



In Israeli army camps, Gazan detainees subjected to torture and degrading treatment



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📍 Israel-Palestinian Territory

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Geneva - New testimonies concerning the systematic torture and inhumane treatment meted out to Palestinian detainees in Israeli army camps—some of whom have been forcibly disappeared from

the Gaza Strip—have been received by Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor.

The Israeli army and Shin Bet investigators have treated the Palestinian detainees like “non-human animals”, according to testimonies received by Euro-Med Monitor from newly-released people who spent several days in Israeli custody.

The majority of the horrific torture operations, according to the testimonies, start as soon as people are taken from their homes or asylum centres, where many Gazans are sheltering from the ongoing Israeli attacks. Soldiers then beat the detained people and strip them naked, except for their undergarments, forcing them to sit on their knees in the street for hours while being harassed and treated with contempt. Multiple freed prisoners said that after being made to curse themselves and disparage Palestinian groups and political figures, they were violently transferred in trucks to open-air detention facilities, where they endured brutal beatings and other forms of mistreatment.

According to a released prisoner who insisted on anonymity due to safety concerns, the majority of inmates are held in Israeli army camps rather than by the Israeli Prison Administration, and as a result, are not held under legal detention circumstances. He added that once they are transferred, detainees are forced to remain inside iron cages despite the very cold weather. Detainees frequently endured severe beatings all over their bodies, electric shock torture,

purposeful burning with cigarette butts, being tied up by the hands and feet in different positions, and “ghost” operations, he further said, referring to the suspension of inmates by their hands and feet.

Euro-Med Monitor said that the Sde Teman army camp, located between Beersheba and Gaza, has been turned into a Guantánamo-like prison. There, detainees are held in very harsh conditions akin to open-air chicken cages, without access to food or drink for long periods of time, while being prevented from meeting with lawyers or receiving Red Cross visits.

The Euro-Med Monitor team highlighted testimonies it received about the deaths of two detainees inside the Sde Teman camp, one of whom had an amputated foot; Israel has not officially announced their deaths. The human rights organisation also documented the arrest of elderly men and women, including an 80-year-old woman, as well as men over the age of 70.

Seventy-five-year-old Jihad Zaqout told Euro-Med Monitor’s team that on 12 December 2023, Israeli forces took him into custody from his Gaza City home. After beating, kicking, and tying him up with iron baskets, the soldiers used him as a human shield by putting him in a home in a neighbourhood where military activity was taking place.

Zakout reported that while he was being transported in a truck along with other Palestinian prisoners,

Israeli soldiers continually beat them on their heads with rifle butts. Upon reaching an army camp housing hundreds of prisoners, Zakout and his fellow detainees were forced to sleep on the ground without a mattress, and were only permitted to use the restroom once every two or three days. Detainees were also beaten and denied access to medical treatment.

Euro-Med Monitor reported on 3 November 2023 the death of worker Mansour Nabhan Muhammad Warsh, only 24 hours after his arrest by Israeli forces. His body was covered in bruises and evidence of handcuffing, which likely contributed to his death by heart attack.

Just four days later, on 7 November 2023, Euro-Med Monitor documented the death of 32-year-old detained worker Majed Ahmed Zaqoul, who was proclaimed dead in Israel's Ofer prison after being subjected to severe torture. The fate of hundreds of other Gaza Strip workers remains unknown.

The Euro-Med Monitor field teams previously documented the detention of hundreds of Palestinian civilians in random Israeli arrest campaigns in different areas of the Gaza Strip, following Israeli forces' storming of residential homes and schools sheltering thousands of displaced people. These random arrest campaigns have targeted doctors, nurses, journalists, and elderly people, including dozens of women, such as Hadeel Youssef Issa Al-Dahdouh. In an inhumane scene, Al-

Dahdouh appears in a photo alongside a group of naked male detainees in an Israeli military truck.

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor called on Israel to immediately reveal the names, whereabouts, and fate of all forcibly disappeared detainees, and to immediately stop its policy of torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees. The Geneva-based rights group called on the International Committee of the Red Cross to bear its responsibilities and verify the detention conditions of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons.

Euro-Med Monitor also called on the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to open an impartial and urgent investigation. This investigation is needed, it said, to probe the Israeli army's liquidation of Palestinian civilians after their arrest in different areas of the Gaza Strip, and to hold those responsible accountable and provide justice to the survivors as well as the families of victims



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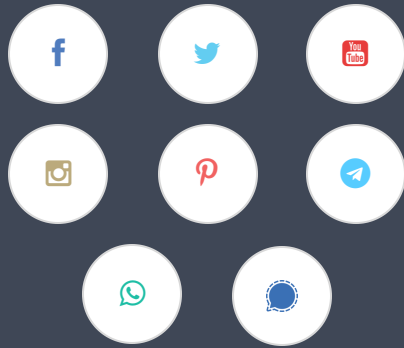
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