

# Monthly Newsletter

November 2020



## Top November Topics

- PHROC Holds the Israeli Occupation Accountable for the Death of Prisoner Kamal Abu Waar and Demands the Establishment of an Independent and Impartial International Investigation Committee to Ensure that the Israeli Perpetrators are Held Responsible.
- The Palestinian Prisoners' Associations Demand the Immediate Release of Sick and Elderly Prisoners after the Escalation in the Number of Covid-19 Cases Amongst Prisoners Inside Israeli Prisons.
- PHROC Urges the Palestinian Office of the Prosecutor to Immediately Release Nizar Banat from Arbitrary Detention.
- The Israeli Occupation Forces Arrest Human Rights Defenders Muhannad Al-Azzah and Khitam Sa'afin.

It is imperative to expose the gravity of the Israeli Prison Services deliberate medical negligence policy, as it has become an integral part of the Israeli occupation's oppression of Palestinian prisoners and a method to infringe on Palestinian prisoners' rights to health and dignified treatment. Palestinian prisoners endure harsh conditions inside Israeli prisons and many violations of the rights they are entitled to under international human rights and international humanitarian law.

On 13 June 2017, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the Israeli occupation is required to expand the living space in Israeli prisons per prisoner to provide adequate living space. The Israeli prosecution requested to extend the deadline to 2027 in an attempt to stall the implementation of the court's decision and deny the prisoners their simplest of rights. The Israeli Supreme Court responded by ordering to expand the living space to 4.5 square meters per prisoner until 2020. The judges also requested the Shabak to abide by the expanded living space standards in other prison facilities until 2021. Notably, the Israeli occupation has started to expand the prisoners' living space in various prisons, but up until today, it has failed to abide by the Supreme Court's ruling.

# News

## General Update on Palestinian Prisoners:

In November 2020, the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) detained 413 Palestinians, including 49 children, seven women, and 157 from Jerusalem, amounting to a total of 4400 Palestinian prisoners currently inside Israeli prisons. Moreover, during this month alone, the Israeli occupation authorities issued 102 administrative detention orders, 47 of which are new orders and 55 renewed administrative orders. Furthermore, the number of Palestinian prisoners infected with COVID19- in Galboa prison is on the rise, as more than a hundred COVID19- cases were documented, exposing 360 prisoners to high health risks, amongst whom are elderly and ill prisoners. It should be noted that there are 700 sick Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons, 300 of which are chronic illnesses, and at least 10 are cancer patients. The Israeli Occupation Forces have been targeting Kobar village, North West of Ramallah, and implementing its policy of collective punishment. Recently, Kobar village has witnessed vicious night raids and arbitrary arrests of its residents, in which 13 were arrested amounting to a total of 26 Palestinians from Kobar in Israeli prisons. Falling victim to the collective punishment policy is Al-Zaibar family from Kobar, who have been subjected to home invasions and forced entries during the dawn hours. The IOF employ various methods to suppress the family, such as using live ammunition to shoot inside the houses at the walls and cabinets, bombing front doors, and using dogs to attack the family members.

## Continued Arrest and Detention of Palestinian Human Rights Defenders:

The targeting and harassments of Palestinian activists and human rights defenders constitute a continuation of Israel's policy to silence those who oppose the Israeli occupation's policies. Muhannad Al-Azzah, 39 years old, is a Palestinian human rights defender, was arrested on Sunday, 1 November 2020, by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) from his home in Kobar, Northen of Ramallah. He was consecutively banned from meeting with his lawyers up until 18 November. Muhannad is a father of one and a former prisoner who was subjected to lengthy interrogations. On Monday, 2 November 2020, Khitam Sa'afin, 59 years old, was arrested from her home in Betunia by the IOF. She is an activist and the head of the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees. Khitam was quarantined for 12 days in HaSharon prison before moving to Damon prison. On 5 November 2020 her court hearing was postponed for 72 hours during which a six month administrative detention order was issued against Khitam. On 10 November 2020, the administrative detention order was reduced to four months, however this is subject to change. Khitam was also put under administrative detentions for four months back in 2017. She is also an active feminist, a human rights defender, a mother of three and a grandmother.

## Medical Negligence Turns Into Attempted Murder:

Palestinian prisoner Ahmad Obeid, 30 years old, is diagnosed with Behçet's disease, an inflammatory disorder that affects multiple parts of the body. Ahmad was arrested back on 6 August 2013 and sentenced to nine years in Ramon Prison. On 22 September 2020, Israeli Prison Services (IPS) approved a laser examination on Ahmad's right eye. The doctor recommended regulated medication in specific dosages, which Ahmad is required to take on a daily and weekly basis. After the IPS moved Ahmad from Ramon prison to Asqalan prison, he was given triple the assigned dosage. The dosage doubled again, amounting to Ahmad receiving a total medicine dosage of one week in one day, which caused serious and imminent health implications. Ahmad started experiencing dryness in the mouth amongst other side effects. The prison clinic examined him and they concluded that this was a result of the increased assigned dosage. Every time Ahmad was moved from one prison to another, he would undergo a -14day quarantine; meanwhile, his guards do not require quarantine. Moving Ahmad increases his health risks and allows the IPS to impose solitary as a tactic of psychological punishment. Ahmad was put in solitary for a week after requesting to go back to Ramon prison. On 18 October 2020, Ahmad filed a complaint to the medical officer of prisons, until now, there is yet to be a response.

