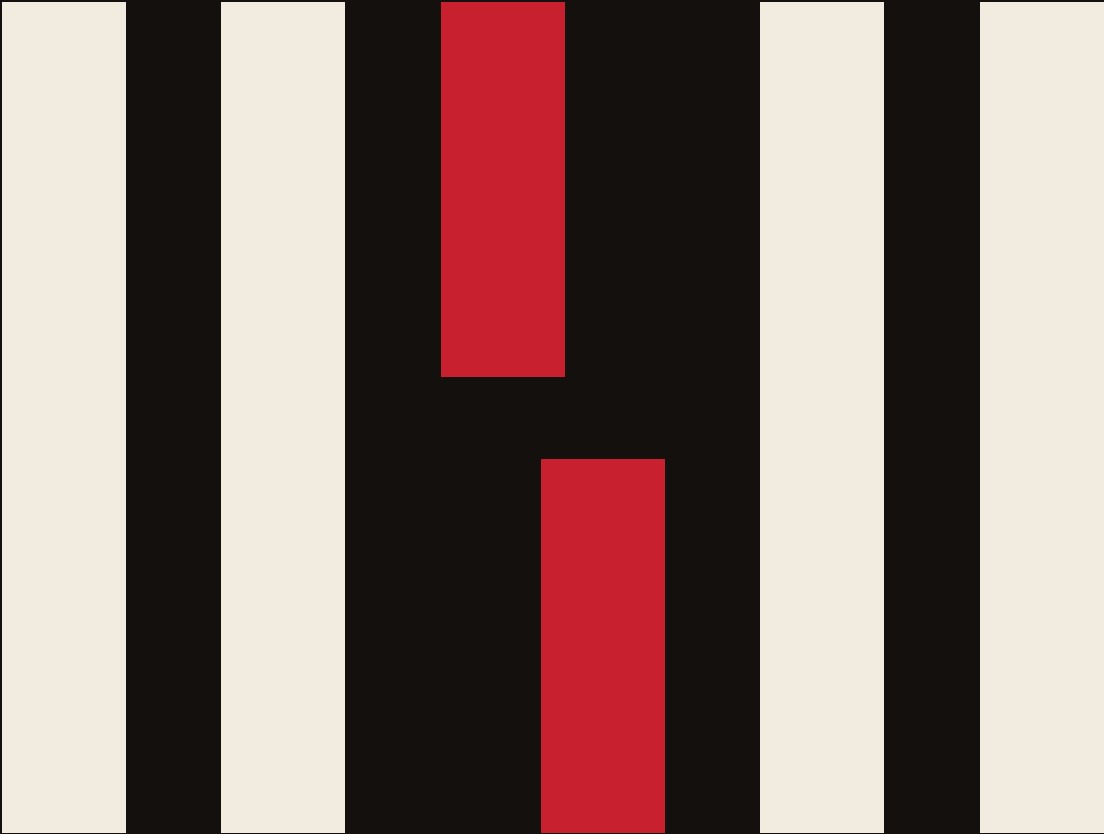


Issue 04
October 2026



In the Dark of a Cell

Three years in Israeli custody:
October 2023 – October 2026

About this file

Qayd is a weekly newsletter on Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody.

Issue 04, “In the Dark of a Cell,” was published on social media as an intro and ten parts, from Oct. 8 to Oct. 12, 2026.

This file brings all the parts together, with more detail than the cards had room for. Each section opens with the card as it was published, with a small image of the card in the margin, followed by what did not fit on the card and the witnesses’ full accounts.

The first page of each part gives the date it was published. Each part reflects information available before that date.

Sources and links are listed by part at the end of the file, followed by corrections to what we published.

With thanks



Faten Ourajini

reviewed much of the English edition of this issue.

Activestills

shared the three photographs in this file with us.

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سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

Salâmun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you) for you persevered in
patience! Excellent indeed is the final home!

Surah Ar-Ra'd 13:24 · translation by al-Hilali and Khan, King Fahd Complex



Islam

Mahfouz Khalaf



Mohammad

Mahfouz Khalaf

They were martyred in the genocidal war on Gaza
on 10 October 2023

**Their brother
Editor of this newsletter**



Al-Muqaddasi

The Best Divisions
10th century

One day I sat with some builders—I mean in Shiraz. [...] I described building in Palestine and discussed questions of construction with them. The master asked me, ‘Are you Egyptian?’ I replied, **‘No, Palestinian.’**



In the cell, the day goes by on too little food,
in a few square meters shared with others.
The door opens for the count, then closes.

At home, mothers, wives and children ask
every evening: Has he eaten? Is he still alive?
The answer does not always come.

From the cell and the home, Issue 04 follows
what has changed for Palestinian prisoners in
Israeli prisons over the past three years.

Ten parts, published one at a time. Each can
be read on its own.



Intro

Issue 04 · In the Dark of a Cell

O

Intro

Since October 2023, there have been about 26,000 arrests in the occupied West Bank. More than 3,000 administrative detainees are held today without trial, most of them former prisoners. Indictments for “incitement” have climbed to more than four times their prewar level. Of those detained in Gaza, some are still unaccounted for.

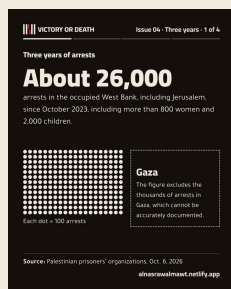
4 cards

This intro reflects information available before publication on Oct. 8, 2026.

1
of 4

Source

Palestinian prisoners' organizations,
Oct. 6, 2026 ↗



The card as published

Three years of arrests

About 26,000

arrests in the occupied West Bank, including Jerusalem, since October 2023, among them more than 800 women and 2,000 children.

The figure excludes the thousands of arrests in Gaza, which cannot be accurately documented.

IN DETAIL

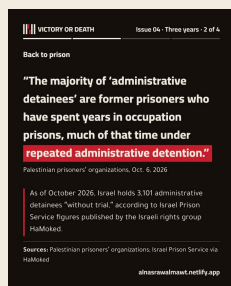
The Palestinian prisoners' organizations count these arrests "since the start of the genocide in October 2023." The count covers the occupied West Bank and occupied Jerusalem.

Gaza is left out. Arrests there number in the thousands, the organizations say, but the severe difficulties of documenting and tracking them keep them out of any total.

2
of 4

Sources

Palestinian prisoners' organizations,
Oct. 6, 2026 ↗; Israel Prison Service
via HaMoked, October 2026 ↗



The card as published

Back to prison

"The majority of 'administrative detainees' are former prisoners who have spent years in occupation prisons, much of that time under repeated administrative detention."

Palestinian prisoners' organizations, Oct. 6, 2026

As of October 2026, Israel holds 3,101 administrative detainees "without trial," according to Israel Prison Service figures published by the Israeli rights group HaMoked.

IN DETAIL

The 3,101 administrative detainees are about a third of the 9,265 "security" prisoners in Israel Prison Service custody in October 2026. "Security" is the Prison Service's own classification.

My administrative detention order was extended again and again during my detention: first for two months, then for two more, and then for another 50 days.

Z.A., from East Jerusalem, in testimony to B'Tselem

Before the war there were about 1,320, according to the prisoners' organizations. The number rose to 2,070 in November 2023, then to 3,577 in September 2025, according to government figures published by HaMoked.

Z.A., from East Jerusalem, was arrested on Oct. 12, 2023, and held in administrative detention.

3 of 4

Source

Ynetnews, Jan. 29, 2025 ↗

Charged with "incitement"

303

indictments for "incitement" filed in 2024 by a special Israeli army unit in the West Bank that pursues "incitement" in public and online.

In previous years there were 60 to 70 a year. Under a military order, Ynet reported, anyone convicted of incitement faces at least one year, half of it served in prison.

IN DETAIL

The unit was set up within the Israeli army's Central Command at the start of the war and is led by military prosecutors in the occupied West Bank. Its work, in the words of Ynet's Hebrew site, is "a manhunt on social media."

A post, word, image, political position, or personal account may be interpreted as "incitement" ...

Palestinian prisoners' organizations, Oct. 6, 2026

Ynet called 2024 "a year entirely of war." The earlier average, 60 to 70 indictments a year, came from the military prosecution in the West Bank. The unit's 303 indictments in 2024 were more than four times the top of that range.

The military order was issued by the head of Central Command after the war began. It is called the "minimum punishment order."



The card as published

The prisoners' organizations describe what this does to speech: fear becomes part of everyday communication, and people learn to censor themselves.

4 of 4

Source

HaMoked, May 11, 2026 ↗

Gaza detainees: where are they?

“No indication” of arrest.

That was the Israeli authorities' answer in 1,848 cases, out of about 5,400 tracing requests for Gaza detainees handled by the Israeli rights group HaMoked since October 2023.

In 38 cases, Israel's High Court accepted Israel's position that there was no indication of arrest. The fate and whereabouts of these people remained unknown as of May 2026, HaMoked says.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

The phrase comes from a position paper HaMoked published on May 11, 2026, on the “enforced disappearances of Gaza residents in detention.” The paper examines the cases of Gaza residents who disappeared after Israeli forces detained them and whose fate or whereabouts remain unknown. It draws on about 5,400 tracing requests the group has handled since October 2023.

In 1,848 of those cases, the Israeli answer was “no indication” of arrest, “despite eyewitness testimonies in many cases,” HaMoked says. The group challenged those answers in 114 habeas corpus petitions to Israel's High Court.



Part

Part 1

1

A day in an Israeli prison

Prisoners looked for the sun through a hole in the shower-room wall, and a whole day's food could be counted in spoonfuls. Three times a day they knelt for the count, then slept on mattresses on the floor. This is a prisoner's day in an Israeli prison, as those who lived it describe it and as state inspectors found it. Most of the testimonies cover the first months after October 2023; the figures run to September 2026.

1
of 9

Source

The Times of Israel, Jan. 21, 2026 ↗

A day in an Israeli prison

23

hours a day in the cell, in Ramon prison.

Inspectors from Israel's Public Defender's Office visited Ramon prison and found prisoners were kept in "overcrowded cells for 23 hours a day, without proper ventilation or lighting." Their reports were made public in January 2026, after a yearlong legal battle.

IN DETAIL

The inspectors also found prisoners held "without enough food or hygiene products, with reduced access to medical treatment." Their reports came out only after a yearlong legal battle by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel.

Besides Ramon, the Public Defender's Office visited Gilboa, Megiddo and al-Naqab (Ketziot) prisons, and the "security" wings at Ayalon, Shata, Eshel and the Russian Compound (al-Moscobiyyeh). The visits produced "a harsh and uniform picture," in the words of Ha-Makom, the Hebrew news site that reported on the findings.

Since August 2024, the Israel Prison Service has been merging Nafha and Ramon into a single prison called Ganot, about 15 kilometers north of the town of Mitzpe Ramon, according to the prison's official page. It has 17 "security" wings and two isolation wings.

The commanders of Megiddo and Ramon prisons denied that violence against prisoners was prevalent and said sufficient hygiene and cleaning products were provided (The Times of Israel, Jan. 21, 2026).



The card as published

2 of 9

Source

B'Tselem, "Welcome to Hell," 2024 ↗



The card as published

Sunlight

"... since 7 October, we were only allowed out for the shower, and we'd look there for the few rays of sunlight that came through a hole in the wall."

S.B., from East Jerusalem, on Nafha prison, August 2023 to March 2024. Testimony to the Israeli rights group B'Tselem, 2024.

"For 191 days, I didn't see the sun." Thaer Halahleh, 45, from Kharas, near Hebron, on Nafha prison after Oct. 7, 2023. Testimony to B'Tselem, 2024.

IN DETAIL

Both testimonies come from Nafha prison. S.B. was held there from August 2023 to March 2024. Thaer Halahleh, a father of four, was in cell 3 on wing 4. After the war began, he says, "we were also forbidden to go outside to the yard, unlike before."

Until the war, we were allowed out of the cells for 12 hours, between 6:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M., and could walk in a large lot outside, to be in the sun.

S.B., from East Jerusalem, in testimony to B'Tselem

3 of 9

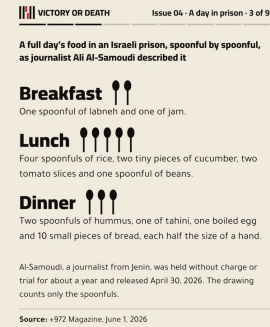
Source

+972 Magazine, June 1, 2026 ↗

A full day's food in an Israeli prison, spoonful by spoonful, as journalist Ali Al-Samoudi described it

Breakfast: one spoonful of labneh and one of jam. Lunch: four spoonfuls of rice, two tiny pieces of cucumber, two tomato slices and one spoonful of beans. Dinner: two spoonfuls of hummus, one of tahini, one boiled egg and 10 small pieces of bread, each half the size of a hand.

Al-Samoudi, a journalist from Jenin, was held without charge or trial for about a year and released April 30, 2026.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Ali Al-Samoudi is 60. He has worked as a correspondent for Al-Quds newspaper and as a cameraman for Al Jazeera. Israeli forces raided his home in Jenin at dawn on April 29, 2025, and arrested him.

Another meal, described in a testimony B’Tselem recorded on Nov. 9, 2025, had to feed about 60 prisoners. J.M., a released prisoner, said it would not have been enough for 10 people: a bag of labneh of about a kilogram, six cucumbers and six slices of bread.

4 of 9

Sources

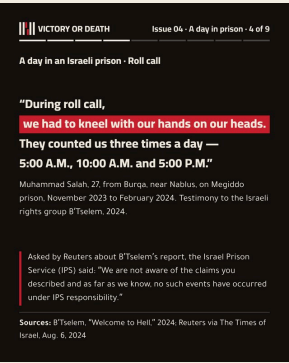
B’Tselem, “Welcome to Hell,” 2024 ↗; Reuters via The Times of Israel, Aug. 6, 2024 ↗

Roll call

“During roll call, we had to kneel with our hands on our heads. They counted us three times a day — 5:00 A.M., 10:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.”

Muhammad Salah, 27, from Burqa, near Nablus, on Megiddo prison, November 2023 to February 2024. Testimony to the Israeli rights group B’Tselem, 2024.

Asked by Reuters about B’Tselem’s report, the Israel Prison Service (IPS) said: “We are not aware of the claims you described and as far as we know, no such events have occurred under IPS responsibility.”



The card as published

IN DETAIL

In Thaer Halahleh’s testimony about Nafha, the count itself changed after the war. Before, prisoners stood in the cell while they were counted. After Oct. 7, the guards drew a line at the cell entrance, barred the prisoners from coming near it, and made them bow down with their hands on their heads.

Musa ’Aasi, 58, a father of five from Beit Liqya, near Ramallah, told B’Tselem that the counting unit came without warning. The prisoners had to wake at once; the guards knocked on the door and ordered them straight onto their knees, heads bowed and hands raised, in a way he called humiliating.

The Prison Service also told Reuters, in August 2024, that all prisoners had been treated according to the law and their basic rights had been fully provided, and that detainees had the right to file complaints that would be fully examined and investigated. A spokesperson said that after the “October 7 attack,” National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir ordered that prison conditions be made more strict, to reverse an improvement allowed previously.

5 of 9

Source

B'Tselem, “Welcome to Hell,” 2024 ↗



The card as published

Evening

“The light would only turn on from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M.”

