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The undated photo shows Palestinians demonstrating in the occupied West Bank for the release of cancer-stricken prisoner Nasser Abu Hamid.

Ramallah, October 24 (RHC)-- An Israeli court has rejected an appeal for the early release of a cancer-stricken Palestinian patient held in jail, as his health condition has been seriously deteriorating.

The Palestinian Prisoners Society (PPS) said the district court in Lod on Sunday turned down another request submitted by the lawyer of Nasser Abu Hamid who asked Israeli judges to consider his critical health condition and order his early release. The court hearing was held in the absence of the Palestinian prisoner due to his medical condition.

The PPS warned that Abu Hamid is wrestling with death as the Israeli prison service (IPS) continues to deny him necessary medical care. Last September, Israeli doctors issued a medical report recommending Abu Hamid's release, saying his cancer had reached an irreversible stage.

The prisoner had not received any dose of chemotherapy for several months because of extreme lethargy leading to an inability to respond to cancer drugs.

The 49-year-old is serving seven life sentences and an additional 50 years in prison for activism in favor of Palestinians' freedom from Israel's decades-long occupation and aggression. He began suffering from a life-threatening condition in his lungs a few months ago, but the IPS refused to allow him to receive medical attention in time.

Abu Hamid had contracted pneumonia, which prompted his transfer to hospital, but he was later brought back to Israel's Ramla prison. Rights groups have urged all advocates to urgently intervene and pressure the Israeli regime to release him.

There are reportedly more than 7,000 Palestinians held at Israeli jails. Human rights organizations say Israel violates all the rights and freedoms granted to prisoners by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Israeli jail authorities keep Palestinian prisoners under deplorable conditions without proper hygienic standards. Palestinian inmates have also been subject to systematic torture, harassment, and repression.

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