

Israel has kidnapped 3,000 Palestinians since beginning of genocidal war against Gaza

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Ramallah, April 16 (RHC)-- A human rights group says Israeli forces have kidnapped 3,000 Palestinians from Gaza since the start of the aggression on the besieged strip last October, including women and children.

"Since the onset of the genocidal military campaign against Gaza, Israeli forces have detained at least 3,000 Palestinian residents of Gaza, including women, children, elderly people, as well as professionals such as doctors, nurses, teachers and journalists," Al Mezan Center for Human Rights said in a report on Monday.

According to the report, around 1,650 Gazans are held in total isolation from the outside world at Nafha and Negev (Ketzioth) prisons "under the Unlawful Combatants Law", and are denied access to lawyer and legal advice.

This law "has been extensively utilized on Palestinian residents of Gaza as an alternative to administrative detention", which is commonly used against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and East al-Quds.

Under its policy of administrative detention, the occupying regime detains Palestinians without trial or charge for up to six months; a period which can be extended for an indefinite number of times.

Citing their testimonies, Al Mezan said the detainees are subjected to torture and inhumane treatment from the moment of their arrest.

"They were forced to strip naked, wear blindfolds, and have their wrists tied. They were also brutally beaten, deprived of sleep for several days, denied food and deliberately starved as a form of torture and collective punishment."

Noting that the "systematic and widespread" torture inflicted upon Palestinian detainees also constitutes crimes against humanity, the group called upon the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to "swiftly" issue arrest warrants against "all individuals implicated in perpetrating and/or ordering such egregious crimes."

Issam Younis, director general of Al Mezan, said, "The evidence and testimonies gathered by our lawyer reveal a level of reprisals and torture that lacks any semblance of humanity. What Israel is doing to Palestinian detainees forms part of its genocide against the Palestinian people." "It is imperative to halt this genocide and ensure accountability for those responsible for heinous genocidal acts."

Al Mezan also urged the international community to shoulder its "moral and legal responsibilities" and prevent and punish the crime of genocide, as well as to pressure Israel to comply with international law and abide by its obligations as an occupying power.

Israel waged the genocidal war on Gaza after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas carried out a historic operation against the occupying entity on October 7 in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

Since the start of the genocidal war, the Israeli aggression has killed at least 33,800 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

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