“By 10:00 P.M. we were hungry again and we went to bed on an empty stomach.”

Muhammad Salah, 27, from Burqa, near Nablus, on Megiddo prison, November 2023 to February 2024. Testimony to B'Tselem, 2024.

IN DETAIL

In Nafha, the power went off and on. In S.B.’s testimony, it was cut during the day at first, then turned back on only between 6:00 and 10:00 P.M., and later left off altogether.

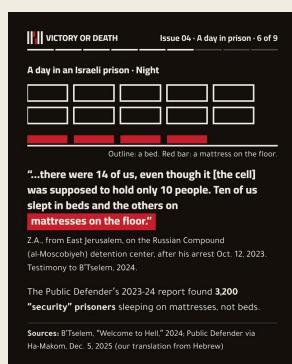
Showers were allowed for one hour every three days, so no prisoner got more than three minutes. After Oct. 7, the prisoners also lost the washing machines.

About eight months before the war, in February 2023, National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir told the Prison Service that “security” prisoners would get four minutes to shower and running water only one hour a day, Ynet reported. The new rules were to start in two wings of Nafha prison.

6 of 9

Sources

B'Tselem, "Welcome to Hell," 2024 ↗; Public Defender via Ha-Makom, Dec. 5, 2025 (in Hebrew) ↗



The card as published

Night

“... there were 14 of us, even though it [the cell] was supposed to hold only 10 people. Ten of us slept in beds and the others on mattresses on the floor.”

Z.A., from East Jerusalem, on the Russian Compound (al-Moscobiyyeh) detention center, after his arrest Oct. 12, 2023. Testimony to B'Tselem, 2024.

The Public Defender's 2023-24 report found 3,200 “security” prisoners sleeping on mattresses, not beds.

IN DETAIL

Z.A. was arrested on Oct. 12, 2023, and held at the Russian Compound for 13 days. During that time, he says, “they kept putting more detainees in the cell.”

Each prison room contained 10 prisoners and measured seven by three meters. There were only six beds for 10 prisoners, meaning six slept on the beds while four slept on the floor.

Ali Al-Samoudi, a journalist from Jenin, to +972 Magazine

In the Public Defender's report for 2023–2024, 3,200 “security” prisoners were on mattresses. The report's figures, as Ha-Makom published them, also show 1,300 criminal prisoners on mattresses. In September 2026, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel said about 19% of all prisoners sleep on mattresses, without a bed.

7 of 9

Source

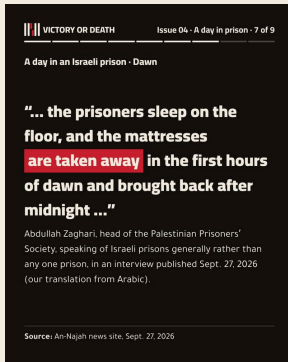
An-Najah news site, Sept. 27, 2026 ↗

Dawn

“... the prisoners sleep on the floor, and the mattresses are taken away in the first hours of dawn and brought back after midnight ...”

Abdullah Zaghari, head of the Palestinian Prisoners' Society, speaking of Israeli prisons generally rather than any one prison

In an interview published Sept. 27, 2026.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Zaghari spoke of the mattresses while describing the prisoners' health, which he called "difficult and dangerous." He also spoke of scabies spreading through the prisons.

In S.B.'s testimony about Nafha, on the day the war began the guards confiscated everything in the cells, including "pillows, sheets, blankets and mattress covers." They left one blanket for each prisoner.

In Thaer Halahleh's testimony about Nafha, the mattress was among the few things each prisoner kept after the confiscations: "one set of clothes, one pair of shoes, one blanket, a mattress, a bottle of shampoo and a toothbrush."

8 of 9

Sources

The Times of Israel, Oct. 18, 2023 ↗;
Channel 14, Sept. 16, 2026 (in
Hebrew) ↗; ACRI, Sept. 24, 2026 ↗

Without a bed

On Oct. 18, 2023, Israel's parliament, the Knesset, voted 16-1 for a law letting the national security minister declare an "incarceration emergency." As Israel's Channel 14 described it, the emergency allows prisoners to be held in less space than the law requires, and without a bed.

On Sept. 16, 2026, the Knesset's National Security Committee approved a one-month extension of the emergency, to Oct. 15, 2026. On Sept. 24, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel asked Israel's High Court to revoke the temporary orders that allow this, saying about 19% of all prisoners sleep on mattresses, without a bed.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

On the day the law passed, The Times of Israel wrote that it enabled National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir "to worsen the conditions of security prisoners." Ben Gvir had said he wanted to house Palestinian detainees and prisoners on mattresses rather than in beds.

The latest extension came from the Knesset's National Security Committee and ran for one month, Channel 14 reported.

We found no extension beyond Oct. 15 and no ruling on the association's petition (as of Oct. 9, 2026).

9 of 9

Sources

The Times of Israel, Dec. 6, 2025 [↗](#);
Ynet, Dec. 4, 2025 [↗](#); ACRI, Sept. 24,
2026 [↗](#)

A prisoner's living space, as the inspectors found it

Under 3 m²

Israel's Public Defender's Office found in 2023-24 that more than 90% of "security" prisoners had less than 3 square meters each, despite a ruling by Israel's High Court setting a minimum of 4.5 square meters.

Its report, published in December 2025, called conditions in the prisons "one of the harshest detention crises the state has known."

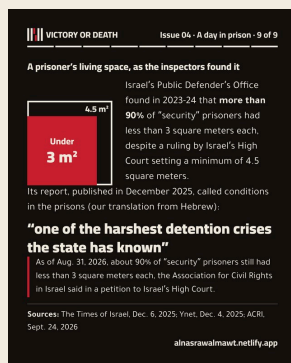
As of Aug. 31, 2026, about 90% of "security" prisoners still had less than 3 square meters each, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel said in a petition to Israel's High Court.

IN DETAIL

The report compared the two groups of prisoners: 35% of criminal detainees lived in less than 3 square meters each, against more than 90% of "security" detainees.

In Megiddo, the inspectors found 520 prisoners over the prison's approved capacity. Twelve prisoners were held in a cell of 23 square meters, about 2 square meters each.

The report was published on Dec. 4, 2025, after reviews and site visits during 2023 and 2024.



The card as published



Ze'ev Jabotinsky

On the Iron Wall
1923

If it were possible (and I doubt this) to discuss Palestine with the Arabs of Baghdad and Mecca as if it were some kind of small, immaterial borderland, then Palestine would still remain for the Palestinians not a borderland, but

their birthplace [...]



Part

Part 2

2

How many are held, and where

Israel holds 9,265 “security” prisoners, and 7,756 of them have not been sentenced. Its prisons have room for 14,500 and hold about 23,000. In al-Naqab (Ketziot), at least 16 prisoners died after Oct. 7, 2023, according to data published in November 2025. At Sde Teiman, an army camp, more than 1,000 detainees were held in pen-like structures, HaMoked says, while Rakefet, an underground wing of Ayalon prison, keeps its detainees without natural light.

8 cards

This part reflects information available before publication on Oct. 9, 2026.

1 of 8

Source

Israel Prison Service 2026 ↗

How many are held, and where

9,265

“security” prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons as of October 2026.

Israel classifies 1,419 of them as “unlawful combatants.”

“Security” is the Israel Prison Service’s label. These are its own figures, and exclude Gaza detainees held by the army.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

On Oct. 1, 2023, days before the war, the Israel Prison Service reported 5,192 “security” prisoners in Israeli custody. The number rose to 11,040 in September 2025, “the most Israel has ever held,” according to HaMoked, which receives its figures from the Prison Service.

Israel held 105 people from Gaza as “unlawful combatants” in November 2023. The number rose to 2,662 in September 2025, then fell to 1,419 in October 2026. The label comes from the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law, in The Jerusalem Post’s words, “a 2002 law that allows Israel to hold people it defines as unlawful combatants.”

2 of 8

Source

Israel Prison Service 2026 ↗

Israel’s “security” prisoners, by status, October 2026

7,756

not yet sentenced.

Sentenced: 1,509. Held pending trial or sentencing: 3,236. Administrative detention, without trial: 3,101. Held as “unlawful combatants”: 1,419.

The figures leave out Gaza detainees held by the army.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

In November 2023, according to government data reported by HaMoked, Israel held 2,313 sentenced prisoners, 2,321 people pending trial or sentencing, and 2,070 administrative detainees. Three years later, only the sentenced group had shrunk, to 1,509. The other two had grown.

People held as “unlawful combatants” are “not necessarily held for the purpose of filing an indictment against them,” The Jerusalem Post reported in June 2026. At that time, an adult held under the law could wait up to 40 days before being brought before a judge.

3 of 8

Sources

Ha-Makom 2025 ↗; Israel’s National Security Ministry 2026 ↗

Overcrowding in Israel’s prisons

About 23,000 prisoners, in prisons built for 14,500.

Capacity, as reported in December 2025: 14,500. Prisoners, September 2026: 23,049.

A lawyer at Israel’s National Security Ministry gave the September 2026 figure, saying the number had stabilized and new construction would add room for about 3,000 more by late 2026 and early 2027. Both figures include all prisoners, criminal and “security.” We found no more recent capacity figure (as of Oct. 9, 2026).



The card as published

IN DETAIL

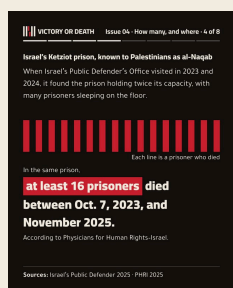
The overcrowding began before the war. Israel “had already exceeded the prison system’s capacity of 14,500 detainees,” The Times of Israel reported, and on Oct. 6, 2023, it was holding 16,353 prisoners. By the end of 2024 the number had risen to 23,000.

The latest figure came from Aviv Israeli, a lawyer in the legal adviser’s office at Israel’s National Security Ministry, as Channel 14 reported it. He said the number had recently stabilized, and that construction steps were “expected to add” about 3,000 places by late 2026 and early 2027.

4 of 8

Sources

Israel's Public Defender 2025 ↗
PHRI 2025 ↗



The card as published

Israel's Ketziot prison, known to Palestinians as al-Naqab

At least 16

In the same prison, at least 16 prisoners died between Oct. 7, 2023, and November 2025.

According to Physicians for Human Rights–Israel

When Israel's Public Defender's Office visited in 2023 and 2024, it found the prison holding twice its capacity, with many prisoners sleeping on the floor.

IN DETAIL

Ha-Makom, describing the Public Defender's report, put occupancy at al-Naqab at about 200%. Z.A., an administrative detainee from East Jerusalem, was transferred there a week after he was told of his administrative detention order.

That's when my Ketziot ordeal started.

Z.A., from East Jerusalem, in testimony to B'Tselem

The figure of 16 comes from data obtained by Physicians for Human Rights–Israel and published by +972 Magazine in November 2025. In that data, Ketziot is the Israel Prison Service facility where the most prisoners died: at least 16. Megiddo follows with 7, then Nitzan prison and the Prison Service's medical center, together, with at least 6, then Ofer with at least 5.

The Israel Prison Service refused to answer +972 Magazine's detailed questions about the deaths in its report, referring the magazine instead to the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT).

5 of 8

Source

Israel Prison Service 2025 ↗

Scabies, a contagious skin disease, in Ketziot prison

2,500

cases in Ketziot in May alone.

In March 2025, responding to a media inquiry, the Israel Prison Service said that of the prisoners in Ketziot, 49 had been diagnosed with scabies and the situation was "under control."

In July 2025, the Prison Service presented its own data.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

In its March answer, the Prison Service put the 49 “out of the hundreds of prisoners held in Ketziot,” saying “only 49” had been diagnosed, The Times of Israel reported. The paper called Ketziot “just one of Israel’s primary security prisons.”

The Prison Service’s own data, presented in July 2025, recorded 2,500 scabies cases in Ketziot in May 2025 alone. The figures “showed a very different picture,” in The Times of Israel’s words.

In December 2025, the Public Defender’s Office reported that in the prisons it visited, scabies had “developed into an epidemic within these facilities.”

6 of 8

Source

HaMoked 2024 ↗

Sde Teiman, an Israeli army detention camp, 2024

More than 1,000

In September 2024, HaMoked wrote that, as far as it knew, more than 1,000 detainees had been held there in pen-like structures, without beds.

On Sept. 1, 2024, Israeli authorities told Israel’s High Court that only 24 detainees were being held there at that time, according to HaMoked.

On Sept. 18, 2024, Israel’s High Court ruled that Israel must run the facility in accordance with the law, according to HaMoked.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

HaMoked wrote this on a page that follows a petition to Israel’s High Court over the facility, petition No. 4268/24.

The state, as respondent to the petition, said in a supplementary notice to Israel’s High Court on Sept. 1, 2024, that the detention infrastructure at the facility had been “upgraded,” according to HaMoked.

7 of 8

Sources

The Guardian 2025 ↗; Kan 2025 ↗;
PCATI 2025 ↗

Rakefet, an underground wing of Israel’s Ayalon prison

About 100 detainees were held there in the months before November 2025, according to official data obtained by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel.

After Oct. 7, 2023, Israel’s National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir ordered it back into service, The Guardian reported. In July 2025, Israel’s public broadcaster Kan reported that it held dozens it described as members of Hamas’ Nukhba and naval commando units and Hezbollah’s Radwan Force.

The number is approximate.

IN DETAIL

When Rakefet was shut in 1985, it held 15 men, The Guardian reported.

In July 2025, Kan called it “the Rakefet wing in Ayalon prison,” a compound it said had opened the previous September.

The Guardian published the figure of about 100 on Nov. 8, 2025, saying the detainees had been held there “in recent months.”



The card as published

8 of 8

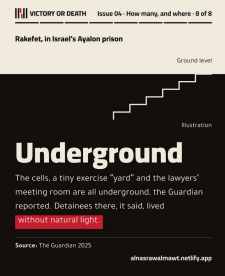
Source

The Guardian 2025 ↗

Rakefet, in Israel’s Ayalon prison

Underground.

The cells, a tiny exercise “yard” and the lawyers’ meeting room are all underground, The Guardian reported. Detainees there, it said, lived without natural light.



The card as published



Yusuf Diya al-Khalidi

letter to Zadoc Kahn
1899

Let a place be sought somewhere for the unfortunate Jewish nation; nothing more just and equitable. My God, the earth is vast enough; there are still uninhabited countries where the millions of poor Jews could be placed, who would perhaps become happy there and one day form a nation. That would perhaps be the best, the most rational solution to the Jewish question. But,

**in the name of God,
let Palestine be left alone.**



Part



Part 3

3

Food in Israeli prisons

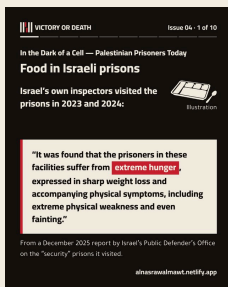
In Nafha prison, Samer Khawaireh was the one who handed out the food: a spoonful of labneh for breakfast, and jam measured by the lines on a plastic cup. Israel's own inspectors found prisoners suffering from "extreme hunger," and National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir said his policy was "the minimum of the minimum." In September 2025, Israel's High Court ruled that providing food is not a means of punishment. A year later, Haaretz wrote that "the deliberate starvation policy continues."

