

At least 13 Palestinian prisoners launch open-ended hunger strike

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An Israeli prison guard keeps watch from a tower at Ayalon prison. (File photo by Reuters)

Ramallah, August 14 (RHC)-- At least thirteen Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails have gone on an open-ended hunger strike against their administrative detention and the regime's repressive measures.

The Palestinian Prisoners' Society (PPS) announced in a statement over the weekend that six detainees in "Rimon" prison joined the hunger strikers last Thursday. They are Hadi Nazzal, Mohammed Zakarnah, Anas Kumeil, Abdu-Rahman Barraqa, Mohammed Ikhmeis, and Zuhdi Ibeido – all from Qabatiya, a town in the Jenin Governorate. They have been detained since May of last year.

The prisoners Saif Hamdan, Saleh Rabayaa, Qusai Khudair, and Osama Khalil continue their hunger strike for 14 days. The detainees Kayed al-Fasfous and Sultan Khalouf have been on strike for ten days, and detainee Osama Dqroq has been on strike for six days.

Hundreds of Palestinian prisoners are currently being held under the administrative detention policy. Israel's administrative detention is a sort of imprisonment without trial or charge. The Israeli regime keeps the detainees without charge for up to six months; a period which can be extended indefinitely.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Commission of Detainees' and Ex-Detainees' Affairs has called on the international community to break its silence over the Israeli crime of administrative detention. The latest hunger strike coincides with the steps taken by administrative detainees in "Ofra" and several other prisons,

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention have recently taken a series of actions against restrictions imposed on them by Israeli authorities.

At least 500 inmates have been refusing to show up for their military court hearings since the beginning of the year. The boycott includes hearings for the renewal of administrative detention orders as well as appeal hearings and later sessions at Israel's supreme court.

Thousands of Palestinians are held in Israeli jails. Human rights organizations say Israel violates all the rights and freedoms granted to prisoners by the Geneva Convention.

They say administrative detention violates the right to due process since the evidence is withheld from prisoners while they are held for lengthy periods without being charged, tried, or convicted.

Palestinian detainees have continuously resorted to open-ended hunger strikes in an attempt to express outrage at the detentions. Israeli jail authorities keep Palestinian prisoners under deplorable conditions without proper hygienic standards. Palestinian inmates have also been subject to systematic torture, harassment, and repression.

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