

Images from Gaza show Israeli soldiers detaining dozens of men stripped to underwear



Gaza City, December 8 (RHC)-- Images from Gaza circulating on social media Thursday showed a mass detention by the Israeli military of men who were made to strip to their underwear, kneel on the street, wear blindfolds and pack into the cargo bed of a military vehicle.

The exact circumstances and dates of the detentions are unclear, but some of the detainees' identities were confirmed by colleagues or family members.

At least some of the men are civilians with no known affiliation to militant groups, according to a conversation CNN had with one of their relatives and a statement by one of their employers, a news network.

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor posted an image of one detainment and said in a statement on its website Thursday that "the Israeli army detained and severely abused dozens of Palestinian civilians."

"Euro-Med Monitor received reports that Israeli forces launched random and arbitrary arrest campaigns against displaced people, including doctors, academics, journalists, and elderly men," it said.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has not responded to CNN's request for comment on the images. CNN has geo-located some of the images to Beit Lahia, north of Gaza City.

The Israeli media, without indicating a source, has portrayed the images as the surrender of Hamas members.

In a statement Thursday, news outlet The New Arab, or Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, said one of its correspondents and several members of his family were among those detained as part of the incident portrayed in the images.

"Today, Thursday, the Israeli occupation army arrested the journalist and the director of 'The New Arab' office in Gaza, our colleague Daa Al-Kahlot, from Market Street in Beit Lahia, along with a group of his brothers, relatives, and other civilians," Al-Araby Al-Jadeed wrote.

"The occupation deliberately forced Gazans to take off their clothes, searched them, and humiliated them when they were arrested before taking them to an unknown destination, according to what the people there told us," he said.'



Hussam Kanafani, the Al-Araby Al-Jadeed editor-in-chief, said in the statement that Al-Kahlot and his family were still missing.

“We will make every effort possible, in cooperation with international institutions and organizations concerned with the rights and freedom of journalists in the world, to determine the whereabouts of our colleague Diaa and release him as soon as possible,” Kanafani said.

CNN spoke with a relative of another detained men, Hani al-Madhoun, from his home in the United States.

“Israeli forces arrived on the street and called out all the men to come out, and they complied,” al-Madhoun told CNN. “This house was their place of refuge after our two homes were destroyed.”

Al-Madhoun said he was in contact with his sister, who is in Gaza.

He said he recognized his cousin Aboud in one of the photographs and saw his brother Mahmood in a video. He said that Mahmood is a shopkeeper and Aboud “is not involved in any activities; he helps his father in construction.”

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