



Prison

Violence

Palestinian Prisoner's Day



Palestinian prisoners endure severe levels of torture, degradation, and inhumane treatment inside Israeli prisons. These violations are evident in the mistreatment of sick, wounded, and hunger-striking prisoners, as well as the torture inflicted on healthy prisoners. The policy of torture and inhumane treatment has long been employed by the occupying state against prisoners. The prisoner movement has documented cases where prisoners developed diseases, disabilities, or died as a result of military interrogations. Furthermore, excessive force has been used by prison units or special forces during raids on prison sections, resulting in injuries or fatalities among the prisoners.

While the policy of violence has been ongoing, the Prison Service launched an unprecedented attack on prisoners in all Israeli prisons after October 7, implementing several policies that turned prisons into death traps for Palestinian prisoners. The policy of physical assaults emerged in terms of severe beatings with sticks and batons, and the use of tear gas canisters during raids on detention cells, or security checks. A large number of prisoners in various prisons reported being subjected to severe beatings at the hands of prison units or special units. These physical assaults were accompanied by depriving prisoners of any medical aid or transferring them to prison clinics, which in many cases led to the prisoner being left on the ground bleeding for long hours or suffering from the effects of injuries, which eventually led to multiple deaths during the year.

The number of martyrs within the prisoner movement has reached 233. Some of these individuals succumbed due to deliberate medical neglect by the Prison Service, while others died as a result of severe beatings and torture in Israeli prisons. This number is the number of martyrs before the year 2023. From the beginning of 2023 until October 7, child prisoner Wadea Abu Ramoz was martyred on 25 January 2023, after he was injured following the storming of the town of Silwan, and his death was announced after being detained in the hospital. Prisoner Ahmad Abu Ali from Yatta near Hebron was martyred on 10 February 2023 due to the policy of medical neglect and procrastination in providing treatment, while prisoner Mahmoud Hamdan was detained and executed by the occupation forces on 1 March 2023. In addition, prisoner Khader Adnan was killed on 2 May 2023, after he began an open hunger strike that lasted for 86 days.

Continuing testimonies and reports reveal the severe ill-treatment and torture inflicted upon Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons. Prisoners of various ages and factions have confirmed being subjected to brutal beatings and deliberate medical neglect amounting to torture. These violations represent significant tactics employed by the Prison Service to undermine the prisoners' resolve. Following October 7, testimonies from prisoners and the conditions of those released—showing signs of diseases and exhaustion resulting from beatings and torture—have confirmed an unprecedented increase in criminal acts. The prisoner movement has documented 12 deaths between October 7 and the end of February 2024[1].

[1] We confirm that this number does not reflect the real number of martyrs, but rather this number is what was officially announced by the Israeli occupation authorities. However, there are reasonable doubts that there are some martyrs in the Israeli army camps in which Gaza prisoners are hidden, and the Israeli authorities still refuse to disclose their fate.

The first prisoner martyr after October 7 was 58-year-old Omar Daraghmeh from Tubas, whose death was announced on 23 October 2023 after being placed in administrative detention in Megiddo Prison. Daraghmeh was arrested alongside his son Hamza on 9 October 2023, and both were transferred to administrative detention for six months. Ashraf Abu Sneineh, Daraghmeh's lawyer, confirmed that Daraghmeh attended a trial session held via Zoom at Ofer military court on the same day he was pronounced dead. Abu Sneineh confirmed that the session proceeded normally, and when the lawyer asked Daraghmeh how he felt, Daraghmeh replied that he was fine. Abu Sneineh also explained that the situation in the prison, in general, was difficult, and the actions of the Prison Service with the prisoners were violent. Hours after the session was held, Daraghmeh's death was announced, raising questions about the circumstances of his death.

