

Former Palestinian prisoner diagnosed with leukemia a week after release

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Ramallah, September 7 (RHC)-- A former Palestinian prisoner has been diagnosed with leukemia only a week after his release from Israeli prisons where he spent five months behind bars, according to two Palestinian prisoners' rights groups.

The Palestinian Commission of Prisoners' Affairs and the Palestinian Prisoners Society (PPS) said in a joint statement that final medical examinations of 40-year-old Ismail Yousef Taqatqa confirmed that he was suffering from blood cancer.

The statement added that Taqatqa, a father of four children, did not have any health problems prior to his arrest last March. The advocacy groups noted that his health condition sharply deteriorated during detention at the notorious Ofer Prison in the occupied West Bank, and was subsequently transferred to Hadassah Medical Center in al-Quds.

He was then discharged from Hadassah Hospital on August 29, on a bail of 10,000 Israeli shekels (nearly 3,000 U.S. dollars), and was immediately shifted to an-Najah University Hospital in the northern West Bank city of Nablus.

The two Palestinian prisoners' rights groups described Taqatqa as the latest victim of the systematic medical crimes that the Israel Prison Service (IPS) is perpetrating against Palestinian prisoners, noting that the crimes have escalated dramatically following the onset of the Israeli genocidal war against Gaza on October 7 last year.

The groups held the IPS fully responsible for the critical health situation facing Taqatqa and for the fate of thousands of prisoners who face systematic abuses.

They said that these Israeli measures are aimed at killing Palestinian inmates or causing them chronic and serious health problems that are difficult to treat later.

Palestinian detainees have continuously resorted to open-ended hunger strikes in an attempt to express outrage at their illegal detention. Israel keeps Palestinian inmates 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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