

Palestinian detainees continue boycott of Israeli courts

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Photo shows Palestinian prisoners at an Israeli jail

Ramallah, February 13 (RHC)-- Palestinian detainees imprisoned under Israel's so-called policy of administrative detention continue their boycott of the Israeli military courts for the 45th consecutive day. Palestinian detainees say their move is a continuation of longstanding Palestinian efforts "to put an end to the unjust administrative detention practiced against our people by the occupying forces."

The boycott includes the initial hearings to uphold the administrative detention order, as well as appeal hearings and later sessions at Israel's so-called supreme court.

Palestinian prisoners also maintain that Israel's use of administrative detention has expanded in recent years and many women, children and elderly people have been incarcerated under the thorny policy.

Under the banner, "Our decision is freedom ... no to administrative detention", at least 500 Palestinian prisoners have so far registered their protest against the controversial policy by refusing to show up for their military court hearings since the beginning of the year.

The detainees in an earlier statement described the courts as a "barbaric, racist tool that has consumed hundreds of years from the lives of our people under the banner of administrative detention, through nominal and fictitious courts – the results of which are predetermined by the military commander of the region."

The Supreme Leadership Council of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad prisoners recently announced the start of a mass protest by imprisoned members of all Palestinian resistance groups and political factions in protest to the escalating repression by Israeli prison authorities.

The council, in a statement released on Saturday, paid tribute to Palestinian prisoners and declared the beginning of the Third Intifada, stating that the popular and concerted action has started off at Israeli prisons and detention centers, will prevail in Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories, and will continue until the final victory is achieved.

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.

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.

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