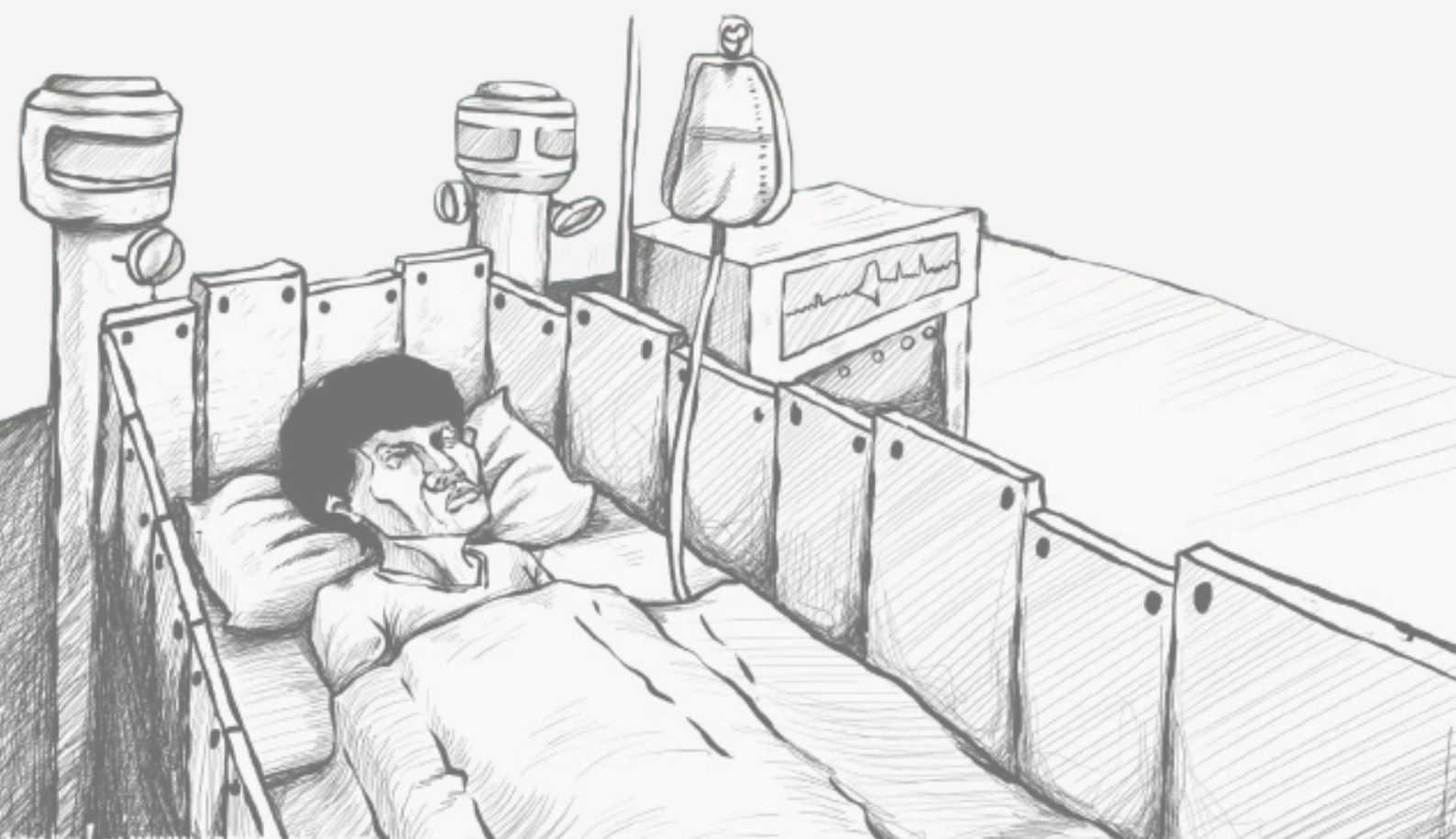
Daraghmeh is not the only prisoner whose circumstances of death remain mysterious. Prisoner Arafat Yasser Hamdan, 23, from Beit Sira near Ramallah, was martyred in Ofer Prison on 24 October 2023, two days after he was arrested by the occupation forces, and less than 24 hours after the martyrdom of Daraghmeh. Majed Zaqoul, a 32-year-old from Gaza, lost his life at Ofer Prison on 6 November 2023. Zaqoul was one of the workers arrested after October 7. It is reported that his family was not notified, but rather the news of his death was published in the media. Another prisoner from Gaza was martyred, but the occupation authorities had concealed his assassination for some time until it was announced through the media and confirmed while he was detained at Anatot army camp near Jerusalem. He remains anonymous because the occupation authorities refused to disclose his identity.

The martyrdom of prisoner Abdurrahman Marei, 33, from Qarawat Bani Hassan near Salfit, was announced on 13 November 2023, while prisoner Thaer Abu Asab, 38, from Qalqilya, was martyred on 18 November 2023 after being assaulted by the Kater unit. 23-year-old Abdurrahman Al-Bahash from the city of Nablus also died on 1 January 2024 as a result of being assaulted by the guards, and due to medical neglect and the failure to provide him with medical assistance. On 8 February 2024, prisoner Mohammad Al-Sabbar, 21, from Addahiriya near Hebron, was martyred due to a medical crime, having suffered from a congenital problem in the stomach and intestines, and was receiving regular treatment, but was deprived of treatment since his arrest. With the starvation policy implemented by the Prison Service, Al-Sabbar fell ill and was martyred as a result. The cases of these martyrs will be discussed in detail in this section.

On 12 February 2024, 16-year-old Mohammad Abu Sneineh, from the city of Jerusalem, died as a result of the wounds he sustained on February 11, after he was arrested while wounded. On 21 February 2024, prisoner Khaled Al-Shawish, 53 years old from Al-Faraa camp near Tubas, was also martyred. Al-Shawish had been suffering from paralysis since 2007 due to an injury he sustained during his arrest.

On 20 February 2024, prisoner Izzuddin Al-Banna from Gaza was martyred. According to the prisoners' testimonies, Al-Banna was suffering from a mobility disability and multiple diseases. After his arrest, Al-Banna was subjected to severe torture that led to a worsening of his health condition, until he passed away. It was also announced that cancer patient and prisoner Asif Al-Rifai, 22 years old from the town of Kafr Ain near Ramallah, was martyred on 29 February 2024.

We confirm that what was mentioned previously were the names of the martyrs who were officially announced. However, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz published a report on 7 March 2024 stating that 27 Palestinians from Gaza were killed while being held in detention in Israeli army camps. The report said that some of them were suffering from health conditions and were receiving treatment before their arrest, while the rest were killed due to the torture they were subjected to and the harsh living and detention conditions[2]. Such a report was confirmed by a group of prisoners liberated from those camps, who confirmed to the media that they were subjected to severe beatings, restraints, and blindfolds throughout detention, in addition to the starvation policy that the Israeli army implemented against them. Moreover, the names of these martyrs and the reasons for their martyrdom are still unknown, as the occupying state refuses to disclose any information about the detainees in these army camps.



