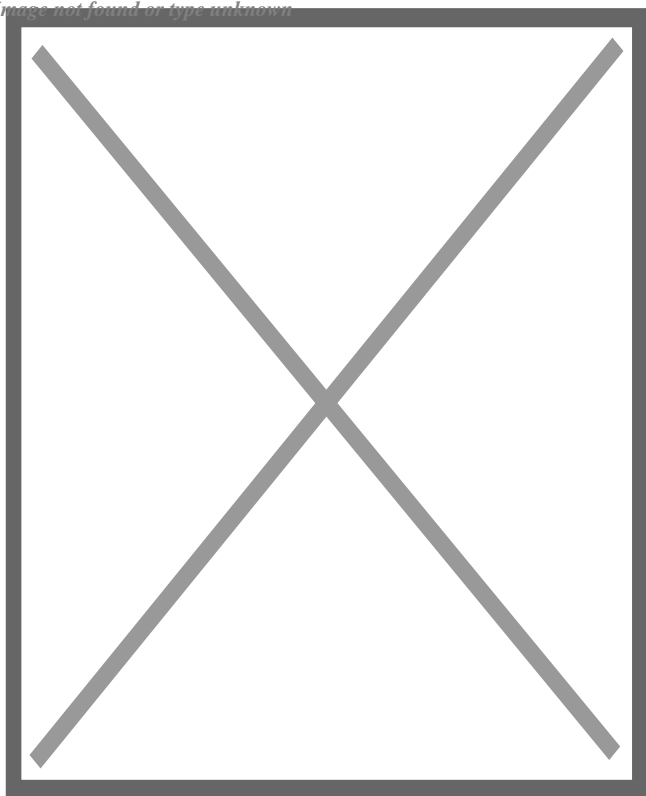


Israeli court jails Palestinian journalist amid attacks on media freedom

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Palestinian journalist Rasha Herzallah

Tel Aviv, November 19 (RHC)--An Israeli military court has sentenced Palestinian journalist Rasha Herzallah to six months in prison and fined her 13,000 shekels (\$3,300), as the regime continues its vicious attacks on press freedom, including the targeting of media professionals, in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Herzallah, 39, was working for the official Palestinian News and Information Agency (WAFA) at the time of her arrest last June, when she was summoned to an interrogation at the Israeli detention center in the town of Huwwara, south of Nablus. She was subsequently placed under administrative detention, without

charges or trial.

Her detention was extended five times before a charge of “incitement on social media” was brought to court at the Israeli Salem military base near Jenin. She is expected to be released from prison on December 1st.

Herzallah is one of 94 Palestinian journalists detained by Israeli forces since the start of the regime’s genocidal war on Gaza in early October last year. Among those detained are three other female journalists, identified as Rola Hassanin, Bushra al-Tawil, and Amal Shuja’iyah, a journalism student from Birzeit University.

On Saturday, an Israeli drone attack killed Palestinian journalist Mohammed Saleh al-Sharif in the Jabalia refugee camp at the northern end of the Gaza Strip. Wafa news agency, citing local sources, reported that Sharif was recently forced to evacuate his home in the Tal al-Zaatar neighborhood in east Jabalia due to ongoing Israeli bombardment, and sought refuge with a relative in Beit Lahia.

A few days later, the Palestinian journalist and his cousin returned to their home to assess the damage, but as they approached, an Israeli drone targeted them. His cousin was killed instantly, while Sharif was left wounded, bleeding for more than two hours before succumbing to his injuries.

Journalists operating in Gaza are faced with increased dangers as they report on the conflict amidst Israeli ground assaults and airstrikes, disrupted communications, supply shortages, and power outages.

Israel launched the genocidal aggression on the coastal territory on October 7 last year, after Palestinian resistance groups carried out a surprise retaliatory operation into the occupied territories. So far, Israel has killed at least 43,922 Palestinians, most of them women, children, and adolescents, and injured 103,898 others.

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