1
of 10

Israel's own inspectors visited the prisons in 2023 and 2024:

“It was found that the prisoners in these facilities suffer from extreme hunger, expressed in sharp weight loss and accompanying physical symptoms, including extreme physical weakness and even fainting.”

From a December 2025 report by Israel's Public Defender's Office on the “security” prisons it visited.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

The Public Defender's Office is an Israeli state body that inspects prisons. Its report came out on Dec. 4, 2025, after reviews and site visits during 2023 and 2024. Conditions had reached “one of the harshest detention crises the state has known,” the report said.

“Security” is the Israel Prison Service's own classification.

2
of 10

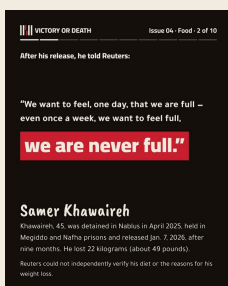
After his release, he told Reuters:

“We want to feel, one day, that we are full — even once a week, we want to feel full, we are never full.”

Samer Khawaireh

Khawaireh, 45, was detained in Nablus in April 2025, held in Megiddo and Nafha prisons and released Jan. 7, 2026, after nine months. He lost 22 kilograms (about 49 pounds).

Reuters could not independently verify his diet or the reasons for his weight loss.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

When Khawaireh came home in January 2026, his 9-year-old son did not recognize him, Haaretz reported.

In Nafha I was the shawish, the one who hands out the food. Every day we got 10 slices of bread. Breakfast was a spoonful of labneh, and a spoonful or half a spoonful of jam. ... I would count the jam by the lines on the plastic cup: one line, two, three.

Samer Khawaireh, to Haaretz

Khawaireh is a journalist from Nablus and the occupied West Bank correspondent for the Arabic news site Al-Araby Al-Jadeed. He was arrested at home in a nighttime raid and spent the nine months in administrative detention. Asked by Haaretz why he had been held without trial, Israel's Shin Bet security service declined to respond, the paper reported on Oct. 8, 2026.

Reuters added that it could not independently verify “exactly how widespread such experience is” among prisoners.

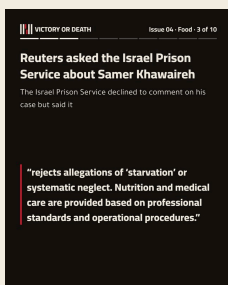
3 of 10

Reuters asked the Israel Prison Service about Samer Khawaireh

The Israel Prison Service declined to comment on his case but said it “rejects allegations of ‘starvation’ or systematic neglect. Nutrition and medical care are provided based on professional standards and operational procedures.”

IN DETAIL

The reply appeared in a Reuters report published on Feb. 11, 2026. Khawaireh's story, Reuters wrote, came “five months after Israel's Supreme Court ruled that its prisons were failing to provide enough food.”

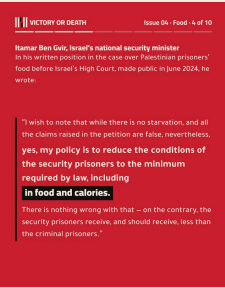


The card as published

4 of 10

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's national security minister. In his written position in the case over Palestinian prisoners' food before Israel's High Court, made public in June 2024, he wrote:

“I wish to note that while there is no starvation, and all the claims raised in the petition are false, nevertheless, yes, my policy is to reduce the conditions of the security prisoners to the minimum required by law, including in food and calories. There is nothing wrong with that — on the contrary, the security prisoners receive, and should receive, less than the criminal prisoners.”



The card as published

IN DETAIL

The minister’s position came to light at a hearing on June 26, 2024. At that hearing, representatives of the Israeli government presented the attorney general’s position: the food given to “security” prisoners was sufficient, and it had been changed mainly for logistical and operational reasons. It was then claimed at the hearing that the State Attorney’s Office had left the minister’s position out of the government’s response to the High Court. The justices rebuked the prosecution, Maariv reported.

My policy is clear, and it is a shame the prosecution hid it: the terrorists will get minimum conditions and minimum food, and I will make sure this policy is carried out.

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel’s national security minister, June 26, 2024

5 of 10

Source

B’Tselem 2024 and 2026

The scales

How much weight three released prisoners told B’Tselem they lost in Israeli detention.

Nassim a-Radi’, from Beit Lahiya: “... from 93 kg before my arrest to 60 when I was released.”

Ibrahim Fuda, from Beit Lahiya: “Before I was arrested, I weighed 87 kilograms. During my detention I lost 25 kilograms.”

Thaer Halahleh, from Kharas: “I lost 35 kilos.” He was held in Nafha after Oct. 7, 2023.

One kilogram is about 2.2 pounds.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Nassim a-Radi’, 34, a father of four from Beit Lahiya, was released after two years in prison. Ibrahim Fuda, 35, a father of two, is also from Beit Lahiya.

Thaer Halahleh, 45, a father of four from Kharas, near Hebron, was held in Nafha prison, in cell 3 on wing 4.

6 of 10

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's national security minister. He appeared at Israel's High Court on July 17, 2025, for a hearing on a petition over prisoners' living conditions, and said:

“I am proud that I changed the policy in the prisons.” “Our policy is to give the minimum of the minimum. It works, it deters, and it must continue.”

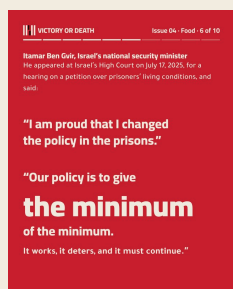
IN DETAIL

Ben Gvir came to the court on July 17, 2025, for a hearing on a petition by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel over the living and detention conditions of prisoners. He said he was proud of changing the policy as the hearing opened, Israel Hayom reported.

... In the past they went in thin and came out fat ...

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's national security minister, July 17, 2025

Israel Hayom described an uproar in the courtroom, with Ben Gvir present. About seven weeks later, on Sept. 7, 2025, Israel's High Court ruled in the food case.



The card as published

7 of 10

On Sept. 7, 2025, Israel's High Court ruled on prisoners' food.

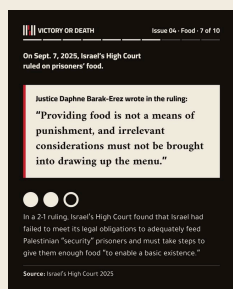
“Providing food is not a means of punishment, and irrelevant considerations must not be brought into drawing up the menu.”

Justice Daphne Barak-Erez, in the ruling

In a 2-1 ruling, Israel's High Court found that Israel had failed to meet its legal obligations to adequately feed Palestinian “security” prisoners and must take steps to give them enough food “to enable a basic existence.”

IN DETAIL

The ruling came on Sept. 7, 2025. Justice David Mintz dissented. About three months later, Haaretz summed up what the ruling requires: that the Israeli government supply “security” prisoners with food “in a quantity suited to maintaining their health.”



The card as published

On Oct. 8, 2026, Haaretz wrote that the justices of Israel's High Court had twice ruled against the starvation policy, "after many delays, and while dragging their feet," and that in September 2025 they had ordered the state "to see to proper nutrition for the prisoners."

8 of 10

On the day of Israel's High Court ruling on prisoners' food, Sept. 7, 2025

"Our hostages in Gaza have no High Court to protect them. ... We will continue to give the terrorists held in prison the most minimal conditions set by law."

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's national security minister

VICTORY OR DEATH Issue 04 · Food · 8 of 10

On the day of Israel's High Court ruling

on prisoners' food, Sept. 7, 2025

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's national security minister, said:

"Our hostages in Gaza have no High Court to protect them. ... We will continue to give the terrorists held in prison the most minimal conditions set by law."

The card as published

IN DETAIL

The minister responded on the same day the ruling came out. As of September 2026, Haaretz reported, only 16% of the "security" prisoners held in Israel had been charged and convicted in court.

More than a year after the ruling, on Oct. 8, 2026, Haaretz opened its investigation with these words: "For three years now, Israel's prisons for Palestinian inmates have operated as torture camps." Hunger, severe violence, scabies and brutal living conditions are part of daily life for thousands of prisoners, the paper wrote. None of it happens in the dark, it said: this is declared policy, at the center of Ben Gvir's election campaign.

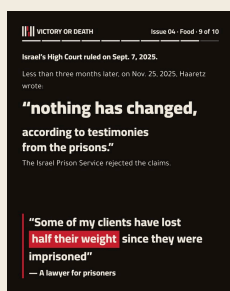
9 of 10

Israel's High Court ruled on Sept. 7, 2025. Less than three months later, on Nov. 25, 2025, Haaretz wrote:

"nothing has changed, according to testimonies from the prisons."

The Israel Prison Service rejected the claims.

"Some of my clients have lost half their weight since they were imprisoned" — a lawyer for prisoners



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Haaretz based its report on a motion that the Association for Civil Rights in Israel and the Israeli rights group Gisha filed with Israel's High Court early that week, drawing on visits to the prisons. The two groups said the Israel Prison Service was not carrying out the ruling. In affidavits attached to the motion, prisoners said nothing had changed in how food was handed out, and some said the amount had even gone down. The groups asked the court to fine or jail the Prison Service commissioner, Kobi Yaakobi.

On March 28, 2026, Haaretz reported that Israel's High Court had told the Israeli government that the Israel Prison Service must provide enough food to all "security" prisoners, not only to those who are underweight.

On April 23, 2026, the Israeli news site Arutz Sheva reported the court's decision on the two groups' contempt motion. The court found they had not laid a "sufficient basis to prove a systemic violation" of the ruling. The justices stressed that the duty to provide enough food applies to all "security" prisoners, and that individual prisoners' claims of food shortages are to be heard in personal petitions. Extra food is allowed "when the need for it arises."

On Oct. 8, 2026, Haaretz wrote that contempt motions had been filed in both cases, over food and over Red Cross visits, and that in neither case did the rulings appear to have changed anything in how the Israel Prison Service operates.

10 of 10

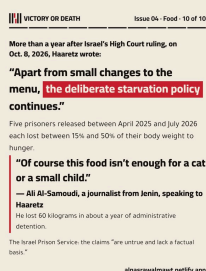
More than a year after Israel's High Court ruling, on Oct. 8, 2026, Haaretz wrote:

"Apart from small changes to the menu, the deliberate starvation policy continues."

Five prisoners released between April 2025 and July 2026 each lost between 15% and 50% of their body weight to hunger.

"Of course this food isn't enough for a cat or a small child." — Ali Al-Samoudi, a journalist from Jenin, speaking to Haaretz. He lost 60 kilograms in about a year of administrative detention.

The Israel Prison Service: the claims "are untrue and lack a factual basis."



The card as published

IN DETAIL

The five came out of Megiddo, Nafha, al-Naqab (Ketziot), Ofer and Damon prisons, and all of them live in the occupied West Bank. Ali Al-Samoudi went into prison weighing 120 kilograms, with diabetes and high blood pressure. He came out with 10 illnesses.

It is meant only so that we can stand and sit for the count. That leads to illnesses like mine: I would faint and wake up lying on the floor.

Ali Al-Samoudi, a journalist from Jenin, to Haaretz

In his account to Haaretz, there was no salt, no sugar and no coffee in the prison food.

Hiba Allawi, a mother of five from al-Dhahiriya, spent five and a half months in Damon prison and came out in July 2026 having lost 36 kilograms. Rabee Abu Naim, from the village of al-Mughayyir near Ramallah, described how most prisoners saved up food for what they called “the day of fullness,” “so that one day a week we would feel full.”

The Israel Prison Service told Haaretz the claims “are untrue, lack a factual basis and are part of a smear campaign against the State of Israel and its lawful institutions around the world.” It said it “operates in accordance with the law and under constant judicial review.”



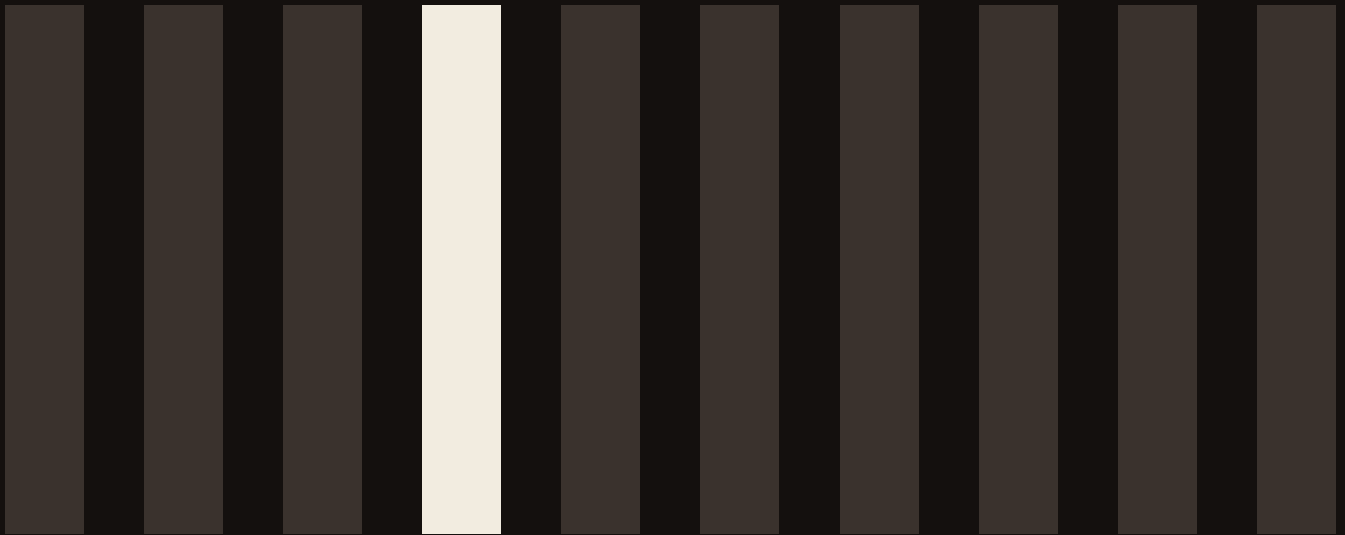
Arthur Balfour

Memorandum respecting Syria,
Palestine and Mesopotamia
1919

For in Palestine we do not propose even
to go through the form of consulting the
wishes of

**the present inhabitants
of the country,**

though the American Commission has
been going through the forms of asking
what they are.



Part



Part 4

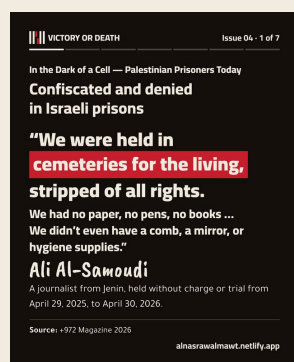
4

Confiscated and denied in Israeli prisons

One blanket, one set of clothes and one pair of shoes for each prisoner: that is what was left in the cells of Nafha prison after Oct. 7, 2023, according to two testimonies given to B'Tselem. In al-Naqab, a detainee said, Qurans and prayer mats were confiscated and prayer was banned, whether in a group or alone. Israel's national security minister wrote that canteen purchases had been stopped "in line with my policy." The Israel Prison Service, for its part, said it was not aware of the claims.

1
of 7

Source

[+972 Magazine 2026 ↗](#)

The card as published

Confiscated and denied in Israeli prisons

“We were held in cemeteries for the living, stripped of all rights. We had no paper, no pens, no books ... We didn’t even have a comb, a mirror, or hygiene supplies.”

Ali Al-Samoudi

A journalist from Jenin, held without charge or trial from April 29, 2025, to April 30, 2026.

IN DETAIL

Israeli forces raided Ali Al-Samoudi’s home in Jenin at dawn on April 29, 2025, and arrested him. He was held without charge or trial and released almost a year to the day later, on April 30, 2026.

I know that nothing has changed to this day, because as a journalist I interview prisoners who are released. A prisoner who was released three or four days ago from the prison where I was held told me the situation has gotten even worse.

Ali Al-Samoudi, to Haaretz, October 2026

Al-Samoudi, 60, has documented events in Jenin for four decades, as a correspondent for Al-Quds newspaper and a cameraman for Al Jazeera. +972 Magazine spoke to him shortly after his release; the full list he gave also included “no television, no radio.”

2
of 7

Source

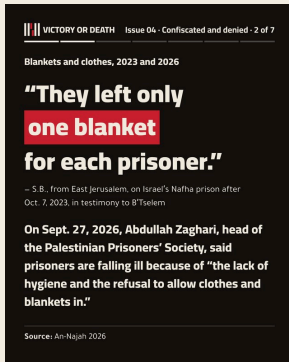
[An-Najah 2026 ↗](#)

Blankets and clothes, 2023 and 2026

“They left only one blanket for each prisoner.”

S.B., from East Jerusalem, on Israel’s Nafha prison after Oct. 7, 2023, in testimony to B’Tselem

On Sept. 27, 2026, Abdullah Zaghari, head of the Palestinian Prisoners’ Society, said prisoners are falling ill because of “the lack of hygiene and the refusal to allow clothes and blankets in.”



The card as published

IN DETAIL

S.B. had been held in Nafha since August 2023. On Oct. 7, the prisoners still had televisions in their cells, which is how they learned what had happened that day; the prison administration told them nothing. The confiscations began that same day.

... that day, they confiscated everything in the cells: TVs, electric kettles, hotplates, heaters, fans, pillows, sheets, blankets and mattress covers.

S.B., in testimony to B'Tselem

Speaking on Sept. 27, 2026, Zaghari called the prisoners' health "difficult and dangerous." The prisoners sleep on the floor, he said, and "the mattresses are taken away in the first hours of dawn and brought back after midnight," while scabies spreads through the prisons.

3 of 7

The first days of the war inside Israel's prisons

"Lockdown"

On Oct. 10, 2023, Israel Hayom reported that "security" prisoners had been on "lockdown" since the war began: confined to their cells, with no daily routine except an hour in the yard.

"Family visits and lawyer visits were banned, and even Red Cross visits. So we were cut off from the outside world." — S.B., from East Jerusalem, on Israel's Nafha prison, in testimony to B'Tselem



The card as published

IN DETAIL

The same Israel Hayom report said that on that day, a Tuesday, the Israel Prison Service cut off television viewing in the wings holding "security" prisoners. It also removed electrical appliances, such as hotplates and kettles, from the wings and the cells.

On Oct. 7, 2023, the Israel Prison Service had declared an "incarceration emergency," with a blanket ban on family visits to "security" prisoners, according to the Israeli rights group HaMoked. The ban was later written into an amendment to a temporary order.



Photo: Oren Ziv / Activestills · archive, 2012

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4 of 7

Sources

B'Tselem 2024 ↗; Maariv 2024 ↗;

An-Najah 2026 ↗

What was taken from prisoners, or denied them, after Oct. 7, 2023

From two prisoners' accounts of Israel's Nafha prison, October 2023 to spring 2024, unless another source is named.

Canteen (prison store) purchases: stopped under the policy of Israel's national security minister (his written position, 2024)

Clothes and shoes: each prisoner was left one set of clothes and one pair of shoes

Clothes and blankets from outside: not allowed (head of the Palestinian Prisoners' Society, September 2026)

Yard time: in Nafha, "we were only allowed out for the shower"

IN DETAIL

The two prisoners are S.B. and Thaer Halahleh, 45, a father of four from Kharas, near Hebron, who was also held in Nafha. In Halahleh's words: "They also confiscated everything we had: the TV, hot plate, kettle, and all electrical appliances in the room, as well as our clothes and shoes. They left each of us with one set of clothes, one pair of shoes, one blanket, a mattress, a bottle of shampoo and a toothbrush."

But since 7 October, we were only allowed out for the shower, and we'd look there for the few rays of sunlight that came through a hole in the wall.

S.B., from East Jerusalem, on Nafha prison, in testimony to B'Tselem

Before the war, S.B. says, prisoners in Nafha were let out of their cells for 12 hours, from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., into a large lot outside, in the sun. Halahleh: "For 191 days, I didn't see the sun."

S.B. also describes the loss of the washing machines after Oct. 7. Showers were allowed for one hour every three days, so no prisoner got more than three minutes.

The tightening began before the war. In early February 2023, The Jerusalem Post reported that National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir had ordered the closure of the pita bakeries in Ramon and al-Naqab (Ketziot) prisons. That same month, he told the Israel Prison Service to cut showers for "security" prisoners to four minutes, starting in two wings of Nafha prison, Ynet reported.

VICTORY OR DEATH Issue 04 · Confiscated and denied · 4 of 7

What was taken from prisoners, or denied them, after

Oct. 7, 2023

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- **Yard time:** in Nafha, "we were only allowed out for the shower"

Sources: B'Tselem 2024 · Maariv 2024 · An-Najah 2026

The card as published

5
of 7

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's national security minister — in his written position in a case before Israel's High Court over Palestinian prisoners' food, made public in June 2024, he wrote:

“When the war broke out, in line with my policy, it was decided to restrict the movement of the security prisoners. Within this framework, it was decided to stop canteen purchases and to change the way the security prisoners are fed.”

“Security prisoners” is the Israel Prison Service's label; the canteen is the prison store.

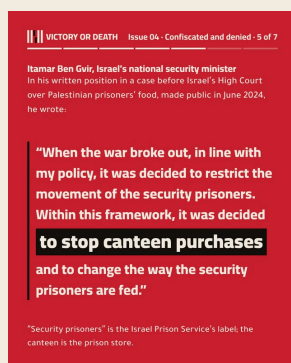
IN DETAIL

At a hearing before Israel's High Court on June 26, 2024, it was argued that the State Attorney's Office had left the minister's position out of the state's response to the petition. The justices rebuked the prosecution, the Israeli daily Maariv reported.

... before the war, we cooked our own food and had as much as we wanted.

Thaer Halahleh, from Kharas, on Nafha prison, in testimony to B'Tselem

Thaer Halahleh, held in Nafha, described what the change in feeding meant for the prisoners:



The card as published

6
of 7

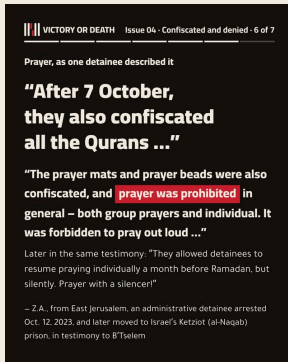
Prayer, as one detainee described it

“After 7 October, they also confiscated all the Qurans ...”

Z.A., from East Jerusalem, an administrative detainee arrested Oct. 12, 2023, and later moved to Israel's Ketziot (al-Naqab) prison, in testimony to B'Tselem

“The prayer mats and prayer beads were also confiscated, and prayer was prohibited in general – both group prayers and individual. It was forbidden to pray out loud ...”

Later in the same testimony: “They allowed detainees to resume praying individually a month before Ramadan, but silently. Prayer with a silencer!”



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Z.A. was arrested around 1:30 P.M. on Oct. 12, 2023, when an unmarked car blocked his way. He was held for 13 days at the Russian Compound (al-Moscobiye), where new detainees were brought in until there were 14 in his cell, which was meant for 10. From there he was moved to Naqab prison with three other detainees; that, he says, is where his ordeal began.

... when the guards found a Quran during a search, they would throw it on the floor and stomp on it.

Z.A., in testimony to B'Tselem

He was held in administrative detention, and the order was extended again and again: first for two months, then for two more, then for another 50 days.

In the same testimony, he describes what happened to the Qurans that remained:

7 of 7

The Israel Prison Service (IPS) — replying to a Reuters question in August 2024 about B'Tselem's "Welcome to Hell" report:

"We are not aware of the claims you described and as far as we know, no such events have occurred under IPS responsibility."

An Israel Prison Service spokesperson

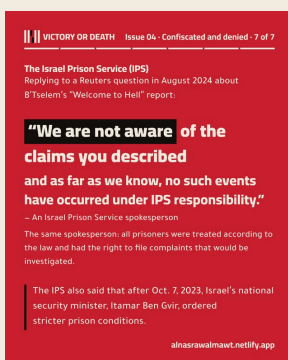
The same spokesperson: all prisoners were treated according to the law and had the right to file complaints that would be investigated.

The IPS also said that after Oct. 7, 2023, Israel's national security minister, Itamar Ben Gvir, ordered stricter prison conditions.

IN DETAIL

In the same Reuters report, the Prison Service gave a reason for the minister's order: the conditions were made stricter "to reverse an improvement in conditions allowed previously."

The Israeli army, responding in The Guardian to B'Tselem's report, said it "rejects outright allegations concerning systematic abuse of detainees" and acts "in accordance with Israeli law and international law." Any claims of abuse are



The card as published

examined thoroughly, it said, and “all incidents in which detainees die are investigated by the Military Police Criminal Investigations Division.”

We found no published official response to B’Tselem’s second report, “Living Hell,” released in January 2026 (as of Oct. 3, 2026).



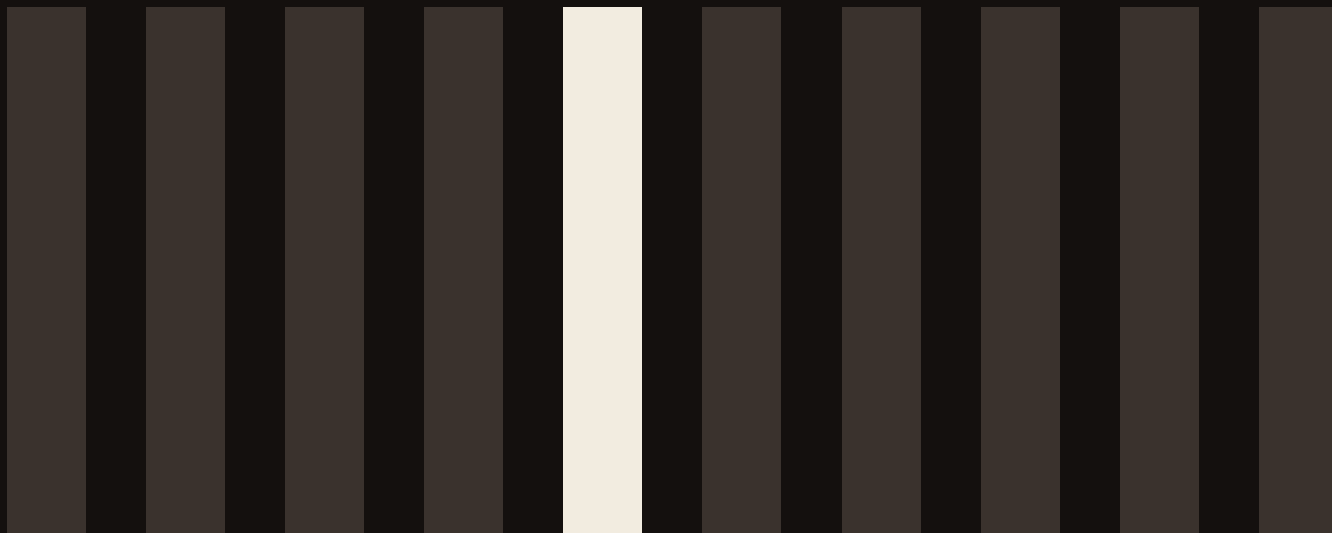
Palestine Arab Delegation

letter to the British Colonial
Secretary
1922

[...] the Jewish National Home
undertaking is the cause of
depriving us of

**our natural right of
establishing
an independent
government**

the same as Mesopotamia and
the Hedjaz.



Part



Part 5

5

Children, women and the sick in Israeli prisons

“Zaid” was 15 when he was arrested, and he spent most of his detention in Israel’s Megiddo prison, where, he says, one plate of rice came for 10 prisoners. In September 2026, Israeli prisons held more than 350 Palestinian children, nearly double the prewar number. A 2024 Israeli law lets judges sentence children as young as 12 to prison for murder or attempted murder defined as terrorism, and solitary confinement of children rose from one case in 2022 to 199 in 2024. In Damon prison, women prisoners get one hour a day outside their cells; in the clinic at Ramla prison, prisoners with chronic illnesses were held permanently.

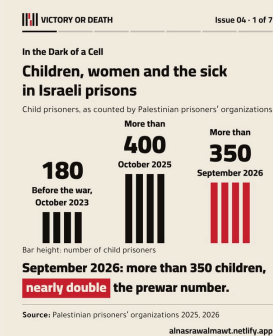
7 cards

This part reflects information available before publication on Oct. 10, 2026.

1 of 7

Source

Palestinian prisoners' organizations
2025, 2026 ↗



The card as published

Children, women and the sick in Israeli prisons — child prisoners, as counted by
Palestinian prisoners' organizations

More than 350

**September 2026: more than 350 children, nearly
double the prewar number.**

180 before the war, October 2023 · more than 400 in October 2025 · more than
350 in September 2026.

IN DETAIL

All three figures come from joint statements by the Palestinian prisoners' organizations. On Oct. 8, 2025, they said Israeli prisons had held around 5,250 prisoners before the war, 180 of them children, and that “the number of child prisoners is more than 400, held in Ofer and Megiddo prisons.” On Sept. 16, 2026, they put the number at more than 350, in the same two prisons.

At a news conference in al-Bireh on Oct. 6, 2026, the organizations gave the figure as 350, without the “more than.” Arrests of children in the occupied West Bank, they said, had passed 2,000 “since the start of the genocide.” On Oct. 10, 2026, the Palestinian Prisoners' Society counted “no fewer than 350” children, held in Ofer, Megiddo and Damon prisons.

The Israel Prison Service keeps its own count. At the end of June 2026, it was holding 376 Palestinians under 18 on “security grounds,” according to the Israeli rights group B'Tselem, as cited by +972 Magazine. “Security” is the Prison Service's own classification.

2 of 7

Sources

Commission of Detainees' Affairs ↗;
Palestinian Prisoners' Society
2025 ↗

A boy in Israel's Megiddo prison

17

Walid Khalid Abdullah Ahmad

17 years old. He died in Israel's Megiddo prison in March 2025, never tried.

From Silwad, east of Ramallah in the occupied West Bank. Arrested Sept. 30, 2024.

In December 2025, an Israeli court closed the investigation into his death.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Shortly after midnight on March 24, 2025, the Palestinian General Authority of Civil Affairs informed the Commission of Detainees' Affairs and the Palestinian Prisoners' Society of his death. He had been held since Sept. 30, 2024, and had never been sentenced. The two groups said that day that they had not been able to confirm how he died.

+972 Magazine wrote on Sept. 30, 2026, that "to date, he is the only Palestinian minor known to have died in Israeli custody." Abdel Nasser Farawneh, who heads the studies and documentation unit at the Commission of Detainees' Affairs, said on April 5, 2026, that "the list of martyrs of the prisoners' movement has not been without children," and that Walid was the latest to join them. Part 8 of this issue covers the investigation into his death and the autopsy.

3 of 7

Sources

Israel's Public Defender's Office
2025 ↗; +972 Magazine 2026 ↗

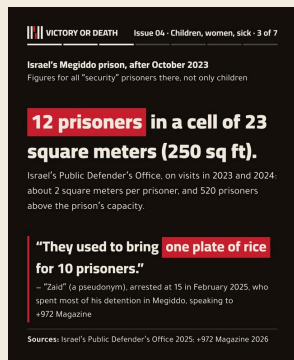
Israel's Megiddo prison, after October 2023 — figures for all "security" prisoners there, not only children

12

prisoners in a cell of 23 square meters (250 sq ft).

Israel's Public Defender's Office, on visits in 2023 and 2024: about 2 square meters per prisoner, and 520 prisoners above the prison's capacity.

"They used to bring one plate of rice for 10 prisoners." — "Zaid" (a pseudonym), arrested at 15 in February 2025, who spent most of his detention in Megiddo, speaking to +972 Magazine



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Israel's Public Defender's Office is a state body that inspects prisons. Its 17th report on detention conditions covers 2023 and 2024, and the Hebrew news site Ha-Makom published its contents on Dec. 5, 2025. Visits to Gilboa, Ramon, Megiddo and al-Naqab (Ketziot) prisons, and to the "security" wings at Ayalon, Shata, Eshel and the Russian Compound (al-Moscobiyyeh), produced "a harsh and uniform picture," in Ha-Makom's description of the report.

The Megiddo figures appear in the report's section on "security" prisoners since the war. Ha-Makom's text does not give the date of the Megiddo visit. The report also found "drastic weight loss and signs of malnutrition," The Times of Israel wrote.

"Zaid" is the name +972 Magazine gave the boy to protect him. "At 15, Zaid was separated from his parents, beaten, and starved," it wrote.

4 of 7

Source

U.N. experts 2025 ↗

Nov. 7, 2024 — Israel's Knesset

12–14

A law allowing judges to sentence children to prison: ages 12 to 14.

It applies under Israel's civilian law, including to citizens of Israel and residents of occupied East Jerusalem. In the occupied West Bank, Israeli military law already allows prison from age 12.

The new law covers murder or attempted murder in what the law defines as terrorism. A convicted child starts the sentence in a closed facility and can be moved to prison at 14.

The law as a whole is temporary, for five years.

IN DETAIL

The Knesset passed the law 55-33 in a vote overnight on Nov. 6–7, 2024, The Times of Israel reported. U.N. experts, in a formal communication to Israel dated May 1, 2025, refer to it as Amendment No. 25 to Israel's Youth Law.

Under the law, the U.N. experts wrote, "minors as young as 12 years old may be placed in a secure facility and can then be transferred to adult prison upon turning 14 years old." A separate provision, temporary for three years only, lets the court move a child from the closed facility to prison for up to 10 days if it believes the child poses a threat to others. "In the event of repeated instances, the court can keep the minor in prison for a duration determined by the judge."

The Times of Israel wrote that "an identical law that was passed in 2016 following a series of attacks carried out by teenagers and other minors expired in 2020." The paper also lists manslaughter



The card as published

among the crimes the law covers. Manslaughter appears neither in the U.N. experts' communication nor in the account of Adalah, the legal rights center that followed the law.

5 of 7

Sources

The New Arab 2026 ↗; Middle East Eye 2026 ↗

Solitary confinement of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons

199

Children: 1 case in 2022, 199 cases in 2024.

The children's figures are from The New Arab. Middle East Eye reports 50 in 2023 and 290 in 2024.

Women: from 2 cases in 2022 to 25 in 2024.

Adults: 4,493 cases in 2024, nearly triple the 2023 figure.

Israel Prison Service figures, obtained by Physicians for Human Rights–Israel through a freedom-of-information request.

Israel Prison Service: the increase reflects more "security detainees," and comparisons of prewar and wartime conditions "distort reality."



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Haaretz published the figures first, on May 14, 2026, in a report by Nir Hasson. Its subheadline says punitive isolation of minors rose "from 1 case in 2022 to 199 in 2024." The same day, Middle East Eye reported on the same data that "the number of minors transferred to solitary confinement rose from one in 2022 to 50 in 2023, before spiking significantly to 290 in 2024." On May 15, The New Arab gave 199. None of the three explained the gap.

In the wording of Haaretz and The New Arab, the figures count cases, not people. Haaretz described the expansion as targeting Palestinian inmates; Middle East Eye wrote that "most cases involve Palestinians." Both outlets give the same figures for women, from two to 25, and for adults, 4,493 in 2024.

We could not find the original Physicians for Human Rights–Israel report with these figures on the group's website (as of Oct. 10, 2026).

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Sources
Commission of Detainees' Affairs
2026 ↗; Palestinian prisoners'
organizations 2025, 2026 ↗



The card as published

Women prisoners in Israel's Damon prison, June 2026

One hour a day outside the cell, for the yard and the shower.

The Palestinian Commission of Detainees' Affairs, after a lawyer's visit: the prison held 87 Palestinian women, three of them from Gaza and about a third in administrative detention.

Women prisoners in all Israeli prisons: 40 before Oct. 7, 2023, and 91 in early October 2026.

IN DETAIL

The Commission of Detainees' Affairs issued its statement on June 23, 2026, after its lawyer visited the prison. In Wafa's English report, "the women are allowed only one hour per day outside their cells for recreation and showering." The Arabic statement calls that hour al-fora, the prisoners' word for their time out in the yard.

The number of women prisoners across all prisons shifts from week to week in the prisoners' organizations' figures: 90 in early September 2026, then 88 on Sept. 20, 21 of them in administrative detention, then 91 in early October. The statement of Sept. 20 said 35 of the women prisoners were mothers.

On Oct. 7, 2026, the prisoners' rights group Addameer said Bushra al-Tawil, one of the women held in Damon, had been moved to an isolation section in Beersheba "after 46 days of continuous isolation" that began in Damon.

7 of 7

Source
Commission of Detainees' Affairs
2025 ↗

Israel's Ramla prison clinic, July 2025

18
Palestinian prisoners with chronic illnesses were held in the clinic permanently.

The Palestinian Commission of Detainees' Affairs



The card as published

IN DETAIL

The figure comes from a statement by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs on July 21, 2025. Wafa's English report put it this way: "18 prisoners with chronic illnesses are held permanently in the Ramleh clinic." The Al-Quds newspaper carried the same statement in Hebrew without the word "chronic": 18 sick prisoners are hospitalized permanently in the prison clinic.

In the Al-Quds version, the statement describes a lack of intensive medical follow-up. It says the prison administration drags its feet in moving sick and wounded prisoners to civilian hospitals, and sends them back to the clinic before their necessary treatment is complete.

We found no report later than July 2025 with an updated count of patients in the clinic (as of Oct. 10, 2026).

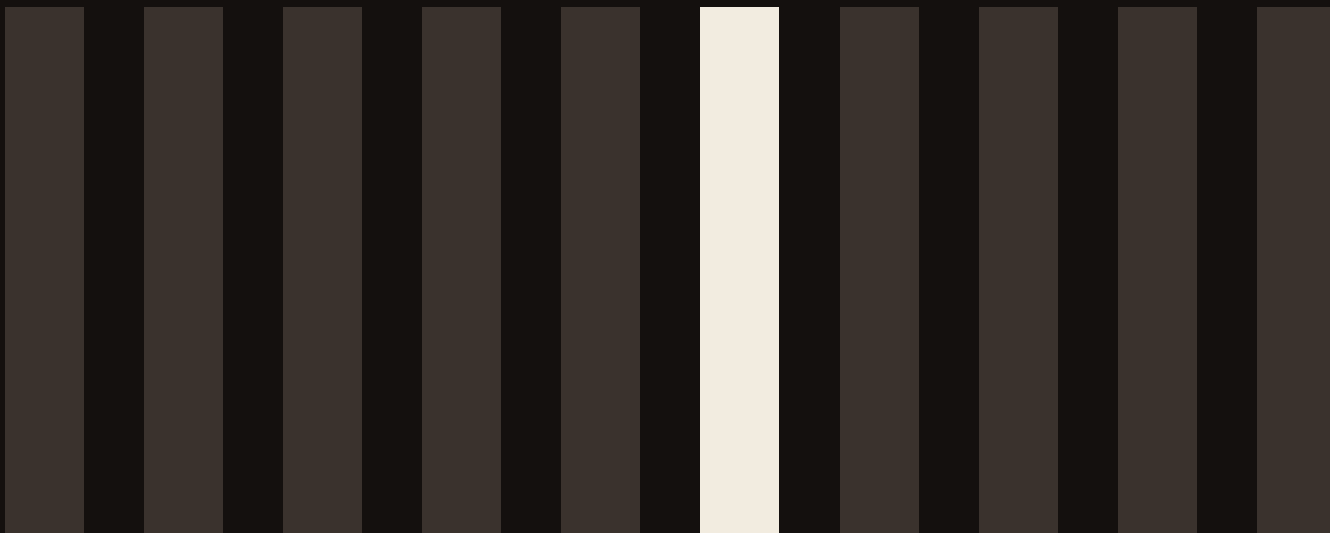


Ibn Hamdis

from a poem of longing for Sicily

If I was driven out of a paradise,

I tell its stories.



Part



Part 6

6

The law: detention, trial and the death penalty

Ibrahim Fuda saw an Israeli judge over Skype for three minutes; then his detention was extended until the end of the war, as an “unlawful combatant.” Israel holds 1,419 people under that law as of October 2026, and a detainee can wait weeks before seeing a judge or a lawyer. Another Israeli law now requires most hearings for “security” prisoners to be held by video. Since May 2026, death by hanging has been the default punishment, in The Times of Israel’s words, for residents of the occupied West Bank convicted by Israeli military courts of “deadly terrorist acts.” A separate law has set up a special military court for those accused over the “October 7 attack.”

10 cards

This part reflects information available before publication on Oct. 11, 2026.

1 of 10

The law: detention, trial and the death penalty — a Gaza detainee, on a court hearing during his detention between 2023 and 2025

3 minutes

“The hearing lasted three minutes.”

Ibrahim Fuda, 35, a nurse from Beit Lahiya in the Gaza Strip, arrested in December 2023 and released in February 2025, in testimony to B’Tselem

“At a certain point, they brought me before a judge in an Israeli court. It wasn’t face to face but through Skype. They accused me of being an ‘unlawful combatant.’ The hearing lasted three minutes. The judge asked me, ‘Ibrahim, what is your full name?’ and I answered him. Then he told me, ‘You pose a danger to the State of Israel, and therefore the court has decided to extend your detention until the end of the war.’”

IN DETAIL

“I worked as a technical nurse in the operating room at al-Awda Hospital,” Ibrahim Fuda told B’Tselem. On Feb. 14, 2025, a Red Cross delegation arrived at the prison, and he was released that same month.

I met once with a lawyer from a human rights organization who came to the prison and asked me about my condition.

Ibrahim Fuda, in testimony to B’Tselem

“Before I was arrested, I weighed 87 kilograms,” he said. “During my detention I lost 25 kilograms.”

B’Tselem, an Israeli rights group, took his testimony through its field researcher Muhammad Sabah on Oct. 9, 2025. It appeared in January 2026 in the group’s report “Living Hell,” among new testimonies from 21 released Palestinian prisoners.



The card as published

2 of 10

An Israeli law from 2002

“Unlawful combatant”

It lets Israel hold people it designates “unlawful combatants,” not necessarily in order to charge them.

People held as “unlawful combatants” in Israel Prison Service facilities: 105 in November 2023. The number rose to 2,662 in September 2025, then fell to 1,419 in October 2026. The figures do not include Gaza detainees held by the Israeli army.

Sources

HaMoked 2023–2026 ↗; The Jerusalem Post 2025–2026 ↗



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Since November 2023, the Israel Prison Service figures published by HaMoked, an Israeli rights group, have included Palestinians from the Gaza Strip held under Israel's Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law of 2002.

In November 2023, according to government data reported by HaMoked, Israel held 2,313 sentenced prisoners, 2,321 people held pending trial or sentencing and 2,070 administrative detainees, as well as 105 people from Gaza held as "unlawful combatants." By September 2025, it held 11,040 Palestinian "security" prisoners, "the most Israel has ever held," HaMoked said. Of those, 3,577 were in administrative detention and 2,662 were held as "unlawful combatants." "Security" is the Israel Prison Service's own classification.

As of October 2026, HaMoked says, Israel holds 9,265 "security" inmates in prisons inside Israel: 1,509 sentenced prisoners, 3,236 held pending trial or sentencing, 3,101 administrative detainees "held without trial," and 1,419 people held as "unlawful combatants." At the end of December 2025, the Hebrew news site Ha-Makom put the number held under the law at 1,287.

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Sources

MivzakLive 2023 ↗; The Jerusalem Post 2026 ↗

The "unlawful combatants" law and its amendment

"Temporary" — passed for four months.

The amendment that lengthened detention periods for "unlawful combatants" was passed Dec. 18, 2023. Israel's government decided to extend the declaration that allows its arrangements through Nov. 30, 2026.

Its arrangements remain in force in October 2026, with shorter periods since July.

June 17, 2026: Israel's High Court orders Israeli authorities to justify holding detainees from Gaza for weeks before bringing them before a judge. Deadline: July 19, 2026. We found no published response and no hearing since (as of Oct. 11, 2026).

IN DETAIL

Nine Knesset members voted for the amendment on Dec. 18, 2023, with none against and no abstentions, and it was set as a temporary order for four months, the Hebrew news site MivzakLive reported. It has been extended ever since. In January 2026, The Jerusalem Post said the measures had "since been extended six times," most recently on Dec. 25, 2025,



The card as published

through March 31, 2026. In March 2026, Ha-Makom wrote that the temporary order had been “changed and extended four times” and was now facing a fifth extension. Neither source explains the difference in the count.

In early October 2026, Israel’s government extended by two months the declaration that triggers the special arrangements, from Sept. 30 to Nov. 30, saying “conditions on the ground still justify extending the declaration,” The Jerusalem Post reported. If the declaration expires, the paper wrote, “existing decisions preventing detainees from meeting with lawyers would expire immediately.” It added: “Thousands of unlawful combatants remain in detention, including detainees for whom permanent detention orders have not yet been issued.”

The conditional order of June 17, 2026, was issued by Supreme Court President Yitzhak Amit and Justices Daphne Barak-Erez and Ruth Ronnen. The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel wrote that it requires the state “to justify provisions delaying judicial review of the detention of thousands of Palestinians from Gaza.”

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Source

The Jerusalem Post 2026 ↗

How long an “unlawful combatant” waits to see a judge

40 days

Before a judge: within 14 days under the 2002 law, within 40 days under the temporary amendment, and within 30 days for a minor.

Detention order: within 96 hours under the 2002 law without the amendment, against up to 25 days under the temporary amendment as it stood from early 2026 to June. Before a judge: within 14 days, against within 40 days; for a minor, within 30 days. Barred from seeing a lawyer: up to 10 days, against up to 25 days.

