



Palestinian prisoners are victims of torture and systematic executions as international organisations are silent



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📍 Israel-Palestinian Territory

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Geneva - Palestinian prisoners and detainees from the Gaza Strip who are being held by the Israeli army are being subjected to premeditated murder and arbitrary execution outside the purview of the law

and the judiciary, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor said in a statement issued Saturday.

Euro-Med Monitor emphasised the need for international judicial authorities, in response to these crimes, to launch an urgent and comprehensive international investigation to hold the perpetrators accountable, exhume the bodies, identify the victims, return the remains, and provide justice to the families of the victims. It also emphasised the necessity of taking all necessary steps to preserve the lives of thousands of people who are still being held in Israeli prisons and detention facilities under duress, arrest, or forced disappearance.

According to Euro-Med Monitor, Israeli prisons and detention centres have become more brutal replicas of Guantanamo. Ill treatment and degrading disregard of human dignity, deprivation of the most basic rights, and horrible forms of torture including those that result in murder have been documented despite numerous international condemnations and demands to ensure the rights and safety of prisoners and detainees.

Euro-Med Monitor expressed horror and shock at the ongoing reports of intentional killings of Palestinian prisoners and detainees, while others were tortured to death in the Sde Teman camp and other Israeli detention centres and military facilities.

The rights group cited reports published in the Hebrew newspaper Haaretz two days ago regarding

the deaths of 27 Gaza Strip detainees since 7 October during questioning and detention in Israeli military facilities following severe torture and mistreatment.

According to the paper, the detainees died while being held at the Sde Teman base near Beersheba, southern Israel, and the Anatot base near occupied Jerusalem, or while being investigated in other Israeli facilities. The army has not released any information about their deaths.

Euro-Med Monitor warned that the Israeli army continues to commit the crime of forced disappearances of prisoners and detainees from the Gaza Strip by withholding lists of their names and information about their whereabouts, and depriving them of legal protections they should be accorded for detentions over extended periods of time.

While many of them were subjected to physical and psychological torture, sexual violence, and threats from the moment of arrest until the moment of their release, some detainees were subjected to bargaining and blackmail attempts demanding cooperation with the Israeli army and Shin Bet in exchange for alleviating their torture or obtaining certain 'privileges' and their release.

Euro-Med Monitor earlier reported 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, in addition to being subjected to severe torture, beatings, and ill-treatment to extract forced confessions and/or punish them for being Palestinians. They were also denied any contact with the outside world.

According to Euro-Med Monitor, the age range of the detainees in the Israeli camps includes children, youth, and the elderly. They are subjected to days of questioning in fenced compounds while blindfolded and with their hands tied. Testimonies state that in the course of the night, lights were turned on and shone brightly on them in an attempt to continuously exhaust them, rob them of sleep, subject them to various forms of torture and maltreatment. They were completely denied access to any legal representation or visits from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Most alarming and dangerous, according to Euro-Med Monitor, is the Israeli army's insistence on systematically dehumanizing Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, including prisoners and detainees, by denying their human rights, pain, or dignity. Detainees are subject to particularly cruel and sadistic crimes, such as torture and even killings after which their bodies are hidden with no notice to their relatives about their fate and whereabouts.

The Israeli army has granted its soldiers permission to conduct arbitrary, random, and widespread arrest operations in the Gaza Strip, Euro-Med Monitor

found. This was done under the provisions of the Unlawful Combatants Law, which deprives prisoners and detainees of all rights accorded to them by international humanitarian law and human rights standards, including legal protections. This exempts them from being treated as detainees under the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, as well as prisoners of war under the First Protocol to the Geneva Conventions. With the onset of the crime of genocide in the Gaza Strip, the Unlawful Combatants Law was amended to allow for the detention of Palestinians there for a maximum of 75 days, with the possibility of an indefinite extension, based on secret evidence that neither the detainee nor his attorney is allowed to view, depriving them of their right to a fair trial and legal presentation. It should be noted that the number of Palestinians detained from Gaza under the aforementioned law has reached approximately 800 detainees, in addition to thousands more who are held in military detention facilities, based on data provided by the Israeli Prisons Service.

According to Euro-Med Monitor, at least two of the people who died while being held by the Israeli army were Gaza Strip workers who had work permits inside Israel. These individuals were taken into custody following the 7 October events, when hundreds of workers were held in military facilities before being subjected to a tough investigation.

Euro-Med Monitor highlighted testimonies it received from ex-prisoners saying they were

purposefully deprived of food, water, and sleep in addition to suffering from severe abuse and torture.

Forty-three-year-old Jihad Yassin told the Euro-Med Monitor team that he was detained by the Israeli army for eleven days in January, subjected to "brutal and frightening" conditions of confinement, including electric shocks, severe beatings, and being shackled. He also said that he and the other detainees had been sprayed with strange and inappropriate materials, leaving them exposed to insects and freezing weather.

"We were served distressing food that showed signs of mold. Not only did we endure severe beatings, but we were also made to take drugs that made people hallucinate. I still experience the side effects of those drugs, like headaches and lightheadedness."

Radwan Katkat, a 44-year-old Palestinian Authority employee who lives in the northern Gaza Strip, claimed that after being taken from a shelter close to Kamal Adwan Hospital on December 11, he was detained by the Israeli army for 32 days.

