

Nearly 160 Palestinian prisoners in critical condition in Israeli jails

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Palestinian political prisoners seen in Ofer Prison, southwest of Ramallah (File photo by WAFA)

Ramallah, June 5 (RHC)-- At least 700 sick Palestinian inmates are in Israeli jails, and 160 of them are in critical condition, according to a prisoners' advocacy group. Riad al-Ashqar, the director of the Palestinian Center for Prisoners Studies (PCPS) made the remarks in a statement over the weekend.

Ashqar further stated that Palestinian detainee, Musa Sofan, is among the 20 prisoners who are suffering from cancer in Israeli jails, adding that the Israeli authorities are offering him the opportunity for proper treatment.

He went on to say that the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) continues preventing Sofan's release for treatment after spending 20 years in prison, noting that the Israeli jail authorities are denying him the right to "at least die among his relatives instead of dying in prison."

Ashqar noted that another sick Palestinian inmate, Walid Dagga, was returned to Ramla Prison under unfounded claims of suffering from a strange illness after an Israeli court rejected his release. "The court did not look into the possibility to release him or not, but whether it had jurisdiction to deal with his case or not," he said, stressing that "he is facing a slow death."

He further pointed out that far-right Israeli minister Itamar Ben-Gvir directly incited the court against Dagga and asked it not to look into his case, while describing the detention conditions of the Palestinian inmate as "very difficult."

There are reportedly more than 7,000 Palestinians held in Israeli jails. Hundreds of the inmates have been incarcerated under so-called administrative detention, without trial or charge.

The Palestinian commission for prisoners says five Palestinian prisoners languishing in the Israeli Naqab prison are in need of urgent medical treatment. Palestinian detainees have continuously resorted to open-ended hunger strikes in an attempt to express outrage at their illegal detention.

Israeli prison authorities keep Palestinian prisoners under deplorable conditions without proper hygienic standards. Palestinian inmates have also been subject to systematic torture, harassment, and repression. Human rights organizations say Israel continues to violate all rights and freedoms granted to prisoners by the Fourth Geneva Convention and international laws.

According to the Palestine Detainees Studies Center, around 60 percent of the Palestinian prisoners detained in Israeli jails suffer from chronic diseases, a number of whom died in detention or after being released due to the severity of their cases.

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