

Monthly Newsletter

June 2021



Top June Topics

[-UN Panel Finds that Three Female Palestinian Students from Birzeit University are in Arbitrary Detention, Following Legal Submission from LPHR and Addameer](#)

[-Urgent Intervention for the Immediate Release of Child Administrative Detainee Under Extenuating Medical Circumstances](#)

-Palestinian Civil Society Organizations Condemn the Killing of Palestinian Political Activist Nizar Banat and Attacks on Peaceful Demonstrations in Ramallah

[-LPHR and Addameer Significant Update on Israel's Military Detention and Prosecution of Three Female Palestinian Students From Birzeit University](#)

The Original Photo: ©Salam Jum'ah

Throughout this month, recent events have highlighted the extreme violence employed by Israeli Occupation Forces against Palestinian prisoners. In light of the recent raid in Ofer Prison and closing of investigations in the previous Naqab Prison raid, Addameer chose to commemorate the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (June 26th) by publishing a paper analyzing IOF raids on Palestinian prisoners as an underexamined, yet blatant case of torture. The persistent ill-treatment, lack of accountability, and arbitrary detention orders led a number of Palestinian political prisoners to resort to open hunger strikes in protest of ill-treatment and arbitrary administrative detention.

News

General Update

In June 2021, the Israeli Occupation Forces continued arrest and detention campaigns against Palestinians throughout the occupied territory, which has more than doubled compared to the number of arrests recorded last year, following the highest number of arrests (3100) in May 2021. A majority of the arrests took place in the occupied 1948 territory and Jerusalem—the governorate with the highest rate of arrests—representing a major geographic shift in arrests. In Jerusalem alone, between May and June 1,699, 2021 Palestinians were arrested, including 83 females and 394 children. Currently, 4,850 Palestinians are incarcerated in Israeli prisons, among them 41 female prisoners and 225 child prisoners. The Israeli occupation regime continues to rely on administrative detention in the occupied West Bank, over 540 Palestinians reside under administrative detention.

To compound upon this, IOF conducted several violent raids on Palestinians held in Israeli prisons, including the most recent Ofer prison raid, leading to a host of abuses, violations, and injuries among Palestinian prisoners and detainees. In response to the escalating conditions of abuse and administrative detention, a number of Palestinian detainees began open hunger strikes. The longest running of these strikes by Ghadanfar Abu Athan lasted 65 days, where he reached critical condition, facing an imminent threat to life. Several Palestinian detainees continue their hunger strikes in protest of their detention, as the issue of deliberate medical neglect and ill-treatment gains greater urgency.

[LPHR and Addameer Significant Update on Israel's Military Detention and Prosecution of Three Female Palestinian Students From Birzeit University](#)

In September 2020, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR) and Addameer submitted a complaint to the United Nations Working Group for Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) on the Israeli military authorities' ongoing unlawful arbitrary detention of three young female Palestinian Birzeit University students: Layan, Elyaa, and Ruba. A decision from the UN Working Group is imminent.

LPHR and Addameer report on recent significant updates on the arbitrary military detention of the three students, who have each received criminal convictions and varying excessive sentences by an Israeli military court based on exercising their basic human rights by participating in and affiliating with a democratic student association at Birzeit University. They also received suspended sentences on each of their charges for a period of five years. Their criminal convictions are part of an intensifying pattern of the Israeli military authorities' arbitrary detention of Palestinian university students for the peaceful exercise of their basic human rights of freedom of assembly, association, and expression.

On 7 June 2021, the WGAD published an opinion; giving full clarity that the criminalization and wholly punitive treatment subjected to Layan, Elyaa, and Ruba are unlawful, arbitrary, based on discriminatory grounds, and replete with human rights violations.

Palestinian Civil Society Organizations Condemn the Killing of Palestinian Political Activist Nizar Banat and Attacks on Peaceful Demonstrations in Ramallah

Palestinian civil society organizations strongly condemn the killing of political activist Nizar Banat at the hands of Palestinian security forces and the escalating violence against peaceful demonstrators in Ramallah. We express grave concern at the resurgence of repression and undermining of the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms by the State of Palestine, exposing fundamental elements of a police state and threatening civil peace.

