

Ex-prisoner says ?Israeli jails harsher than U.S.-run prisons of Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib



Sheikh Talal Abdulrahman, longtime Palestinian prisoner, and Marzieh Hashemi, Press TV's host

Tehran, March 12 (RHC)-- A former Palestinian prisoner says what is happening to Palestinians in the Israeli jails is "harsher" than the way inmates were treated in the notorious U.S.-run prisons of Guantanamo Bay in southeastern Cuba and Abu Ghraib in Iraq.

Sheikh Talal Abdulrahman, who has served time in Israeli prisons for 18 years, made the statement in an exclusive interview with the latest episode of Press TV's Hidden Files program.

Abdulrahman underlined the Israeli regime's escalating crackdown on Palestinians since the October 7 retaliatory attack on the occupied territories, saying the number of Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails exceeds 12,000 people, which means 7,000 more Palestinians have been detained since then while the figure previously stood at 5,000 detainees, including women and children.

Detailing the woes and hardships the Palestinian prisoners suffer in the occupying regime's jails, Abdulrahman termed the liberation of Palestine as precious and said the price Palestinians pay for it is high.

"The Palestinian detainee suffers two pains, the first pain when his house is raided by the occupation army. The troops detonate the doors using bombs and then enter the home and begin ransacking it and destroying everything inside. They terrify the children, women, fathers and mothers in plain sight of the prisoner who is handcuffed behind his back. Any person in that house who wants to protest or speak is hit in the plain sight of the family," the former prisoner said.

"The Israeli army ransacks the house and takes everything inside. If the troops find money, they steal it. They also steal the jewelry of the women and they take any electronic devices such as computers and phones; they confiscate everything," he added.

Abdulrahman went on to say that the second suffering that the prisoner would endure begins when he is placed in the occupation troops' vehicle and taken for interrogation.

"On the way to the interrogation, the detainee is physically and verbally assaulted and hears blasphemous words; all of that is part of the psychological torture," he added. Abdulrahman stressed that the Israeli regime uses "systematic torture," including electrocution, denial of food and medicare as well as sexual abuse as a "weapon of war" against Palestinians. He said the regime uses this method to "force the detainees to speak and make a confession."

Pointing to Israel's interrogation techniques, Abdulrahman said, "I spent seven days without sleep and without food during the holy fasting month of Ramadan, they were just giving us one or two meals in three days, when I asked for water, they spilt water on the floor."

Abdulrahman underlined that what happens in Israeli jails is "harsher" than what is happening in the US prisons of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay as they learned from the same source how to torture and humiliate people.

Abdulrahman said at the times of war with Palestinians, the Israeli regime pretends to adhere to international law in dealing with detainees in order to portray itself as a "democratic" entity but "all the masks are falling" in the ongoing aggression on Gaza.

"There is no humanity in the Israeli regime's dealings," he said. "The regime uses insult and force to obtain confessions... the regime uses the scenes of arresting women and children to press the resistance to submit to its demands."

Denouncing Israel's torture weapons, he added, "Any war has its own means such as the means of destruction and bombs and weapons of mass destruction, but the other means is torture of civilians who are not involved in any operations in order to press the fighters to give up and raise the white flag."

Abdulrahman emphasized that all the Israeli atrocities in the Gaza Strip are taking place amid the world's silence, including the silence of human rights organizations and the United Nations.

"All their meetings are fruitless and that's because Israel is the spoiled son of the United States and Washington's dirty tool in the region," he said.

Touching on the alarming spike in Israel's administrative detentions of Palestinians, especially minors, Abdulrahman said the administrative detention is originally British and the Israeli regime inherited the policy after Britain's ruling of Palestine, under which the detainees are imprisoned without a charge for six months, and it could be extended for another six months and then for a year.

He said the administrative policy is not practiced anywhere across the world and that more than 3,000 administrative detainees are currently in Israeli jails. "Palestinians treat Israeli captives 'humanely' while we see the 'height of ignobility' in the regime's prisons."

Pointing to how Operation al-Aqsa Storm changed the way the world looked at the Palestinian issue, Abdulrahman said the retaliatory attack awakened the conscience of the world as a lot of pro-Palestine rallies were held across the globe and hundreds converted to Islam due to the steadfastness of Palestinians against Israeli oppression.

"Now, the world looks at Palestine with admiration and respect," he said, adding that the operation changed people's perspectives and was beneficial to the Palestinian cause.

Calling on the international community to hold the Israeli regime accountable for its crimes in Gaza over the past five months, Abdulrahman said, "The Muslim nations should support the oppressed nation of Palestine. The Palestinian nation is the most oppressed nation in the world. We have been subjected to occupation and oppression for more than 70 years, we will move forward on the path that we selected until victory is achieved and Palestine liberated."

Israel waged its genocidal war on Gaza on October 7 after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas carried out Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

Since the start of the offensive, the Tel Aviv regime has killed 30,960 Palestinians and injured 72,524 others.

The Tel Aviv regime has also imposed a "complete siege" on the territory, cutting off fuel, electricity, food and water to the more than two million Palestinians living there.

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