

Palestinian prisoners' health condition worsening due to severe food shortage

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This file picture shows Israeli forces outside Ofer Prison in the occupied West Bank. (Photo by

Ramallah, July 8 (RHC)-- The health condition of Palestinians being kept behind bars at the Israeli-run Ofer Prison in the occupied West Bank is dramatically getting worse due to the severe shortage of food supplies, says an independent Palestinian human rights organization.

The Center for Defending Freedoms and Civil Rights (Hurriyat) said in a statement on Monday that the detainees are suffering from significant weight loss due to the lack of food and lack of diversity of foodstuffs.

A prisoner said prison officials suppressed the detainees in Section 26 of the incarceration facility last Monday after the inmates stage a protest against meager rations of food. He said the prisoners were assaulted and beaten after they were forced to sleep on their stomachs in the section's yard.

The prisoner said the amount of rice distributed was 150 grams last week, but now it has reduced to 100 grams for each detainee. The amount is very small and does not cover the daily need for calories required to practice the daily life of the detainee within his range of movement in the room.

Another detainee stated that more than 30 prisoners out of 220 in Section 26 suffered severe abdominal pain due to eating beans and lentils that had not been cooked well.

An independent and non-governmental rights organization says at least 9,300 Palestinian prisoners are currently being held in Israeli jails and detention centers. Moreover, the detainees are suffering from skin diseases due to the lack of sufficient availability to hygiene materials and the lack of time to shower.

Hurriyat called on United Nations and its relevant organizations, especially the World Health Organization, to visit Palestinian detainees inside Israeli prisons. It also demanded specialized medical studies on the starvation policy of the Israel Prison Service (IPS), and its future impacts on the health conditions of nearly 9,000 prisoners.

Hundreds of Palestinian inmates are currently held without trial or charge under Israel's notorious policy of administrative detention. 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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