Nizar Banat, a political activist and candidate for the Palestinian Legislative Council, was arrested early morning on Thursday, 24 June 2021, after a joint security force stormed in and began severely beating him as he was taken to their vehicles and transported. Shortly after, Banat was transferred to the Hebron Governmental Hospital for examination and was pronounced dead. In a press conference held on Thursday, the Independent Commission for Human Rights and Al-Haq reported that preliminary investigations and autopsy results into the death of Nizar Banat confirm injuries to the head, neck, chest, back, upper and lower extremities, and the presence of binding marks on the hands and fractures in the ribs.

Following the announcement, several peaceful demonstrations arose in different governorates, including Ramallah, condemning the killing of Nizar Banat by security forces. In response, Palestinian security forces, many in civilian clothing, deployed excessive and indiscriminate force against Palestinian protestors, journalists, children, and bystanders. This was especially highlighted in the violent response to a peaceful assembly taking place in the center of Ramallah on 26 June 2021, coinciding with the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

Numbers of Palestinian prisoners at Israeli occupation prisons by the end of June 2021.



Individual Case

The Case of Ghadanfar Abu Atwan

Ghadanfar Abu Atwan is a 28-year-old Palestinian from Dura in the occupied West Bank. In October 2020, Israeli occupation forces stormed his home and arrested him, placing him under administrative detention for six months, an order that was renewed for an additional six months by the Israeli military commander and confirmed by Ofer military court. On 5 May 2021, Ghadanfar began an open hunger strike to protest his detention, whereupon he was transferred to solitary confinement for 14 days, and later subjected to physical assault and ill-treatment.

After fifty days on strike, Ghadanfar was transferred to Kaplan Medical Center under imminent threat to life. Despite the lack of charges against him and the deterioration of his

health, Israeli military courts rejected the multiple appeals submitted by his lawyers. On 4 July 2021, Ghadanfar announced his abstinence from drinking water in further protest of the refusal of Israeli military courts to end his arbitrary administrative detention, who chose to only temporarily “freeze” the order. After 65 days on hunger strike, on 8 July, Ghadanfar was released from detention and transferred to a Palestinian hospital in Ramallah.

Ghadanfar’s case is emblematic of the Israeli occupation regimes’ broader practice of systematic and arbitrary administrative detention, among which is the targeting of former Palestinian prisoners, who are routinely released, re-arrested, and placed in administrative detention for months on end.

Publication

[Torture and Ill-Treatment Beyond Interrogation: Violent Raids Against Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli Occupation Prisons](#)

To mark the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, in light of the recent raid in Ofer Prison and the closing of investigations in the previous Naqab raid, Addameer seeks to highlight an underexamined, yet blatant case of torture and ill-treatment against Palestinian prisoners’: Israeli violent raids on Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli prisons. Prison raids by IOF special units, extremely violent in nature, give way to a host of abuses, grave injuries, and human rights violations, and serve as one method of collective punishment, torture, and ill-treatment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees. In 2020, Addameer alone documented more than 25 attacks in Israeli prisons.

The recurrent use of prison raids as a form of punishment and ill-treatment by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian prisoners and detainees is largely obscured due to suppression of evidence, beyond witness testimony, and their characterization as “security measures.” Rather than a point of exceptionality, the closing of investigations of the 2019 Naqab case belies the culture of impunity enjoyed by the Israeli occupation and apartheid regime as it systematically subjects Palestinian detainees to numerous violations of their basic rights under international law.

EVENTS

[Al-Haq International Law Online Summer School Program / Al-Haq](#)

9 June 2021: As part of Al-Haq’s Seventh International Law Summer School 2021, which aims to assist professionals in developing a coherent understanding of the legal and human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. Sahar Francis led a session on Palestinian political prisoners.

[Palestine Occupée, Enfance En Danger / Plateforme des ONG Françaises pour la Palestine](#)

10 June 2021: Speaking on a panel in a conference hosted by ONG Françaises pour la Palestine, Addameer Director Sahar Francis discussed the violations of children’s rights throughout detention, arrest, trial, and incarceration in the Israeli military judicial system.

[“Israeli oppression tools during the last months” / Al Quds Human Rights Clinic](#)

29 June 2021: During a webinar on the uptick in Israeli repression in recent months, Addameer Director Sahar Francis discussed the Israeli occupation forces’ use of excessive force and massive arrest campaigns of Palestinians throughout the occupied territory.

[Democratizing Torture: Systematic Punishment in the United States and Israel / Justice for Muslims Collective](#)

29 June 2021: In a panel on the democratization of torture in the US and Israel, Addameer International Advocacy Officer Milena Ansari discussed the history and practice of torture by the Israeli occupation regime, international law and the lack of domestic and international accountability.

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