Since July 1, 2026, a further amendment has shortened the periods: a permanent detention order within 18 days (10 for a minor), and the wait for a judge seven days shorter.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Before the Sixth Amendment, the temporary periods were longer. The amendment “slightly reduced some timeframes — shortening temporary detention warrants from 30 days to 25, requiring initial judicial review within 40 days instead of 45, and limiting the prevention of meetings with lawyers to 25 days rather than 45,” The Jerusalem Post reported. The draft of the Sixth Amendment, on the Israeli government’s agenda for Dec. 11, 2025, was to run until March 31, 2026. In June 2026, the Post still described the 40-day wait, and 30 days for a child, as “the current framework.”

On June 18, the paper wrote that a first draft of a later amendment would have shortened the wait for a judge, but that “the final version of the amendment left the existing timeframes in place.” On Oct. 2, 2026, it wrote of “the latest amendment to the temporary provision, which entered into effect on July 1”: a permanent detention order “must be signed within 18 days of detention, or within 10 days in the case of a minor.” “The periods before judicial review were shortened by seven days,” it added, and the longest a detainee can be kept from a lawyer was cut too, by an amount it did not give. The paper does not explain how the two reports fit together.

We found neither the text of the July 1 amendment nor the dates it was passed and expires (as of Oct. 11, 2026).

The Israeli state, according to The Jerusalem Post (June 18, 2026), said that “before the amendment was advanced for final approval, the security situation had worsened,” citing “the war with Iran and renewed intensive IDF ground maneuvering in Lebanon.” For that reason, the final version kept the existing periods.

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Sources

B'Tselem 2024 ↗; Reuters 2024 ↗

A Zoom hearing · Israel’s Ketziot prison, October 2023

“An Arabic-speaking guard was in the room, and he listened to the entire conversation between me, the judge and the lawyer. He threatened that if I complained to the judge, I would pay.”

Firas Hassan, 50, a father of four from Hindaza in the Bethlehem district, in testimony to B'Tselem

From a prison room, at the hearing of his appeal against his administrative detention.



The card as published

Israel Prison Service, to Reuters on the B'Tselem report: “We are not aware of the claims you described and as far as we know, no such events have occurred under IPS responsibility.”

IN DETAIL

On Oct. 22, 2023, an Israeli court was due to hear Firas Hassan’s appeal against his administrative detention order.

That day, he told B’Tselem, the guards took the prisoners one at a time, to a room where they watched the court proceedings on Zoom.

B’Tselem field researcher Basel al-Adra took the testimony on April 24, 2024. It was published in August 2024 in B’Tselem’s report “Welcome to Hell.”

The Israel Prison Service also told Reuters that all prisoners had been treated according to the law, that their basic rights had been fully provided by professionally trained guards, and that detainees had the right to file complaints that would be fully examined and investigated (The Times of Israel, Aug. 6, 2024).

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Source
Association for Civil Rights in Israel
2026 (in Hebrew) ↗



The card as published

Israeli courts · hearings for “security” prisoners

The judge on a screen

Since February 2026, an Israeli law has required most hearings for prisoners and detainees classified as “security” cases to be held by video, not in person in the courtroom.

July 2, 2026: the Association for Civil Rights in Israel petitions Israel’s High Court against it. We found no later development (as of Oct. 11, 2026).

IN DETAIL

The law is called “Holding Hearings by Video Conference.” The association’s petition to Israel’s High Court, No. 5586-07-26, followed a letter it sent to the attorney general on March 23, 2026.

I had a remote court hearing over Zoom. My detention was extended until further notice under the classification of “unlawful combatant.”

Muhammad Khader, 36, a father of five from 'Izbet Beit Hanoun in Gaza, in testimony to B’Tselem (Nov. 12, 2025)

Other B’Tselem testimonies describe hearings on Zoom in the first months of the war. Z.A., an administrative detainee from East Jerusalem, was arrested on Oct. 12, 2023, and moved to al-

Naqab (Ketziot) prison. “Every time, they would take me at 8:00 A.M. to the room where I attended the hearing, which started at 2:00 P.M., via Zoom,” he said.

Muhammad Salah, 27, from Burqa, near Nablus, was held in Megiddo prison. “Throughout the entire period of detention, I didn’t meet with a lawyer,” he told B’Tselem. “I also didn’t see my parents or other family members, because they canceled visits altogether.”

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Sources

Kan, Israel’s public broadcaster [↗](#);
The Times of Israel [↗](#); Association
for Civil Rights in Israel, 2026 [↗](#)

March 30, 2026 — Israel’s Knesset

The Times of Israel: it makes death by hanging the default punishment for residents of the occupied West Bank convicted by Israeli military courts of “deadly terrorist acts.”

Passes the death penalty law, 62-48, with one abstention.

No pardon or commutation by the military commander.

In force since May 17, 2026. We found no sentence handed down under it as of Oct. 11.

IN DETAIL

“Deadly terrorist acts” is The Times of Israel’s phrase. On the day of the vote, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel published a Q&A on the law, then still a bill. Palestinians “convicted of terror-related murder in military courts in the territories would face a mandatory death sentence,” it said, and “The Military Commander would not have the authority to exercise discretion and offer pardons or commute sentences.”

The two sources disagree on the right of appeal. The Times of Israel wrote that the law passed “while eliminating any right of appeal.” The association wrote: “The defendant would have the right to appeal the death sentence.”



The card as published

8 of 10

Source

The Times of Israel 2026 [↗](#)

Israel’s death penalty law · who it applies to

In Israeli military courts, it does not apply to Israeli citizens or residents of Israel.

May 17, 2026: the head of the Israeli army’s Central Command signs the military order that puts the law into effect in the occupied West Bank.

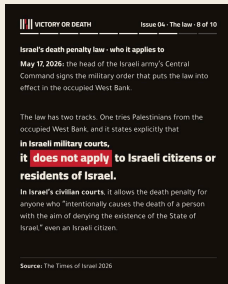
The law has two tracks. One tries Palestinians from the occupied West Bank, and it states explicitly that in Israeli military courts, it does not apply to Israeli citizens or residents of Israel.

In Israel's civilian courts, it allows the death penalty for anyone who "intentionally causes the death of a person with the aim of denying the existence of the State of Israel," even an Israeli citizen.

IN DETAIL

Maj. Gen. Avi Bluth, head of the Israeli army's Central Command, signed the military order, and the law "came into effect Sunday night," May 17, 2026, The Times of Israel reported. On the day the law passed, the paper noted that "only Palestinians are tried in military courts."

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel explained the other track: "In Israeli courts, a person convicted of terror-related murder committed with the intent to eradicate the State of Israel would be sentenced to death or life imprisonment." In the military track, then, death is a mandatory sentence; in the civilian track, it is one of two.



The card as published

9 of 10

Source

The Times of Israel 2026 ↗

A separate law · a special Israeli military court, May 2026

93

votes, none against.

Israel's Knesset passes a law creating a special military court for detainees Israel accuses of taking part in the "Oct. 7, 2023, attack." Its trials are to be public and broadcast.

Those it convicts on genocide charges, under a 1950 Israeli law, could be sentenced to death.

We found no indictment filed before it (as of Oct. 11, 2026).

IN DETAIL

The vote took place on May 11, 2026, The Times of Israel reported. "The bill passed 93-0 in Israel's 120-seat parliament," Al Jazeera wrote. Trials "will be open to the public and broadcast on a website set up for that purpose," The Times of Israel wrote. The genocide charges would be brought under Israel's 1950 Law for the Prevention of Genocide.



The card as published

On Oct. 7, 2026, The Times of Israel reported that the trial process faced delays, and that Simcha Rothman, a Knesset member, wanted the first indictments filed “in the first half of 2027.” The Algemeiner wrote on Oct. 8 that “there has yet to be a full criminal accounting of the events in a courtroom.”

10 of 10

Sources

The Times of Israel ↗; Ynet, 2026 ↗

Israel's death penalty law · where it stands

The law is in force, not frozen.

We found no death sentence handed down under it, and no execution (as of Oct. 11, 2026).

Ynet, Sept. 20, 2026: organizations had petitioned Israel's High Court against the law. The attorney general had not responded, no hearing had been held, and Justice Yechiel Kashner had declined, for now, to freeze it.

IN DETAIL

On May 19, 2026, after the military order was signed, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel filed a request with Israel's High Court. The court rejected it the next day “because there is currently no concrete case to which the order's provisions would apply,” the association said.

On Aug. 20, 2026, National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir announced that ground had been broken on a gallows, The Times of Israel reported. “It is unclear, however, if the legislation will lead to automatic death penalty sentences,” the paper wrote. On Sept. 28, it wrote that “nobody has been executed under it yet, and some observers say it will not be used in practice.”

On May 24, 2026, the Israeli authorities undertook to inform Israel's High Court “immediately” if a defendant is convicted of an offense that carries the death penalty, according to the Association for Civil Rights in Israel.



The card as published



Jean-Jacques Rousseau

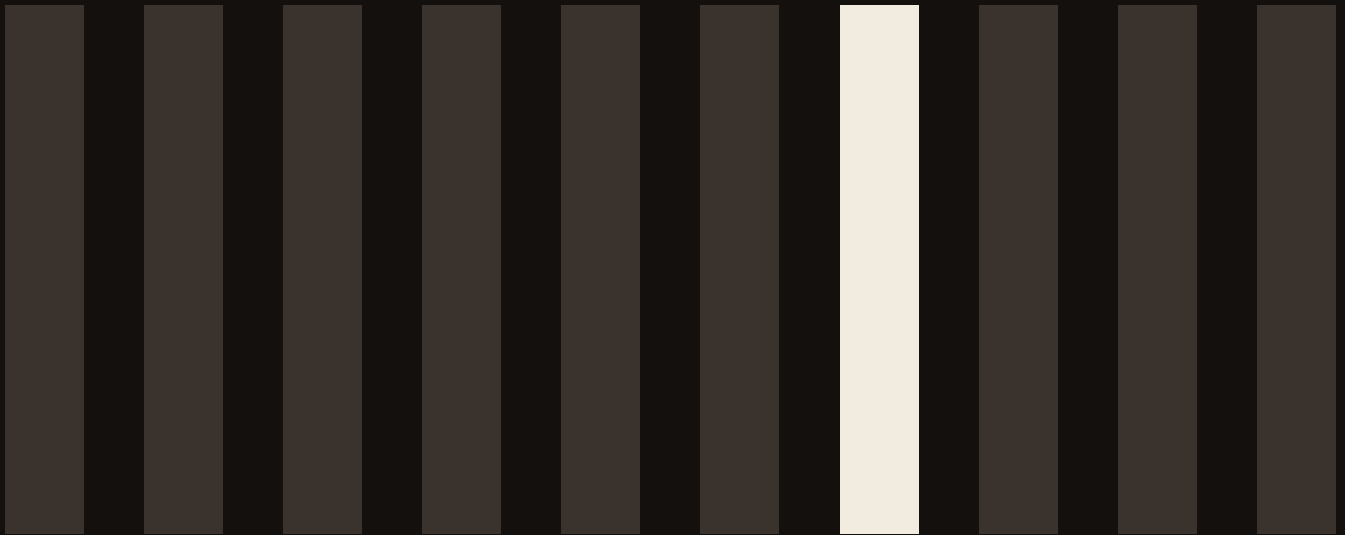
The Social Contract

1762

Let us agree, then, that

force does not make right,

and that we are obliged to obey only
legitimate powers.



Part

Part 7

7

Sexual violence against Palestinian detainees

Three freed Palestinian prisoners told B'Tselem, each under his own name, how they were sexually assaulted in Israeli detention. At Sde Teiman, physicians who examined another detainee found broken ribs, a lung injury and a rectal tear. The indictment against the soldiers in that case carried no charge of sexual violence, and it was later withdrawn. In 2026, the United Nations blacklisted Israeli forces in its annual report on sexual violence in conflict. Israel calls the accusations “baseless.”

■ **Warning: This part includes testimonies of rape.**

1
of 9

Sexual violence against Palestinian detainees

“Sexual assaults, including rape, used as a tool to destroy the detainees’ dignity.”

Palestinian prisoners’ organizations, Oct. 6, 2026, on the main practices in Israel’s prisons

A U.N. commission of inquiry, March 13, 2025: “Specific forms of sexual and gender-based violence – such as forced public stripping and nudity, sexual harassment including threats of rape, as well as sexual assault – comprise part of the Israeli Security Forces’ standard operating procedures toward Palestinians.”

IN DETAIL

The line comes from “Three Years of Genocide,” a paper by the Palestinian prisoners’ organizations. It is one item in a list of “the principal policies employed against Palestinian political prisoners.” The Arabic version of the paper describes the list as an integrated system of practices that turns prison into a place of slow killing.

The commission’s sentence is about Palestinians in general, not about detainees alone. In the same statement, on March 13, 2025, the commission said that other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, “including rape [...], were committed either under explicit orders or with implicit encouragement by Israel’s top civilian and military leadership.” Its full report is U.N. document A/HRC/58/CRP.6.

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of 9

From his testimony to B’Tselem

“During the torture, one of the soldiers raped me.”

Tamer Qarmut, 41, a father of five from Beit Lahiya in the Gaza Strip

Arrested in December 2023, released in October 2025.

IN DETAIL

Tamer Qarmut was arrested after Israeli tanks surrounded Kamal Adwan Hospital on Dec. 12, 2023. He was later moved from Sde Teiman to al-Naqab (Ketziot) prison. On Oct. 13, 2025, he returned to the Gaza Strip.

His testimony does not say where he was raped, or where a doctor later examined him. B’Tselem field researcher Muhammad Sabah recorded it on Nov. 8, 2025, and B’Tselem

published it in January 2026 in its report “Living Hell,” on Israeli prisons as a network of torture camps.

The Arabic page of that report opens with a content warning that the testimonies that follow describe cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The first testimony after the warning is Tamer Qarmut’s.

3 of 9

Source

B’Tselem 2026 ↗

December 2023, a medical exam at a detention site Tamer could not name

“When I started telling him that I’d been raped with a stick, the doctor cut me off and told the soldiers to take me out of the examination room.”

Tamer Qarmut, in testimony to B’Tselem

The examination, as Tamer Qarmut tells it: Weight: 108 kilograms (238 pounds). Chronic illness: No. A disability in his leg, worse from the beating. Treatment: A painkiller.

IN DETAIL

After his arrest, he and other detainees were moved by bus “to a place whose name we didn’t know.” There he was taken for a medical exam.

He was weighed, and the doctor asked whether he had any chronic illnesses. “I told him I did not, but that I had a disability in my leg and now it hurt even more because of the severe beating I had taken,” he says. Afterward he was held in what he calls “the shack” from Dec. 13 to Dec. 22, 2023.

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Megiddo Prison, after his transfer there, March 2024

“All three of them laughed and jeered while abusing and raping me.”

Sami a-Sa’i, 46, a journalist and father of six from Tulkarm in the occupied West Bank, in testimony to B’Tselem

He says three Israel Prison Service guards pinned him to the floor and raped him with a hard object, six times.

Held for 16 months in administrative detention with no indictment filed against him, he was released in June 2025.

Before that, at the prison infirmary, a doctor asked if he was Hamas. He replied that he was a journalist. The doctor said they would “rape everyone who belongs to Hamas.”

