

Israel frees Palestinian who went on 103-day hunger strike

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Maher al-Akhras arrives at al-Najah Hospital in the West Bank city of Nablus following his release by Israeli authorities, on November 26, 2020. (Photo: AFP)

Nablus, November 26 (RHC)-- The Israeli regime has released Palestinian inmate Maher al-Akhras, who was on hunger strike for more than 100 days in protest at his detention without charge, in what he hailed as yet another victory against the occupying entity.

Palestinian Prisoners' Society (PPS), a human rights group based in the occupied West Bank city of Bethlehem, said Akhras was freed early on Thursday, days after he ended 103 days of hunger strike to protest Israel's so-called administrative detention.

The PPS said the Israeli occupation authorities released Akhras at the Jabara checkpoint in the city of Tulkarm and he was later transferred to al-Najah National University Hospital in Nablus, northern West Bank.

"Praise be to God that I am now between my family and my people in Nablus, and that, God willing, we will get rid of the occupation with the mighty wills of our people, and live from victory to victory until we

reach a greater victory and liberate Palestine,” Akhras told Palestine Today radio.

The 49-year-old Palestinian prisoner was detained on July 27 and held under a four-month administrative detention order, with no charge and based on allegedly secret evidence that was not available even to his lawyers.

Akhras, a father of six and originally from Silat al-Dhahr town in Jenin, stopped his hunger strike on November 6 after he managed to force the Tel Aviv regime to meet his demands, but said he would spend the remaining period of his prison term, which ended today, in hospital for medical treatment.

Israeli courts initially refused to order his release despite his worsening health conditions and calls by international and legal institutions to stop his administrative detention.

During his hunger strike, the Palestinian prisoner faced “gravely deteriorating” health conditions, as described by physicians, and risked the collapse of some of his vital organs, such as kidneys, liver, and heart.

The Gaza-based Palestinian Center for Human Rights had on several occasions called on international rights groups to intervene immediately to “save the life of Akhras before it is too late.”

Hundreds of Palestinian prisoners are held under administrative detention, in which Israel keeps the detainees without charge for up to six months, a period which can be extended an infinite number of times. Women and minors are among these detainees.

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