

Jordan rejects Israeli ruling over extending detention of Jordanian woman



Amman, October 19 (RHC)-- Jordan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates has rejected a ruling by an Israeli military court to extend the detention of Jordanian citizen Heba Abdel-Baqi Labadi, who was recently arrested after crossing the kingdom into the occupied West Bank.

Sufyan al-Qudah, a spokesman for the foreign ministry, said in a statement that extension of the administrative detention of Labadi is illegal and invalid, and rejected by Amman. Qudah said the foreign ministry had informed the Israeli side of its complete rejection of the verdict, and called for the immediate release of the Jordanian woman.

He said that the Jordanian Foreign Ministry will continue to exert its utmost efforts to secure Labadi's release through all possible means.

On October 14, Qudah said Jordan's Ambassador to Tel Aviv Walid Obeidat had demanded the immediate release of Labadi and Abdurrahman Marei and their repatriation in his meetings and frequent contacts with Israeli officials, Jordan's official news agency Petra reported.

The spokesman for the Jordanian Foreign Ministry added that Amman rejects the Israeli authorities' decision to arrest the two. Amman, he added, follows up on their case on a daily basis and has instructed its diplomats in Tel Aviv to visit them periodically.

Labadi also holds a Palestinian identity card. She was arrested on August 20, when she crossed the King Hussein Bridge, also known as the Allenby Bridge, which crosses the Jordan River near the Palestinian city of Ariha and connects the West Bank with Jordan, with her mother and aunt on their way to a relative's wedding in the northern West Bank city of Jenin.

According to her attorney, Raslan Mahajna, she is suspected of meeting with people affiliated to the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah during trips to Beirut both last year and early this year.

Mahajna added that Labadi often voices her views against the Israeli regime's occupation of Palestinian territories on social media networks.

"She was interrogated intensively for 35 days, and in the end, there was no basis for indicting her, so she was slapped with an administrative detention order," he said. "She's been on hunger strike, because in her view, this was an arbitrary, unjustified arrest."

Labadi is reportedly being held at Kishon prison, also known as the al-Jalame detention center.

Jordan's foreign ministry has summoned the Israeli ambassador to demand the immediate release of two Jordanian nationals arrested in the occupied territories.

Arabic-language Arabi 21 online newspaper reported that Marei was arrested on September 2 as he was going to attend the wedding of a relative in the northern West Bank city of Nablus. The 29-year-old man, a resident of the Abu al-Zayegan area in the central Jordanian city of Zarqa, had traveled with his mother through the King Hussein Bridge.

His family said they have not been able to contact him since his arrest, and have not been told the reason for his detention. Marei is said to be suffering from cancer. His relatives are concerned his medical condition will deteriorate in jail.

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