IN DETAIL

Sometime between March 10 and 12, 2024, Border Police officers transferred him from the detention facility in Huwarah to Megiddo prison. At the infirmary, a doctor asked him about Hamas and then examined him. After that, he was handed over to the Israel Prison Service, and the assault followed.

Afterward he was taken to wing 10. It was the time of the iftar meal in Ramadan, he recalls.

He was released at the al-Dhahiriya checkpoint on June 10, 2025. The Committee to Protect Journalists describes him as a Palestinian freelance journalist. B’Tselem field researcher Abdulkarim Sadi recorded his testimony on July 22, 2025.

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In an interrogation room

“I wasn’t expecting them to sexually assault me. When it happened, I wanted to die.”

Muhammad Khader, 36, a taxi driver and father of five from 'Izbet Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip, in testimony to B’Tselem

He says soldiers hung him by chains in the middle of the room, in a stress position known as “shabah.” Then they sexually assaulted him with an object as he hung there.

Held at Sde Teiman, an Israeli military detention facility.

Then the officer told him: “We’ll take you back to Sde Teiman, dog.”

IN DETAIL

After the assault, the officer ordered the soldiers to take him down and brought him tea and water. He refused to drink them, he says. Then came the threat to send him back to Sde Teiman, and he was taken back there.

B’Tselem field researcher Muhammad Sabah recorded his testimony on Nov. 12, 2025. The testimony does not say where the interrogation room was.

When he gave his testimony, in November 2025, he was still displaced in Deir al-Balah, living in a school building near the sea.

6 of 9

Source

[Lawfare 2026 ↗](#)

Another case, another detainee: Sde Teiman, July 5, 2024

Broken ribs. A lung injury. A rectal tear.

Soldiers were accused of beating a Palestinian detainee with a baton, kicking him and using a Taser on him during a body search. One allegedly stabbed him with a sharp object.

IN DETAIL

Sde Teiman is an Israeli military detention facility, the same place where Muhammad Khader was held. The detainee in this case is a different man, searched by a group of soldiers on July 5, 2024.

The diagnosis is that of the physicians who later examined him, as Lawfare reported it in an article by Yuval Shany and Amichai Cohen on April 2, 2026, after the indictment in the case was withdrawn.

The detainee was released to Gaza in the October 2025 ceasefire “without him testifying on the matter,” The Times of Israel reported.

7 of 9

Sources

[Lawfare 2026 ↗](#); [United Nations 2026 ↗](#); [The Times of Israel 2026 ↗](#); [Army Radio 2026 ↗](#)

Sde Teiman: the five soldiers

April 2026 — Israel’s military chief of staff approves the five’s reinstatement as reservists.

On Feb. 19, 2025, five reservists from Force 100, a riot-control unit for military prisons, were indicted for abusing that same detainee and causing him serious bodily harm.

The U.N. secretary-general’s report on sexual violence in conflict: the indictment included no charge of sexual violence or rape.

March 12, 2026 — Israel’s military advocate general withdraws the indictment. Among his reasons: “complexity regarding the existing evidence,” and the detainee’s release to Gaza in October 2025 without testifying.

IN DETAIL

The indictment was filed by the former military advocate general, Maj. Gen. Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi. Her successor, Maj. Gen. Itay Ofir, withdrew it in a decision he published on March 12, 2026. The charges, according to Lawfare, were abuse and causing serious bodily harm “under aggravated circumstances.”

Among the reasons for the withdrawal, The Times of Israel reported, were “procedural difficulties,” “the accumulation of all these exceptional circumstances” and their impact on “the fundamental and basic right to a fair trial.” The decision also cited an “abuse of process” claim by the defendants.

The U.N. secretary-general’s report on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2026/321, April 21, 2026) notes that “a charge of sexual violence or rape was absent from the indictment” and that “in March 2026, all charges were dropped.” These developments, the report says, “risk reinforcing a climate of impunity that may enable the commission of conflict-related sexual violence.”

On April 16, 2026, Israeli Army Radio reported that the military chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, had approved the five reservists’ return to duty.

The Israeli army’s spokesperson said that “a command inquiry has not yet been conducted regarding the Force 100 soldiers” and that “the military probe does not prevent the troops from returning to military duty” (Army Radio via JNS, April 16, 2026).

8 of 9

Sources

United Nations 2026 ↗; The Associated Press 2026 ↗

United Nations, 2026

For the first time, the U.N.’s annual report on sexual violence in conflict blacklisted Israeli forces for their treatment of Palestinian detainees.

The U.N. verified incidents of sexual violence, some as a form of torture, against Palestinians from the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank between 2023 and 2025: 14 men, 7 women, 9 boys and 1 girl.

Among the violations listed in the report: “rape, including with objects, gang rape, attempted rape ...”

IN DETAIL

In August 2025, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres wrote to Israel’s U.N. ambassador, Danny Danon, that the United Nations had “credible information” of sexual violence against detained Palestinians. Guterres said he was “gravely concerned” about reported violations in several prisons, a detention center and a military base. He warned that Israeli forces could be listed in his next report “due to significant concerns of patterns of certain forms of sexual violence that have been consistently documented by the United Nations.”

The listing came in the secretary-general's report S/2026/321, dated April 21, 2026, and released in May. It was the first time Israeli forces had been listed "since the review began more than 15 years ago," The Associated Press reported. The report says that in 2025 the U.N. was able to document "patterns of sexual violence against Palestinians detained in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory." Of the cases it verified, 13 occurred in 2025 and 18 in 2023 and 2024.

9 of 9

Sources

Israeli Prime Minister's Office
2025 ↗; The Associated Press
2025–2026 ↗

Israel's responses

Netanyahu, March 2025: "baseless accusations of sexual violence" · Danon, August 2025: "baseless accusations" · Danon, May 2026: "We are done with this UN Secretary-General"

March 13, 2025: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on the U.N. commission's report: "baseless accusations of sexual violence"

Aug. 12, 2025: Israel's U.N. ambassador, Danny Danon, after the secretary-general wrote to him that the U.N. had "credible information" of sexual violence against Palestinian detainees: "baseless accusations"

May 28, 2026: Danon, after Israeli forces were blacklisted: "We are done with this UN Secretary-General"

IN DETAIL

Netanyahu's words come from a statement his office issued on the day the commission's report came out: "... the UN has again chosen to attack the State of Israel with false accusations, including baseless accusations of sexual violence."

In August 2025, Danon also said the secretary-general's allegations "are steeped in biased publications."

After the blacklisting, Israel's Foreign Ministry said it had "comprehensively, thoroughly, and unequivocally refuted these allegations."



Ibn al-Rumi

from a poem in defense of his
home
9th century

I have a homeland I have sworn never to
sell,

**nor ever to see another
own it.**



Part

8

Part 8

Deaths in Israeli custody, and accountability

Walid Ahmad, 17, from Silwad, died in Israel's Megiddo prison in March 2025. The Israeli judge who closed the investigation into his death wrote that he was "apparently starved." Since October 2023, 92 Palestinian prisoners whose identities have been made public have died in Israeli custody. More detainees died at Sde Teiman, a facility run by the army, than anywhere else. The army opened 57 investigations into detainee deaths, and by July 2026 none had led to an indictment.

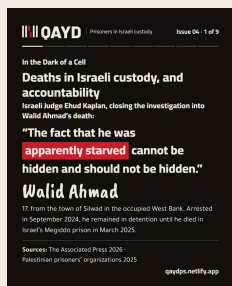
8 cards

This part reflects information available before publication on Oct. 12, 2026.

1
of 8

Sources

The Associated Press 2026 ↗;
Palestinian prisoners' organizations
2025 ↗



The card as published

Israeli Judge Ehud Kaplan, closing the investigation into Walid Ahmad's death

“The fact that he was apparently starved cannot be hidden and should not be hidden.”

Walid Ahmad, 17, from the town of Silwad in the occupied West Bank. Arrested in September 2024, he remained in detention until he died in Israel's Megiddo prison in March 2025.

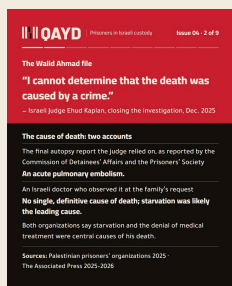
IN DETAIL

Haaretz shared the decision with The Associated Press, which published that line from it on March 25, 2026. Apart from that line, the AP reported, “the rest of the decision remains sealed.”

2
of 8

Sources

Palestinian prisoners' organizations
2025 ↗; The Associated Press
2025–2026 ↗



The card as published

The Walid Ahmad file

“I cannot determine that the death was caused by a crime.”

Israeli Judge Ehud Kaplan, closing the investigation, December 2025

The cause of death: two accounts.

The final autopsy report the judge relied on, as reported by the Commission of Detainees' Affairs and the Prisoners' Society: an acute pulmonary embolism.

An Israeli doctor who observed it at the family's request: no single, definitive cause of death; starvation was likely the leading cause.

Both organizations say starvation and the denial of medical treatment were central causes of his death.

IN DETAIL

The full passage is longer: “But I cannot determine based on the findings of the expert report that there is a causal connection between his poor physical condition and his death, and therefore I cannot determine that the death was caused by a crime.” He went on: “Given this state of affairs, the investigation into his death is exhausted.”

The two organizations set out the chain of causes given in the final report: an acute pulmonary embolism caused by a blood clot, and a clot that resulted, “according to the occupation’s account,” from a “prolonged deterioration in health.” The decision rested on that report, they say, without addressing the effect of starvation and the deliberate denial of treatment. That effect, in their account, was confirmed by the initial medical report, prepared with a doctor from Physicians for Human Rights–Israel, and by the report of the Abu Kabir forensic institute.

The doctor in the second account is Daniel Solomon, a gastrointestinal surgeon. An Israeli civil court allowed him to observe the autopsy at the request of Walid’s family. In April 2025, the AP published his report, which it had obtained from the family: it did not conclude a cause of death, but said Walid was in a state of extreme weight loss and muscle wasting. In March 2026, the AP reported that Solomon wrote Walid “suffered from extreme malnutrition and also showed signs of inflammation of the colon and scabies,” and that he “likely suffered from colitis.”

The Israel Prison Service and the Israeli police did not respond to the AP’s requests for comment.

3 of 8

Source

Palestinian prisoners’ organizations
2026 ↗

Deaths in Israeli custody

92

Palestinian prisoners have died in Israeli custody since October 2023.

The count includes only those whose identities have been made public. Palestinian prisoners’ organizations say the real number is higher, and that Israel is still concealing the fate of dozens more detainees from Gaza who died.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Of the 92, 53 were detainees from Gaza, the Palestinian Prisoners' Society said in September 2026.

Dozens of martyred detainees from occupied Gaza remain subject to enforced disappearance.

Palestinian prisoners' organizations, Oct. 6, 2026

Before the war, from 1967 to October 2023, 237 Palestinians died in Israeli custody, according to Amani Sarahneh of the Palestinian Prisoners' Society, quoted by +972 Magazine in November 2025. The prisoners' organizations, in their paper of Oct. 6, 2026, put the total since 1967 at 329. The two figures agree: 237 before the war plus 92 since add up to 329.

The same paper warns: "The figures presented here reflect only the minimum documented total."

4 of 8

Sources

Palestinian prisoners' organizations
2026 ↗; The Associated Press
2026 ↗

The bodies

100

bodies of prisoners who died before the war and since it began, that Israel is still withholding.

Walid Ahmad's body is still being held; his family is petitioning Israeli courts to get it back.

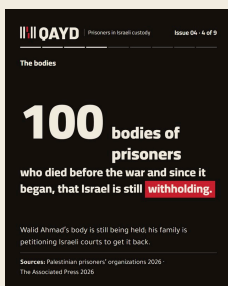
IN DETAIL

Of the 100 bodies, 89 are of prisoners who died after the war began, the Palestinian Prisoners' Society said in September 2026. The other 11 are of prisoners who died before it.

The occupation continues to withhold the bodies of 100 Palestinian prisoners who were martyred in detention, both before and after the genocide.

Palestinian prisoners' organizations, Oct. 6, 2026

Walid's father told the AP in March 2026 that his son's body was still being held by the Israeli authorities.



The card as published

5 of 8

Source

+972 Magazine 2025 ↗

Where they died

29

At Sde Teiman, a detention camp run by the Israeli army, 29 Palestinian detainees have died since October 2023 — more than at any prison or other camp.

A separate count based on army and Prison Service data, published by +972 Magazine in November 2025: at least 98 detainees since Oct. 7, 2023. It differs from the disclosed-identity count of 92. Among them: Sde Teiman, 29; Ketziot (Negev) prison, at least 16; Megiddo prison, 7.

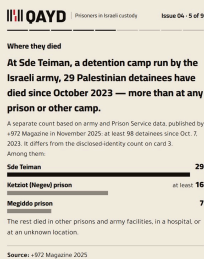
The rest died in other prisons and army facilities, in a hospital, or at an unknown location.

IN DETAIL

The full breakdown comes from data gathered by Physicians for Human Rights-Israel. In Israel Prison Service prisons: al-Naqab (Ketziot), at least 16; Megiddo, 7; Nitzan and the Prison Service's medical center together, at least 6; Ofer, at least 5; Nafha and Ramon together, 4; al-Jalama (Kishon), at least 3; Ashkelon (Shikma), 3; Eshel, at least 1. In army facilities: Sde Teiman, 29; Ofer Camp, at least 2; Anatot Camp, at least 1; other military facilities in southern Israel, at least 7. Five died at Soroka Hospital after being transferred from army facilities, and for eight the place of death is unknown. These figures add up to 97, not 98.

The two counts, 92 and 98, differ in source and definition. The 92 are the prisoners whose identities have been made public. Of the 98, 94 come from data that Physicians for Human Rights-Israel obtained from the army and the Prison Service, including at least 68 detainees from Gaza who died through the end of August 2025. At least four more died after that, according to +972.

In September 2024, the Israeli rights group HaMoked wrote that, as far as it knew, more than 1,000 detainees had been held at Sde Teiman in pen-like structures, without beds. On Sept. 18, 2024, ruling on a petition about the camp, Israel's High Court held that Israel must run it in accordance with the law.



The card as published

6 of 8

Sources

Haaretz 2026 ↗; +972 Magazine
2025 ↗



The card as published

Accountability · The Israeli army

57

investigations into deaths of detainees held by the Israeli army, and not one indictment.

Criminal investigations into the deaths of 56 detainees from Gaza and one from Lebanon in army custody during the war on Gaza. Haaretz published these data in July 2026.

IN DETAIL

Haaretz journalist Bar Peleg reported the figures on July 17, 2026. The paper gives no cutoff date for the data. None of the investigations had led to an indictment by the day the report came out.

The Sde Teiman case covered in Part 7 of this issue is not one of these investigations: it concerns the abuse of a detainee, not a death.

The Israeli army told +972 Magazine in November 2025 that “each death is investigated by the investigating military police,” and pointed to “detainees who arrived injured or in a pre-existing complex medical condition.” To Haaretz, in July 2026, the army said it acts in accordance with international law, and attributed the absence of indictments to evidentiary difficulties inherent in combat.

7 of 8

Source

Ha-Makom 2026 ↗

Accountability · Prison guards, 2024

1,022

complaints against prison guards, and 11 indictments of Prison Service staff.