[2] Haaretz. "27 Gaza Detainees Have Died in Custody at Israeli Military Facilities Since the Start of the War". 7 March 2024 <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-07/ty-article/premium/27-gaza-detainees-died-in-custody-at-israeli-army-facilities-since-the-start-of-the-war/0000018e-1322-d950-a18e-f3bbaa370000?mid5232=open>

Martyr Khader Adnan

"Left as he lived, searching for freedom."

45-year-old Khader Adnan, from the town of Arraba near Jenin, was a baker by trade, a political activist, a husband, and a father of nine children, the eldest of whom is 14 years old, and the youngest of whom is a year and a half. Adnan was arrested about 12 times during his life, and spent a total of eight years in Israeli prisons, most of which (nearly six years) were under administrative detention without charge or trial. Adnan protested the policy of arbitrary administrative detention by engaging in open hunger strikes, one of the peaceful tools available to prisoners to confront this arbitrary policy and other human rights violations practiced by the Prison Service. Adnan undertook six open hunger strikes during the years of his detention, four of which were to protest against his arbitrary administrative detention, while the final hunger strike was in protest against his placement in solitary confinement.



Adnan had been repeatedly arrested and administratively detained by the Israeli occupation forces, starting with his first four-month detention during his years of study at Birzeit University. Following his graduation, Adnan spent nearly six years in administrative detention, the last of which was in 2018, under the guise that he belonged to the Islamic Jihad organization, categorized as a 'terrorist' organization by the Israeli occupation authorities.

Adnan was arrested on 17 December 2011 and went on an open hunger strike to protest his arbitrary administrative detention. The strike continued for approximately 65 days and ended with the fulfillment of his demand for his release on 17 April 2012. After his release, Adnan was active in peaceful solidarity activities with prisoners until he was re-arrested in early July 2014. The arrests continued until his final arrest, which came following the various statements made by him to the press.

The Israeli occupation forces re-arrested Adnan on 5 February 2023 after an Israeli army unit blew up the front door of the house and stormed it. Soldiers then violently searched the house, without taking into account the presence of sleeping children. After that, Adnan was cuffed behind his back with plastic ties, blindfolded, and taken to Dotan military camp. From the first moments of his arrest, Adnan declared a hunger strike in rejection of his arbitrary arrest. After that, the occupying state filed an indictment against Adnan that included two main items, and relied mainly on old confessions around his affiliation with a 'terrorist' organization, and 'incitement'. The Israeli military prosecution claimed that the visits that Adnan made to the families of Palestinian prisoners, his participation, and speeches at the funerals of martyrs killed by Israeli soldiers were a form of incitement.



International law guarantees prisoners their right to go on an open hunger strike and also emphasizes the need to preserve the dignity and lives of prisoners while on hunger strike. Adnan's announcement of his hunger strike implied that the Israeli Prison Service had an obligation to take all necessary measures to prevent the sudden death of the prisoner and to guarantee his physical safety throughout the hunger strike. International law prohibits force-feeding and/or forced treatment of prisoners as a punitive measure while on strike, in addition to practices that involve threats, and/or shackling, or coercion, which are deemed a form of inhuman and degrading treatment.

After Adnan announced his hunger strike, the IPS retaliated against him by placing him in a solitary confinement cell in Al-Jalame Prison. Adnan was detained in Section A, which contains three isolation cells. The isolation conditions in Al-Jalame were extremely harsh, as Adnan was held in an insect-infested and very cold cell, which had an area of 1.8x1.8m, a squat toilet, a shower with an open door to the outside, and a concrete bed. Adnan was not provided with a pillow and was denied a yard time[3].

Isolation orders against Adnan were renewed every two weeks under the pretext that he was not subjected to security checks, even though his health condition did not allow him to make any physical effort, as he was unable to stand or walk because his body was exhausted due to the hunger strike.

[3] A lawyer interview with prisoner Khader Adnan in Al-Jalame on 8 March 2023.

Adnan was held isolated in a cell that did not have any kind of electricity, while he was suffering from very serious health conditions, as he did not take any supplements or vitamins, nor did the IPS provide him with any kind of medical care. Furthermore, the occupation authorities practiced medical neglect by claiming that Adnan refused to undergo medical treatment. The occupation authorities prevented him from accessing specialized medical treatment in a civilian hospital, and from submitting him to the medical observation he needed. Adnan informed the lawyer during a visit that he was willing to undergo medical examinations in the presence of an external doctor, or a doctor from 'Physicians for Human Rights,' yet his request was denied, and the IPS continued to detain him in isolation arbitrarily.

On the 32nd day of the hunger strike, specifically on 8 March 2023, the prison administration informed Adnan that he would be transferred to the Ramla Prison clinic, as a result of his exposure to continuous fainting, vomiting blood, weak vision, and inability to walk. Despite his critical health condition and the risk of sudden death, the IPS practiced a policy of medical neglect against Adnan, by denying him access to a wheelchair in the clinic cell and rejecting requests to transfer him to a civilian hospital several times. Physicians for Human Rights made several attempts to communicate with the Israeli Ministry of Health, Kaplan Hospital, and the Prison Service to request that Adnan be transferred, yet all rejected their requests. The colonial system with all its organs colluded, and the military judges continued to extend the trial procedures, and this demonstrated the formality and arbitrariness of these procedures.

