

Palestinians Mark Prisoners' Day Amid Ongoing Genocide for 2nd Year in a Row

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Ramallah, Palestine – Amid Israel's ongoing genocide, thousands of Palestinian political prisoners are experiencing the most severe forms of torture and maltreatment ever recorded since the beginning of the Israeli occupation, prisoner rights groups said today, on the eve of Palestinian Prisoners' Day.

In this report, Palestinian prisoner defense and advocacy groups lay out the key realities and figures surrounding the current situation for political detainees. The abuse of Palestinian prisoners has become yet another facet of the genocide which is taking place with full international complicity.

The rise in systematic crimes practiced against Palestinian political detainees has led to the direct and indirect killing of 63 identified prisoners since the genocide began, 40 of whom were arrested from the occupied Gaza Strip. Meanwhile, the occupation continues to withhold the bodies and identities of dozens of other Palestinian political detainees, leaving their families in the dark.

Since the occupation of 1967, there have now been 300 identified Palestinian political prisoners who were martyred in custody, the last one being the 17-year-old child Walid Ahmad from Silwad who was starved to death in March 2025 as his autopsy showed.

Israeli occupation authorities are using a myriad of horrific ways to kill and injure Palestinian prisoners at an unprecedented rate, with the most prevalent being severe physical assault, denial of medical care, starvation, and torture including sexual assault.

For decades, prisoners have been in a constant and ongoing battle with their jailers to obtain and preserve the most basic rights that should otherwise be afforded to any detainee around the world. They managed to secure their rights through hunger strikes and other forms of protest, often paying for it with their lives, only to have them stripped away entirely since the start of the genocide.

Testimonies and statements from prisoners in custody — relayed by legal teams and documented through released detainees — continue to reveal a shocking and horrifying level of systematic torture, especially in the accounts of detainees from Gaza. These testimonies, in addition to detailing acts of torture, also described unprecedented methods of humiliation designed to degrade human dignity.

The entire international human rights system must view this as a new phase that threatens humanity as a whole, not just Palestinians.

It is important to remember that the Israeli government had already been inciting for the targeting of Palestinian political prisoners and implementing more oppressive policies well before the genocide began. The period before the genocide served as a prelude to the government's intentions, including blatant calls to execute Palestinian prisoners, led by the fascist minister Itamar Ben Gvir,



who embodies the broader Israeli occupation system. He has openly called for the shooting of Palestinian detainees in the head as a way to "solve" prison overcrowding.

This incitement reflects the reality that prisoners are currently living through, under a government carrying out the world's first live-streamed genocide — and with explicit support from powerful international actors.

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

Since the beginning of the genocide, Israeli occupation forces have carried out at least 16,400 arrests across the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem, including those who remain in custody and others who were later released. Among the 16,400, there were at least 510 cases of arrests among women, and 1,300 among children.

These figures does not include arrests carried out in the Gaza Strip, which are estimated to be in the thousands. This is due to the occupation's ongoing crime of enforced disappearances against many detainees abducted from Gaza. Israel prevents the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from visiting the detainees, and withholds information about their numbers, places of detention, their conditions, or any details about their fate - whether they are dead or alive.

In addition to its central prisons, the occupation has established a number of special military camps for holding detainees, particularly those from Gaza. Notable among those are the Sde Teiman military camp, which became infamous for crimes of torture and rape, as well as Rakefet prison, Anatot military camp, Ofer military camp, Naftali military camp, and Menasha military camp. These are the only camps that the prisoner groups have been able to monitor; there may be secret prisons and camps hidden from the public.

Meanwhile, the Israeli occupation's increased use of administrative detention (AD) - or holding residents without trial or charge - has become one of the most significant transformations of the period since the genocide. The number of Palestinians held under AD has reached a historic high of 3,498 people as of the beginning of April 2025, including over 100 children and four female prisoners.

Before the genocide, the number of Palestinians held under this arbitrary order stood at approximately 1,320 people. The figure began to rise with the arrival of the far-right Israeli government in 2021, before the genocide.

It is clear that since its occupation of Palestinian territories, Israel has used the policy of AD as an arbitrary measure against residents, with tens of thousands detained over the years. Alongside the rise in its use of AD, the occupation has escalated its arrests based on freedom of expression, using the pretext of "incitement" to detain many. Social media platforms have become a central tool for repression, surveillance and arrests.

Medical crimes also weigh heavily on prisoners, particularly with the continued infestation of scabies skin disease, which has led to the martyrdom of prisoners. The majority of detainees suffer from scabies, particularly in the Naqab, Megiddo, and Ofer prisons, where the disease is increasing.

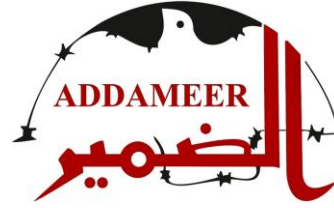


Despite the disease arising over a year ago, occupation authorities continue to deny providing the detainees with basic hygienic products to disinfect their environment, as well as access to clean clothes, sun exposure and regular showers, all of which is taking place amid severe and unprecedented overcrowding in Israeli prisons.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military assault on the northern West Bank continues for close to four months, with occupation forces continuing to carry out mass arrests accompanied by horrific acts against detainees such as extrajudicial executions, using residents as human shields and as hostages to pressure their family members to surrender. This comes alongside severe abuse including during sudden field interrogations, physical assault, international mass vandalism and destruction of detainees' homes, theft of vehicles, money and jewelry, as well as threats of murder and abuse of detainees and their families, and widespread destruction of infrastructure and homes in Jenin and Tulkarem.

DATA AS OF EARLY APRIL 2025

- Number of Palestinian political prisoners: Exceeds 9,900 people, not including all the detainees abducted from occupied Gaza and are subjected to the crime of enforced disappearance.
- Females: There are currently 29 female prisoners, including one arrested from Gaza as well as one minor.
- Children: There are around 400 Palestinian children held, distributed across Megiddo and Ofer prisons.
- “Administrative Detainees” (without trial or charge, applied to West Bank and Jerusalem residents): The number of administrative detainees in Israeli prisons has risen at an unprecedented rate since the beginning of the genocide, reaching over 3,498 administrative detainees (as of early April), including four women and more than 100 children. The majority of administrative detainees are former prisoners, in addition to other groups such as: school and university students, journalists, human rights activists, lawyers, engineers, doctors, academics, members of parliament, activists, workers, and first-degree relatives of martyrs and prisoners, including sisters of martyrs and wives of prisoners.
- “Unlawful Combatants” (without trial or charge, applied to Gaza residents): At least 1,747 residents of Gaza are being held under this arbitrary law as of early April 2025.
- The number of sick prisoners in Israeli prisons has also risen, with hundreds of sick and injured prisoners. Their numbers continue to grow due to the crimes and punitive policies systematically imposed by the occupation, the most notable of which are torture and medical deprivation.



Palestinian prisoners' institutions persist in urging the international human rights system to take decisive action to hold the leaders of the occupation accountable for the war crimes they continue to commit against our people. They demand the imposition of comprehensive sanctions on the occupation to isolate it on the global stage, thereby restoring the international human rights system to its rightful role in upholding justice and human dignity. This is essential to break the paralyzing inaction that has allowed the ongoing genocide and aggression to persist unchecked. The institutions also call for the immediate end to the exceptional immunity granted to the occupying state, which has consistently evaded accountability, judgment, and punishment for its systematic violations of international law. It is time to hold the occupation to account and ensure that its impunity comes to an end.

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