## Numbers of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli occupation prisons by the end of November 2020.



Total Number of Political Prisoners

4400



Administrative Detainees

380

(4 PLC members)



Child prisoners

170



Female prisoners

41

# Individual Case

**“The most brutal kind of death is this voiceless death”- Kamal Abu Waar**

On 10 November 2020, prisoner Kamal Abu Waar, 46 years old, died after battling vocal cord cancer and deliberate medical negligence by the Israeli Prison Services (IPS), making the total number of Palestinian prisoners' deaths in Israeli prisons reach 226. From Qabatiya/Jenin, Kamal was first arrested on 15 January 2003 by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) for three years and was sentenced to six life sentences in addition to 50 years.

During his incarceration, Kamal was diagnosed with vocal cord (throat) cancer, which escalated the IPS's ongoing humiliation and ill-treatment. To attend his hospital appointments, Kamal was transferred from Gilboa prison to the hospital while cuffed. Even during chemotherapy sessions, Kamal would lay in the hospital bed with his hands and feet pinned down and shackled to the bed. In July 2020, he entered the hospital and

underwent surgery to insert a breathing tube, during which he was infected with COVID-19. A month before his death, in October 2020, a new cancerous tumor was discovered in Kamal's throat, and as a result, he lost his ability to speak and eat.

Not only does the IPS torment Palestinian prisoners with medical negligence, but it also withholds the bodies of martyred prisoners, refusing to return the bodies to their families. Currently, eight Palestinian prisoner bodies are withheld, including Kamal Abu Waar, Daoud Al-Khatib, 46 years old, who died on 2 September 2020, and Sa'ad Al-Gharabli, 74 years old, who died on 8 July 2020. Both suffered long term illnesses during their incarceration in Israeli prisons. Ever since Kamal was diagnosed with cancer, he was forbidden from seeing his family. They would only get updates on him through his lawyers. Kamal died alone in Assaf HaRofeh hospital after being a victim of oppression and negligence. He left the world with the following declaration «The most brutal kind of death is this voiceless death.»

## Publication

### [Imprisonment and Medical Negligence: Two Locks on One Cell](#)

The Israeli Occupation Forces practice a policy of deliberate medical negligence against Palestinian prisoners. It is estimated that the number of ill prisoners inside Israeli prisons and detention centers has reached more than 700 cases, 300 of those suffer from terminal or chronic illnesses. According to Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association 2019 statistics, 26 female prisoners suffer from multiple illnesses and health conditions, including heart and thyroid diseases, diabetes, high blood pressure, stomach, bones, eyes, and dental problems. Many prisoners suffer from injuries they sustained during their first moments of arrest, interrogation, or at the hands of the IPS special units. Without receiving the immediate medical care needed to stabilize their conditions, many of these prisoners fall victim to the IPS policy of deliberately stalling the implementation of the provision of specialized medical care.

COVID-19 presents a particularly acute and immediate danger to Palestinian prisoners and detainees, who already endure dire detention conditions, overcrowding, lack of proper ventilation and access to sanitary products, including sanitizers and disinfectants, poor nutrition. Despite many urgent calls, the Israeli occupation authorities have taken no steps to release vulnerable elderly or sick prisoners or to adequately mitigate and prevent a COVID-19 outbreak in prisons.

The Israeli occupation violates all international conventions and covenants that grant prisoners the right to health care and protection against torture, brutality, and ill-treatment. Nonetheless, it continues to evade its responsibilities as an Occupying Power to ensure prisoners' safety and health under its watch as mandated by international conventions.

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## EVENTS

**Palestinian Political Prisoners: A Conversation with Addameer/Middle Eastern and North African Recruitment and Retention Center (MENA RRC)**

**3 November 2020:** Adv. Sahar Francis, Director of Addameer, discussed the situation of Palestinian political prisoners and the main issues concerning the conditions of arrest.

**Palestinian Prisoners Right to Health and the Covid-19 Pandemic/ The International Commission of Jurists**

**5 November 2020:** Adv. Sahar Francis, Director of Addameer, along with Mayssana Morany, Coordinator of Land and Planning Unit at the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, participated in an event to address the challenges that Palestinian prisoners undergo in their quest for the right to health during the current global health pandemic.

**The Cultural and Educational Life of Palestinian Political Prisoners Study Launch**

**22 November 2020:** Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association organized an event at Al-Sakakini Cultural Center in which Lana Khader, a legal researcher at Addameer, discussed the various ways Palestinian prisoners have acquired education in Israeli prisons and detention centers.

**From Colonization to Solidarity: Narratives of Defeat and Sumoud/Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies**

**29 November 2020:** Adv. Sahar Francis, Director of Addameer, participated in a panel discussion addressing what has changed 30 years after the UNGA decided on the partition plan in 1947. Critiquing colonial narratives of submission, subjugation and defeat.

**International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People/ Plateforme Palestine**

**30 November 2020:** On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, plateforme Palestine organized a web conference of which brought together around 300 participants. Adv. Sahar Francis, Director of Addameer, participated in the conference and presented the current situation of Palestinian political prisoners.

**More than Ever, Unite and Act for a Just and Lasting Peace Between Peace Between Palestinians and Israeli/ PCF-Pour Paix Juste et Durable**

**30 November 2020:** Adv. Sahar Francis, director of Addameer, was part of a panel discussion to address the situation of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons.