

Palestinian prisoner commission rules Israel medically neglects prisoners

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Ramallah, July 12 (RHC)-- A Palestinian commission for prisoners has condemned the Tel Aviv regime for practicing the policy of "deliberate medical neglect" against Palestinian inmates languishing behind bars in the Israeli jail.

In a statement released in Ramallah, the Palestinian Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs said that the Israeli prison service (IPS) deliberately denies medical care to terminally-ill Palestinian detainees and violates their very fundamental rights enshrined in international treaties and charters.

The commission pointed to several cases of prisoners with medical conditions and appealed to the international Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations to assume their responsibilities towards the prisoners.

It also held the IPS fully responsible for the medical neglect policy pursued at its jails against the Palestinian prisoners. The commission said that the Israeli authorities barely provides medication to Nidhal Zalloum, a 57-year-old Palestinian prisoner from the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, who suffers from blood pressure, diabetes and constant vertigo at Eshel prison.

Zalloum is one of the longest-serving prisoners in Israeli jails, where he spent about 32 years of his prison sentence that includes two life terms.

It further cited the case of Mohamed Ta'amra, another Palestinian prisoner, who is currently being held at Ramon jail and suffers from blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and stomach acidity. He needs swift medical care.

As for prisoner Fareij Abu Daher, is being kept at Nafha jail, despite sustaining a head injury and suffering from seizures and other medical conditions in Ramon jail. In the latest incident of violence against prisoners, On Sunday, Israeli forces raided the Israeli Ramon Prison, where Palestinian detainees are held, brutally assaulted the inmates and clashed with them.

Palestinian inmates have also been subjected to systematic torture, harassment and repression all through the years of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories. 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% 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.

There are reportedly more than 7,000 Palestinians held at Israeli jails. Hundreds of the inmates have been apparently incarcerated under the practice of administrative detention. The Palestinian inmates regularly stage hunger strikes in protest at both the administrative detention policy and harsh prison conditions.

Administrative inmates in Israeli jails say going on hunger strike is one of their few options to make their voice heard and force Tel Aviv to end this illegal policy. The Israeli parliament, Knesset, has already approved a law which made way for Israel's prison officials to force-feed hunger strikers if their condition becomes life-threatening.

Critics say Israel uses the policy of administrative detention to silence the voices of Palestinians but lacks any concrete evidence that could be presented in an open, military court. Palestinians say administrative detention is a whole other level of injustice.

According to figures by the Defense for Children International, between 500 and 700 Palestinian children at the age of 12-17 are also arrested and tried in Israeli military courts every year. Israeli forces have arrested more than 17,000 minors since 2000



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