He clarified that he was put through a series of interrogation sessions, the first of which took place in a secluded part of the northern Gaza Strip after he was stripped of all of his clothes and tied by his hands and feet. He was then taken to another nearby location and endured severe physical and psychological abuse, including beatings, before

being brought to an Israeli detention camp along with his son and other family members.

According to Euro-Med Monitor, nearly every social group in the Gaza Strip has been impacted by Israeli arrests. Thirty-five-year-old attorney Mohammed Khairy Dalloul, who resides in the Zaytoun neighbourhood south of Gaza City, is one such example. He was taken into custody on 19 November 2023 when he tried to escape to the centre of the Gaza Strip. He was arbitrarily held for 56 days.

In his testimony to the Euro-Med Monitor team, Daloul reported that "the soldiers asked me to be completely naked and searched me using electronic devices, and then took me for investigation, during which I was beaten with sticks and batons, including in the face. One of the soldiers even put his foot on my chest until I was almost out of breath. The soldiers left me there when they saw blood pouring from my head and feet."

"On the evening of my arrest, I was taken to the Be'eri site with several other detainees, handcuffed and blindfolded," he said. "About 40 of us were being held captive inside a tent when ten or so soldiers broke in and began beating us all. One of us was blind, and they pulled out his chin while he was screaming with pain. After being moved to the prison in Al-Sabaa, I spent 14 days there handcuffed and blindfolded before being subjected to another round of interrogations and brutal beatings."

"On the fifteenth day of my arrest, I was moved with roughly fifty other detainees to a nearby location, which was a container," he went on. "We were blindfolded and handcuffed as the soldiers let loose dogs on us and proceeded to beat us all over the body, with particular emphasis on the stomach and other sensitive areas. We were then moved to the Negev prison. On the way, the soldiers took turns beating us severely and insulting and threatening us. Due to the severe beatings, the other prisoners and I were covered in blood to the point that we had to urinate and pass blood."

Daloul reported that upon his arrival at the Negev Prison, he was detained with 17 other detainees in a tent that could accommodate five people at best with no space to sleep or rest. The intensity of the beatings and pain prevented him from sleeping for a full week. He requested a doctor on multiple occasions, but was met with insults and a refusal.

Euro-Med Monitor found that the International Committee of the Red Cross in particular was not able to adequately monitor the conditions of Palestinian prisoners and detainees from the Gaza Strip, and their unwillingness to publicly condemn the Israeli authorities for preventing them from doing their jobs provided cover for the Israeli army to commit more crimes against the Palestinian people. The rights organisation further asserted that the Israeli army still carries out these heinous crimes in spite of the rise in the number of killed prisoners and detainees, as well as reports from international

organisations about the torture and other mistreatment of Palestinian prisoners, both male and female, including sexual harassment and rape, and videos that Israeli army soldiers have published showing hundreds of detainees in deplorable conditions, which are sufficient to serve as a warning of more serious crimes being carried out against them.

The Geneva-based rights group called on the International Committee of the Red Cross to assume its responsibilities and verify the detention conditions of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons. The Red Cross must take public stances and release statements each time Israel prevents it from carrying out its mandated duties, most notably paying visits to Palestinian prisoners and detainees, Euro-Med Monitor emphasised.

Euro-Med Monitor also called on the International Criminal Court to immediately break its silence regarding the serious crimes committed by Israel in the Gaza Strip for more than five months, and to provide international protection for Palestinians, by ending the state of immunity and impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of these crimes and working to hold them accountable immediately and fairly.

Euro-Med Monitor called on the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the Special Rapporteur on the issue of torture, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary

Disappearances to immediately and comprehensively investigate all serious crimes committed by the Israeli army against Palestinian prisoners and detainees, including unlawful executions and killings, torture and inhuman treatment, and forced disappearance, and submit reports about these crimes to all concerned parties, in preparation for the work of investigation and fact-finding committees and international courts.

Earlier, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor revealed that the Israeli army introduced groups of Israeli civilians into detention centres and prisons holding Palestinian prisoners and detainees from the Gaza Strip, permitting the civilians to witness torture crimes against the detainees, with many allowed to film them on their own phones.

Additionally, Euro-Med Monitor revealed that Palestinian female detainees are being subjected to cruel treatment that amounts to torture, sexual violence, and threats of rape. These practices also include beatings, threats, forcing them to strip completely naked, strip searches, tying them up, blindfolding them for extended periods of time, touching their sensitive areas, and being held in freezing open cages without access to food, medicine, essential treatment, or feminine supplies. Finally, the Israeli army is pilfering the money and belongings of detainees when they are arrested.

The International Criminal Court's Rome Statute classifies all of the above Israeli practices against

Palestinian detainees as crimes against humanity and war crimes. The practices are part of Israel's ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people since 7 October.



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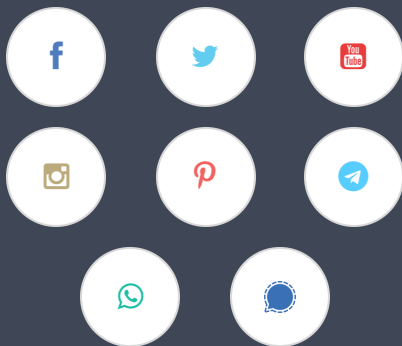
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