By refusing to transfer Adnan to a specialized civilian hospital, and instead transferring him to the Ramla Prison clinic, which is not qualified to accommodate his critical medical condition, the occupation authorities violated international law which guarantees the provision of medical care to all detainees without discrimination. However, the occupation authorities deprive Palestinian prisoners of medical care for national and political considerations, and Palestinian prisoners do not have easy access to medical facilities or doctors, whether inside or outside Israeli prisons.

Despite the arbitrary measures that were taken against Adnan, such as isolating him in very poor humanitarian and health conditions, the abuse of Adnan did not stop there. Rather, multiple punishments were imposed on Adnan, the most prominent of which was depriving him of family visitation rights. His children were not able to visit him throughout his detention, and his wife was not able to see or communicate with him except during the trial sessions that were held via video conferencing. In a report published following her visit to Adnan in the Ramla Prison clinic on 23 April 2023, PHRI chairperson, Dr. Lina Qasem, explained that Adnan suffered from difficulty moving around and excessive weight loss, as he had lost nearly 60 kilograms, in addition to suffering from weak overall strength in his limbs. Dr. Qasem indicated that Adnan refused to undergo medical examinations inside the Ramla Prison clinic, but rather requested that he be transferred to a specialized hospital to undergo all the necessary examinations, and to be under appropriate medical care in appropriate conditions. With the significant deterioration in his health, and despite PHR's several petitions to Israeli courts to have him transferred to hospitals, the courts rejected these petitions, and Adnan was kept in the Ramla Prison clinic.

Adnan's lawyer attempted to release him on bail by submitting more than one request for his release. A hearing was held on 23 April 2023 to consider a plea for bail for Adnan, as he had reached a situation that constituted a real and definite danger to his life. His lawyer stressed during the session the need to release Adnan due to the risk of sudden death, but Salem military court rejected the lawyer's request and kept Adnan in detention, prompting the lawyer to appeal the decision. The Military Court of Appeals postponed the decision, and then later announced an arbitrary postponement until May 10, despite medical reports confirming the risk of Adnan's sudden death. Adnan's condition was not taken into consideration, and Adnan was announced after he was found unconscious inside his isolation cell in the Ramla prison clinic on 2 May 2023.

What happened with Adnan revealed the collusion between the IPS and Israeli military courts and the clear and systematic policy of abusing prisoners, the activists in particular, until Adnan fell as a martyr. The occupation authorities bear direct and full responsibility for his martyrdom, and for their actions that amount to torture and cruel treatment under the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), which prohibited torture and ill-treatment, and classified the failure to provide adequate care for prisoners as torture, in addition to intentional medical neglect that amounted to premeditated murder.

While intentional medical neglect was one of the key factors that led to Adnan's martyrdom, it was not the only factor. Adnan was subjected to ill-treatment during his isolation in Al-Jalame Prison, including deliberate physical exhaustion to cause a further deterioration in his already weak health condition. According to his wife and the legal team that was following Adnan's case, Adnan was forced to exert strenuous physical effort. On 27 April 2023 (day 82 of the hunger strike), Adnan was forced to walk long distances to reach the place designated for a court hearing, even though it was held via video conferencing.

Adnan's body is still being held by the occupation authorities to this day, thus increasing the number of prisoners whose bodies have been withheld and denied their right to burial to 13^[4]. Thus, withholding Adnan's body is yet another punitive measure against his family in particular, as the occupation authorities still prevent his family from saying goodbye and decently burying him, and deny them access to the medical reports that show the cause of death and confirm that the death occurred. This is another example of the arbitrariness and injustice practiced by the occupying state against Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike. With this policy, the occupying state is striving to break the resolve of the prisoners in their battle to seize freedom

[4] This number reflects the number of bodies held until the date of the martyrdom of prisoner Khader Adnan.

Martyr Abdurrahman Marei

33-year-old prisoner Abdurrahman Ahmad Marei, from the town of Qarawat Bani Hassan, northwest of Salfit, was martyred on 13 November 2023. Marie, who was detained in Megiddo Prison awaiting trial, died in his cell as a result of being severely beaten by special forces. Marei was arrested on 25 February 2023, and he was a husband and a father of four.



Ten days after his death, an autopsy was conducted at the Israeli Abu Kabir Forensic Institute, with the presence of a doctor from Physicians for Human Rights – Israel on behalf of Marei family. The autopsy results confirmed that Marei suffered bruises on his chest, and fractures in the ribs and breastbone. The forensic medical report also confirmed the existence of external bruises on his head, neck, back, buttocks, left arm, and thigh[5]. According to the report obtained by PHRI, there were no injuries to internal organs – the lungs, spleen, liver, and brain were found intact, and there was no internal bleeding. However, the doctor involved in the autopsy confirmed that the severe beating that led to fractures and injuries throughout Marei's body could have resulted in an irregular heartbeat or a heart attack[6].

S. I., a freed prisoner released on 16 November 2023, recounted the details of the assassination of Abdurrahman Marei. "I was held in the same cell with Abdurrahman. Since October 7, special forces from the prison units began coming to the cells every Sunday and Tuesday, and they would tie the prisoners' hands behind their backs and beat them severely. On the same day of Abdurrahman's assassination, they entered the cell, tied our hands behind our backs, and started dancing around us. They mocked and ridiculed Abdurrahman, insulted his father who had recently died, and shouted at him. Then around 15 members of the special force surrounded him, assaulted him, and beat him severely for nearly five minutes. They focused on hitting him on the head, before taking him away. About a week later, we learned of the death of Abdurrahman.[7]"

[5] Haaretz. "Six Palestinians Have Died in Israeli Prisons During the War, Two Found Bruised". 9 December 2023 <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-09/ty-article-magazine/premium/six-palestinians-have-died-in-israeli-prisons-during-the-war-two-found-bruised/0000018c-4ea8-df4b-a78e-dfab60f10000>

[6] Autopsy report on the body of martyr Abdurrahman Marei on 23 November 2023.

[7] Haaretz. "Six Palestinians Have Died in Israeli Prisons During the War, Two Found Bruised". 9 December 2023 <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-09/ty-article-magazine/premium/six-palestinians-have-died-in-israeli-prisons-during-the-war-two-found-bruised/0000018c-4ea8-df4b-a78e-dfab60f10000>

In light of the clear evidence included in the forensic report, which confirmed that Marei was beaten and tortured during the special forces' storming of his cell and that he was assaulted on 7 November 2023, an Israeli judge in Hadera Court decided on 13 December 2023 to open an immediate investigation into the case of the martyrdom of prisoners Marei and Daraghmeh. This decision came after the court found out that Marei had been severely beaten and tortured, as there were injuries, marks, and signs of the crime visible on his body. The judge requested the Israeli police to provide the court with the details of the party authorized by the IPS to investigate the incident, and that the court and the lawyer of Marei family have access to the official forensic report by 15 December 2023.

The Commission for Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners' Affairs confirmed that the prison clinic was aware of the assault on Marei and his critical health condition and that the beating he endured may have caused real harm that might endanger his life. However, Marei was not examined again medically from the date of the attack until the day of his martyrdom, and no treatment or medications were provided to him[8].

Following an investigation into the circumstances of Marei's martyrdom, a court session was held on 16 January 2024 and was attended by the Commission's lawyer. Following the session, the Commission clarified that the latest definite evidence of this crime was stated in the narrative of the Israeli prosecutor's representative in the Hadera Court, who conveyed it during the court session held in the presence of a legal team from the Commission, a public prosecutor from the Nazareth District Attorney's Office, and a representative of Um al-Fahm Police.

The prosecutor's representative said during her interrogation that "Abdurrahman Marei bit a prison police officer on November 7, and immediately he was severely beaten and assaulted by a large group of jailers. She indicated that Marei did not receive the necessary treatment, and he was only examined in the prison clinic, which in turn indicated the presence of severe injuries to his face and upper body, mostly in the abdomen, and a problem in his lungs. The representative added that Marei was then transferred to a solitary cell while suffering from severe injuries and bleeding, and he was found dead in his cell on November 13.

The testimony of the prosecutor's representative proved that prisoner Marei was indeed subjected to torture before his death at the hands of the prison police. However, after Marei's autopsy, the occupation authorities claimed that the preliminary forensic report did not determine the cause of death, thus the court ruled that the body be transferred to Tel Hashomer Hospital for further examination, and a final report on the causes of death would be prepared, and accordingly, a hearing was scheduled for 25 January 2024. Nevertheless, the Israeli authorities have not completed the procedures to determine the cause of death and are still withholding Marei's body like the rest of the prisoners who died in Israeli prisons[9].

[8] Watan News Agency. "The occupation admits that prisoner Abdurrahman Marei was killed as a result of severe beatings." 17 January 2024. <https://www.wattan.net/ar/news/425490.html>

[9] The Palestinian Information Center. "Detainees Commission: Prisoner Marei Brutally Executed in Israeli Jail". 18 January 2024. <https://english.palinfo.com/Zionist-Terrorism/2024/01/18/312981/>

Martyr Thaer Abu Asab

39-year-old prisoner Thaer Abu Asab, from the city of Qalqilia, was martyred on 18 November 2023 after being subjected to severe beatings and torture at the hands of the Keter Unit in Naqab Prison, which is responsible for repressing prisons and intervening in emergencies[10]. Abu Asab was arrested in 2005 and sentenced to 25 years in prison.

A few days into the death of Abu Asab, his family demanded an investigation into the circumstances of his martyrdom, but the Israeli authorities responded on the same day, claiming that an autopsy was performed on Abu Asab's body two days after his martyrdom, following a court ruling permitting the conduct of an autopsy without obtaining the family's consent, claiming that it was difficult to contact residents of the West Bank during a state of 'war'.



[10] To learn more about the Keter Unit, see the chapter on Prison Policies; Case Study: Naqab Prison.

Room 10 in Section 27 bears witness to the assassination of Abu Asab

On 18 November 2023, around 6:00 p.m., the guards stormed Room 10 in Section 27, where 10 prisoners were being held, including Thaer Abu Asab, and physically assaulted everyone in the room. Then around 20 guards from the Keter Unit stormed the room while armed with metal batons and started beating and suppressing the prisoners. After about five minutes of beating and assaulting them, they left, leaving all of the prisoners covered in blood and lying on the ground. After their withdrawal, Abu Asab was lying on the ground, bleeding, motionless, and without any signs of a pulse in his body. Despite his cellmates' calls to the guards, they disregarded them. Only a nurse – described by the prisoners as a blond nurse, of average height with a slightly overweight build – arrived after 10 minutes and said, "If he dies, we'll take him".

"Approximately two hours later, as estimated during the guard's room check at 8:00 p.m., Thaer was moved by units and guards. Moments later, we were informed that he had passed away," said M. Q., one of Abu Asab's cellmates[11].

Prisoner S. I. confirmed the abuse caused by the Keter Unit. "In the evening, around 15 guards in armor entered the cell, ordered us all to kneel and put our hands on our heads. They immediately attacked us. They had two muzzled dogs and black sticks. They beat me with the stick until my head bled. The blows I felt extremely harmful were the ones on the left kidney, but I did not lose consciousness, and I saw them beating Thaer on the head.[12]"

On November 19, one day after the martyrdom of Abu Asab, all the prisoners in the room were taken for intelligence interrogation and were told what had happened. Prisoner S. I. requested to file a complaint to the Machash Unit, the Police Investigation Unit. During the interrogation, the officer asked prisoner M. Q., "Did you see the jailer who beat him?" M. Q. replied: "No because they were masked." Then they asked everyone in the room to say that Thaer Abu Asab died during a problem between the prisoners inside the room, but all the prisoners refused. The next day, investigators from the Machash Unit arrived at the request of prisoner S. I., photographed the prisoners and the cell, and took DNA samples.

On the same day, the Israeli Channel 12 published a report stating that Israeli jailers beat a Palestinian prisoner to death in Naqab Prison, at a time when warnings escalated about the Israeli Prison Service's intention to torture Palestinian prisoners, during the all-out aggression on the Gaza Strip. According to Israeli sources and among what was permitted for publication, the report stated that the Investigation Unit 433 opened an investigation against 14 defendants, some of whom were suspected of beating the prisoner and causing his death, while others were suspected of being involved in the violent incident. They were then released and granted leave until further notice. The report explained that according to initial suspicions, about a month ago, prison guards beat the security prisoner in one of the prison cells with sticks. As a result, the prisoner was seriously injured and was provided with treatment, but after a series of tests, all that remained was to declare his death[13].

[11] A phone interview conducted by Addameer with freed prisoner M. Q. on 6 December 2023.

[12] A lawyer interview with prisoner S. I. in Naqab Prison on 26 March 2024.

[13] Al Jazeera. "Israeli channel: Jailers beat a Palestinian prisoner to death." 21 December 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/mr3vr4ba>

On 21 December 2023, the Israeli authorities admitted that prisoner Thaer Abu Asab had been killed under torture in Naqab Desert Prison; that is, a month after his martyrdom. In response to the killing of prisoner Abu Asab at the hands of prison guards, the Israeli Minister of National Security, Itamar Ben-Gvir, refused to hold a trial for the suspects in the killing, adding "I will not hold a trial for the Naqab Prison guards, and an in-depth investigation must be conducted before determining their fate.[14]"

The Israeli occupation army's spokesperson also responded to the news that numerous Palestinian prisoners had been killed, describing the Palestinian prisoners who died in Israeli detention centers as a result of being beaten and tortured as 'terrorists' without giving any substantive information about the circumstances of the matter. He told AFP that "The investigation into the deaths of terrorists in military detention centers is still underway," but without giving any further information about the number of detainees or the circumstances of their deaths[15].

Furthermore, Omar Al-Atshan, who was released in early December 2023 as part of the prisoner exchange deal and was detained in the same section along with Abu Asab, stated in an interview published on social media that Abu Asab was beaten to death in detention. He was subjected to continuous beatings until they made him a martyr. He was assaulted and killed in this brutal way because he asked a guard whether or not there was a truce, and the guard told him no. On the same night, around 15 guards entered the cell, attacked and beat him severely until they killed him. The jailers were indifferent, and none of them came until two hours had passed. This confirms to us their prior knowledge that Abu Asab was lying on the ground, bleeding until he took his last breath.[16]"

In addition to the killing of Thaer Abu Asab, prisoner Said Imran was seriously injured in the same attack, as he was hit on the head, kidneys, and various parts of the body. This caused bleeding in the head, three holes in the stomach, and another in the left kidney. Yet, Imran was not able to find out his health condition until 50 days after the incident, as the prison administration categorically refused to refer him to a specialist doctor, even though he was suffering from dizziness and other pains throughout the body. After 50 days, Imran lost consciousness at night in the cell and was brought to the clinic doctor, who transferred him to Soroka Civil Hospital. Imran underwent stomach surgery to close the holes and stop the bleeding. It also became clear that he had sustained three fractures to the lower ribs and a fracture to the left elbow.

The assault on all prisoners confirms the targeting policy implemented by the occupation forces inside the prisons, which did not exclude any of the prisoners, regardless of their ages or health conditions. The Israeli authorities also practiced a policy of medical neglect against the prisoners who were assaulted, and that was not limited to Naqab Prison, as all Israeli prisons have witnessed such oppression and abuse since October 7.

[14] Palestinian Information Center. "The occupation admits to killing prisoner Thaer Abu Asab by beating him to death." 21 December 2023. <https://palinfo.com/news/2023/12/21/868448/>

[15] Haaretz. "Six Palestinians Have Died in Israeli Prisons During the War, Two Found Bruised". 9 December 2023. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-09/ty-article-magazine/premium/six-palestinians-have-died-in-israeli-prisons-during-the-war-two-found-bruised/0000018c-4ea8-df4b-a78e-dfab60f10000>

[16] Palestinian Information Center. "The occupation admits to killing prisoner Thaer Abu Asab by beating him to death." 21 December 2023. <https://palinfo.com/news/2023/12/21/868448/>

Martyr Abdurrahman Al-Bahsh

23-year-old prisoner Abdurrahman Al-Bahsh from the city of Nablus was martyred in Megiddo Prison on 1 January 2024 as a result of torture, severe beating, and the use of excessive force during the assault.

Al-Bahsh was arrested on 31 May 2023 and was sentenced to 35 months in prison. Al-Bahsh was the first Palestinian prisoner to be martyred in the year 2024 in light of the campaigns of violence and torture launched by the Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian prisoners in prisons and army camps.



Prisoner Sameh Al-Ashqar recounted the attack carried out by the guards in Megiddo Prison on 8 December 2023. "A large number of guards came to the cell, wearing all their equipment, and took us out in handcuffs to the yard, where there were no surveillance cameras. Then around 40 guards assaulted us for nearly 15 minutes^[17]. Al-Bahsh was feeling pain in his right ribs, and when he went to the prison clinic, he was told that he was not suffering from anything. The second time he went out to the clinic, the clinic director kicked him out. He remained in the room for 25 days until he reached the point where he was unable to stand up on his feet during the security check. On 1 January 2024, we noticed that his health condition had declined significantly, and when he tried to speak, he would lose his balance and fall. I and the rest of the prisoners carried him and placed him in the middle of the section, and the jailers took him away. We did not know that he had been martyred until a lawyer visited the prison about four days later.^[18]"

[17] A lawyer interview with prisoner Sameh Al-Ashqar in Megiddo Prison on 4 March 2024.

[18] *ibid.*

Al-Bahsh was the seventh prisoner to be martyred in Israeli prisons since October 7. As part of its ongoing efforts to put an end to these violations and the deadly force used by the occupying state, in addition to seeking to hold those involved in these crimes accountable, the Commission for Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners' Affairs submitted a request to the occupation court in Hadera, and the court ordered an investigation into the circumstances of the martyrdom and allowed a family doctor to attend the autopsy. Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, which participated in the autopsy that was conducted on 14 January 2024, issued a report on January 19, indicating that there was a complete collapse of the right lung, with large amounts of fluid inside the left lung. The results of the autopsy showed a ruptured spleen, in addition to bruises in various areas of the body, and fractures to some ribs. All of these symptoms caused severe pneumonia, given that Al-Bahsh did not have any medical history, or suffer from any diseases before his arrest. This report constituted a document confirming that Al-Bahsh endured severe beatings and that a medical crime was committed against him and led to serious physical complications that led to his death.

Al-Bahsh was the third martyr killed in Megiddo Prison after October 7, which confirmed the prison's use of lethal force against prisoners, the practice of a consistent policy of targeting prisoners, and the use of excessive force against them. Even the fall of two martyrs did not deter the occupation forces inside the prisons. Rather, these forces continued to commit the same violations until the number of martyred prisoners increased dramatically within a very short time.



Martyr Mohammad Al-Sabbar

21-year-old prisoner Mohammad Al-Sabbar, from the town of Addahiriya near Hebron, was arrested in May 2022 and transferred to administrative detention. The last administrative detention order issued against him was in November 2023 for four months. Before his arrest, Al-Sabbar was suffering from a congenital problem in the stomach and intestines[19] and was receiving regular treatment and medication and needed a special diet. During his detention, Al-Sabbar was subjected to the crime of medical neglect, which doubled after October 7, as he was completely deprived of treatment, in addition to being exposed to the crimes of torture and abuse, and the starvation policy, thus increased the suffering of prisoners in an unprecedented way and directly affected the fate of Al-Sabbar.



Although Al-Sabbar suffered from a congenital disease, he was able to live in good health throughout his life for being committed to a healthy diet. However, in cases where Al-Sabbar did not adhere to a diet, he would be exposed to severe constipation that led to severe enlargement of the intestines, putting pressure on the abdominal organs, affecting the function of other organs, such as the kidneys and lungs, and causing a disturbance in blood flow. The delay in diagnosing and treating such a condition leads to a rapid and irreversible deterioration in the patient's health. This is what happened with Al-Sabbar, according to the initial autopsy report by Physicians for Human Rights. When he was transferred to the hospital, a CT scan showed that the diameter of the large intestine reached 15 centimeters. Due to the delay in providing treatment and transferring him to the hospital, his body's vital system collapsed four hours after his arrival to the emergency room, and doctors were unable to save his life.

The medical report on the PHRI autopsy[20] confirmed the possibility of avoiding Al-Sabar's death if the Prison Service was more committed to his medical needs, and the appropriate treatment was provided at the right time. This clearly shows the medical crimes that the Prison Service deliberately commits against prisoners.

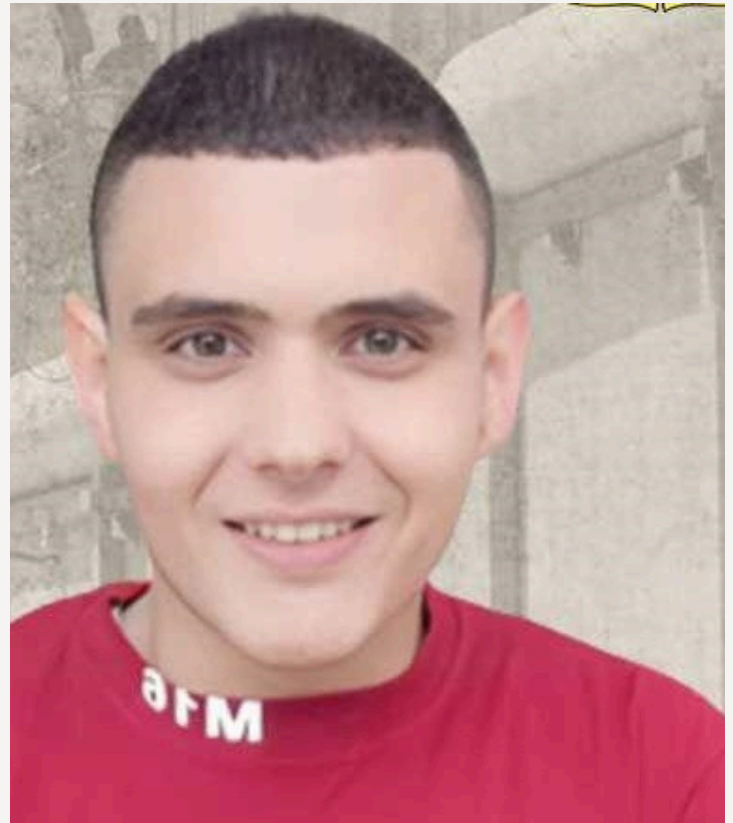
[19] Mohammad Al-Sabbar suffered from a disease called 'Hirschsprung's disease', a disease that leads to disruption of the function of the large intestine due to a neurological problem in the intestinal wall, delaying the progression of stool through the intestines.

[20] Physicians for Human Rights in Israel. "Forensic report on martyr Mohammad Al-Sabbar." 20 February 2024.

Martyr Asif Al-Rifai

Prisoner Asif Al-Rifai was arrested on 24 September 2022 from his home in the town of Kafr Ein near Ramallah district, despite his suffering from chronic cancer of the colon and intestines, and his undergoing chemotherapy sessions.

The conditions of detention did not take into account his delicate health condition. Rather, he was handcuffed and forced to walk about four kilometers. On the way, he fainted as he could not walk long distances. He woke up and found himself shackled to a bed inside a hospital in Jerusalem. From there, he was taken to Ofer Prison for interrogation. After being held in Ofer Prison for some time, he was transferred to the Ramla Prison clinic.



After Al-Rifai was diagnosed with cancer, doctors decided that he should undergo 12 chemotherapy sessions. He had begun treatment and completed eight out of 12 sessions before his arrest, but his arrest prevented him from completing all the sessions.

During his first period of detention in Ofer Prison, Al-Rifai faced a difficult and delicate phase due to his health condition. He was not transferred to any civilian hospital to undergo tests or X-ray scans and receive chemotherapy. He only went out to the prison clinic once a week to replace the stool bag that was attached to his abdomen. In the end, he no longer went out to the clinic, and was forced to change the bag, clean its place, and install the new bag.

After his health condition worsened, Al-Rifai was transferred to the Ramla Prison clinic[21]. Due to the term 'clinic', a person would believe that Al-Rifai was being held in a clinic under continuous health care, but this clinic is a prison and does not have the minimum amount of medical equipment, or the surrounding healthy environment that patients need. Al-Rifai was undergoing chemotherapy sessions in an Israeli civilian hospital, but his detention in the Ramla Prison clinic contributed to the deterioration of his health condition. The physical conditions of the cells, which were filled with humidity, in addition to the quantity and quality of food provided to him, and his continuous transfer from the hospital to the clinic, led to the deterioration of his health condition. During a lawyer visit to the Ramla Prison clinic on 31 October 2023, Al-Rifai confirmed the food was not compatible with the patients' health conditions and nutritional needs.

[21] Ramla Prison and Clinic is located between the cities of Ramla and Lod. It was established during the British Mandate of Palestine in 1934. It is a complex of several prisons, including the Ramla Clinic, which is designated for sick prisoners who cannot live in prisons due to their difficult health condition.

During the last days of Al-Rifai's life, the disease had spread throughout his body as was evident through tests he had conducted with medical follow-up by human rights organizations in a civilian hospital. Despite undergoing chemotherapy at Assaf Harofeh Hospital, the severity of the disease affected his emaciated body, and despite the dangers of death that threatened his life, his family was not allowed to visit him in prison, and he was not released either.

During the past years, many Palestinian prisoners died inside the so-called the Ramla Prison clinic after being diagnosed with cancer, such as Sami Abu Diak and Bassam Al-Sayeh in 2019, Kamal Abu Wa'ar in 2020, Nasser Abu Hamid in 2022, and Asif Al-Rifai in 2024. All of them, except Sami Abu Diak, have their bodies still withheld by the Israeli occupation



Conclusion

The occupying state continues its crimes against Palestinian prisoners, including medical crimes, torture, and cases where victims are subjected to multiple forms of abuse simultaneously. Although historical experience has proven that such crimes affect the prisoners' right to life and many inalienable rights, the occupying state still deliberately violates these rights and continues committing crimes, which took a very dangerous turn after October 7 and resulted in the killing of 12 officially announced prisoners[22], and 27 others in Israeli camps whose circumstances of martyrdom and identities are still unknown. With the fall of these martyrs whose bodies are being withheld by the occupying state, the number of bodies being withheld by the occupying state rose to 23[23]. This demonstrates the criminal approach of the Israeli occupation state, which systematically targets prisoners without any accountability or oversight by the highest political level.

[22] This number includes the number of martyred prisoners from October 7 to 29 February 2024.

[23] This number includes the number of withheld bodies of martyred prisoners until 29 February 2024.