Two totals for 2024 from the Israeli unit that investigates prison guards. The source does not say what the complaints or the indictments concerned, or how they relate.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

In 2025, according to the same source, the unit received 772 complaints, and five indictments were filed against Israel Prison Service staff.

The unit is the National Unit for the Investigation of Prison Guards, known by its Hebrew acronym, Yahas. It sits within Lahav 433, the Israel Police's major-crimes unit, according to the Israeli news site Ha-Makom and a statement from Israel's State Attorney's Office. Ha-Makom published the figures on Sept. 2, 2026.

8 of 8

Sources

Ynet 2026 א; Israel's Channel 13

2026 א

Accountability · Prison guards: indictment, September 2026

12

Prison Service staff charged by Israeli prosecutors with reckless homicide in the death of prisoner Thaer Abu Asab.

The indictment says guards entered the cells in Ketziot prison in November 2023 and beat prisoners; Abu Asab lost consciousness and was later pronounced dead.

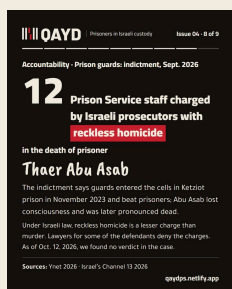
Under Israeli law, reckless homicide is a lesser charge than murder. Lawyers for some of the defendants deny the charges. As of Oct. 12, 2026, we found no verdict in the case.

IN DETAIL

The Southern District Prosecutor's Office filed the indictment with the Beersheba District Court on Sept. 1, 2026. According to the indictment, the incidents took place in Naqab prison on Nov. 18, 2023: the shift commander ordered the guards into the cells, where together they beat prisoners with punches, kicks and batons.

The indictment also carries two further charges, according to the Israeli news site Mako: aggravated grievous bodily harm, and aggravated actual bodily harm.

Efraim Damari, a lawyer for some of the defendants: "My clients categorically reject what is attributed to them, deny the facts of the indictment and maintain their innocence."
Samer Ali, also a lawyer for some of the defendants: "The facts stated in the indictment are inaccurate and contain a great deal of distortion." (Israel's Channel 13, Sept. 23, 2026)



The card as published



Yitzhak Epstein

A Hidden Question
1907

[...] But one trifling matter we have
forgotten: that in our beloved land there
is

an entire people

that has clung to it for hundreds of years
and has never thought of leaving it.



Part



Part 9

9

Families and the Red Cross

Before the war, W.B., a prisoner from Qalqilya, saw his family once a month, on visits arranged by the Red Cross. From Oct. 7, 2023, family visits and phone calls were banned for Palestinian “security” prisoners, and Red Cross delegates were kept out of the prisons. Prisoners who came out describe complete isolation. Rights groups took the bans to Israel’s High Court, which ruled on the Red Cross visits in June 2026.

1 of 6

Source

B'Tselem, "Living Hell," 2026 ↗



The card as published

Families and the Red Cross

“But the joy wasn’t complete, because the scabies stopped me from hugging my parents, my little sisters and my brothers.”

W.B., from Qalqilya in the occupied West Bank, in his testimony to B’Tselem after his release in April 2025

On his family’s visits: “... after the war began, I didn’t see them at all until I was released.”

IN DETAIL

In his words, “Before 7 October 2023, my family paid me visits once a month arranged by the Red Cross.”

Visits were completely stopped for all prisoners, and all the conditions became much harsher and degrading.

W.B., in his testimony to B’Tselem

B’Tselem took his testimony on April 15, 2025, and published it in January 2026 in “Living Hell,” a report built on new testimonies from 21 released Palestinian prisoners.

2 of 6

Sources

HaMoked 2026 ↗; The Times of Israel 2025 ↗; Palestinian Prisoners’ Society 2026 ↗

How family visits were banned

Family visits for Palestinian “security” prisoners were banned from Oct. 7, 2023, as were phone calls.

The ban was later written into an amendment to a temporary law, which Israel’s Knesset extended to July 31, 2026.

According to the Palestinian Prisoners’ Society, Israel’s national security minister, Itamar Ben Gvir, renewed the ban order in August 2026. We found no Israeli source confirming that the ban continued after July 31, or how long the renewal lasts (as of Oct. 12, 2026).



The card as published

IN DETAIL

On Oct. 7, 2023, the Israel Prison Service declared an “incarceration emergency” with a blanket ban on family visits to “security” prisoners, according to the Israeli rights group HaMoked. The ban was “later codified in an amendment to a temporary order,” HaMoked says.

The order itself was signed by the Prison Service commissioner, Kobi Yaakobi, The Times of Israel reported in November 2025. “Since then, Palestinian inmates have been unable to contact their relatives through both phone calls and in-person visits,” the paper wrote.

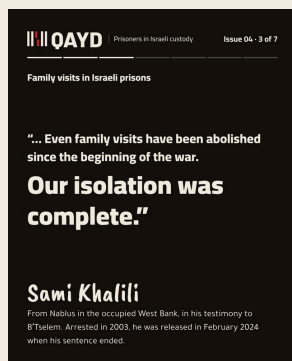
When the Knesset approved the extension to July 31, 2026, 9,243 “security” prisoners were left completely cut off from their families, HaMoked says.

The Palestinian Prisoners’ Society issued its statement on the renewal of the ban order on Aug. 7, 2026.

3 of 6

Source

B’Tselem, “Welcome to Hell,” 2024 ↗



The card as published

Family visits in Israeli prisons

“Our isolation was complete.”

Sami Khalili, from Nablus in the occupied West Bank, in his testimony to B’Tselem

“... Even family visits have been abolished since the beginning of the war.”

Arrested in 2003, he was released in February 2024 when his sentence ended.

IN DETAIL

Sami Khalili says in his testimony that he was arrested on Feb. 10, 2003, and sentenced to 22 years in prison. His sentence ended on Feb. 8, 2024. He was 41 when B’Tselem took his testimony on March 29, 2024; the group published it in August 2024 in its report “Welcome to Hell.”

There were no family visits and there was no contact with anyone on the outside, not even the Red Cross. We were cut off from the news and the outside world.

Musa ‘Aasi, from Beit Liqya, near Ramallah, in testimony to B’Tselem

Just before those words, he says: “This is the worst time in the history of Palestinians in Israeli prisons. The prisoners have no rights. They’ve been stripped of everything, and left completely vulnerable and isolated.”

The same report carries the testimony of Musa ’Aasi, 58, a married father of five from Beit Liqya, near Ramallah, on the same isolation. The only news that could reach the detainees, he says, came when a lawyer visited one of them.

4 of 6

Source

HaMoked 2026 ↗

A petition to Israel’s High Court by HaMoked and three other rights groups, July 26, 2026

About 9,300

men, women and children, the petition says, in complete isolation from their families for nearly three years.

We did not find the outcome (as of Oct. 12, 2026).

IN DETAIL

It was not the first petition. On Nov. 25, 2025, Israel’s High Court rejected an earlier HaMoked petition against the family-visit ban, “holding that it failed to exhaust administrative remedies” with the Israel Prison Service, HaMoked says.

On July 26, 2026, ahead of the extension’s July 31 expiry, HaMoked and three other human rights organizations filed a second petition against the ban. Holding “approximately 9,300 men, women, and children in complete isolation from their families for nearly three years,” the petitioners argued, is an ongoing violation of their most basic rights.

The petition’s figure is approximate. It is slightly higher than the one HaMoked gave when the Knesset approved the extension, 9,243, and the two figures come from different dates.

QAYD | Prisoners in Israeli custody | Issue 04 · 4 of 7

A petition to Israel’s High Court by HaMoked and three other rights groups, July 26, 2026

About

9,300

men, women and children, the petition says, in complete isolation from their families for nearly three years.

⚠ We did not find the outcome. (Last checked Oct. 12, 2026.)

Source: HaMoked 2026

The card as published

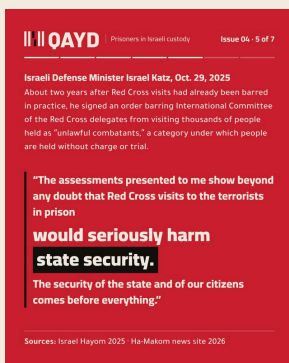


Photo: Ahmad al-Bazz / Activestills · archive, 2019

© Activestills, used with permission · The photo is not covered by CC BY-SA 4.0

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Sources

Israel Hayom 2025 [↗](#); Ha-Makom 2026 [↗](#)

The card as published

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz, Oct. 29, 2025

“The assessments presented to me show beyond any doubt that Red Cross visits to the terrorists in prison would seriously harm state security. The security of the state and of our citizens comes before everything.”

About two years after Red Cross visits had already been barred in practice, he signed an order barring International Committee of the Red Cross delegates from visiting thousands of people held as “unlawful combatants,” a category under which people are held without charge or trial.

IN DETAIL

“The ICRC has been unable to access detainees held in Israeli detention facilities since October 2023,” the International Committee of the Red Cross said in September 2026. Katz’s order was the first time he used his power to bar the visits, according to the Hebrew news site Ha-Makom.

Katz signed the order at midday, Ynet reported. It applies to everyone held under the “unlawful combatant” classification. According to the Israeli newspaper Israel Hayom, it covers thousands of detainees whose names appear on a classified list.

“Unlawful combatant” is a category in a 2002 Israeli law, Ha-Makom says.

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Sources

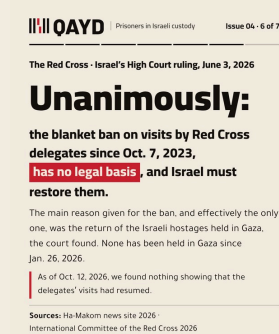
Ha-Makom 2026 [↗](#); International Committee of the Red Cross 2026 [↗](#)

The Red Cross · Israel’s High Court ruling, June 3, 2026

Unanimously: the blanket ban on visits by Red Cross delegates since Oct. 7, 2023, has no legal basis, and Israel must restore them.

The main reason given for the ban, and effectively the only one, was the return of the Israeli hostages held in Gaza, the court found. None has been held in Gaza since Jan. 26, 2026.

As of Oct. 12, 2026, we found nothing showing that the delegates’ visits had resumed.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

Four organizations filed the petition in February 2024: the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, Physicians for Human Rights–Israel, HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual, and Gisha. Israel's High Court issued a conditional order in August 2024, Ha-Makom reported.

On June 3, 2026, the conditional order was made absolute. The court unanimously accepted the petition and ordered Israel to restore the delegates' visits to "security" prisoners and detainees, and to resume handing over information about them to the International Committee of the Red Cross. In Ha-Makom's report on the ruling, the blanket ban had lasted more than two and a half years, with no time limit and no legal basis.

The justices added that the government had presented no legal basis for its policy, even though it had been given many opportunities to do so, Haaretz reported. What followed the ruling is told in Part 10.



Homer
The Odyssey
Book 9

Nothing is sweeter than

**one's homeland
and one's parents,**

even for one who lives far off in a rich
house in a foreign land, away from
his parents.



Part

10

Part 10

A ruling not enforced

On June 3, 2026, Israel's High Court ruled that Israel must restore Red Cross visits to Palestinian prisoners. On Sept. 27, the court found that the government was not complying with its ruling. As of Oct. 12, 2026, we found nothing to show the visits had resumed. Months before the ruling, on Oct. 12, 2025, the day before Haitham Salem's release, Red Cross representatives came to his prison to ask the prisoners to fill out a questionnaire. Salem, from Beit Lahiya in Gaza, says the prisoners refused and wondered why they had not come earlier.

1
of 6

Sources

Ha-Makom 2026 [↗](#); Haaretz 2026 [↗](#)

The card as published

A ruling not enforced

“Not a visit at all.”

Justice Dafna Barak-Erez, Israel’s High Court ruling, June 3, 2026

Since Oct. 7, 2023, the Red Cross has been barred from visiting the prisoners. In May 2026, Israel’s government offered it tours of the prisons without meeting them. Israel’s High Court rejected the offer and ordered the visits restored.

IN DETAIL

On May 8, 2026, Israel’s government told the High Court it would let the Red Cross visit the prisons where Palestinian “security” prisoners are held, but not meet the prisoners. The offer came on the instructions of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Haaretz reported, and the visits were to be limited to meetings with prison staff and tours of the prisons.

It ruled that in imposing this policy the government contravened Israeli and international law.

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel, one of the four groups that brought the petition, on the court’s unanimous ruling of June 3, 2026

The visits on offer were to five facilities that hold “security” prisoners, according to the Hebrew news site Ha-Makom, and only “to get an impression of the conditions of incarceration,” “without personal meetings with the detainees, for security reasons.”

The court rejected the offer. Justice Barak-Erez wrote that a visit without direct contact with the prisoners is “not a visit at all.” In Ha-Makom’s account, that holds under Israeli law and under international law alike.

2 of 6

Source

Ha-Makom 2026 ↗



The card as published

The Red Cross visits case · Over two years at Israel's High Court

About 25

requests to postpone filed by Israel's government before the ruling — most of them without real legal argument, in Justice Barak-Erez's words.

IN DETAIL

The case sat before Israel's High Court for more than two years. In that time, according to Ha-Makom's account of the ruling, the government filed repeated requests for more time: about 25 requests to postpone its responses and the hearings.

The court issued a conditional order in the case in August 2024, Ha-Makom reports. The hearing was held only on Oct. 29, 2025, according to the Association for Civil Rights in Israel. On that same day, Defense Minister Israel Katz signed an order barring Red Cross delegates from visiting detainees classified as “unlawful combatants.”

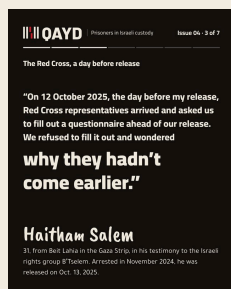
3 of 6

The Red Cross, a day before release

“On 12 October 2025, the day before my release, Red Cross representatives arrived and asked us to fill out a questionnaire ahead of our release. We refused to fill it out and wondered why they hadn't come earlier.”

Haitham Salem, 31, from Beit Lahia in the Gaza Strip, in his testimony to the Israeli rights group B'Tselem

Arrested in November 2024, he was released on Oct. 13, 2025.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

B'Tselem took his testimony on Oct. 31, 2025, and published it in its report “Living Hell” in January 2026.

4 of 6

Sources

Haaretz 2026 [↗](#); The Times of Israel 2026 [↗](#)

Israel Prison Service · July 2026 · a month after the ruling

One visit by the Red Cross every three months per facility, to just five prisoners named in advance.

They meet behind a partition and through an intercom, for no more than half an hour. These are rules set for six months by Israel Prison Service Commissioner Kobi Yaakobi, according to Haaretz and The Times of Israel.

The Israel Prison Service: “The Prison Service acts in accordance with the law.”

IN DETAIL

The rules followed a vote in the Knesset. On the evening of June 29, 2026, lawmakers rejected at first reading a bill to bar Red Cross delegates from entering prisons and detention facilities, 41-36, while the ultra-Orthodox parties boycotted the vote, Haaretz reported. The bill, sponsored by Knesset members Galit Distel Atbaryan, Katy Shitrit and others, was meant to stop the delegates from visiting “security” prisoners or receiving information about them.

Prison Service Commissioner Kobi Yaakobi then set new rules making it harder for the Red Cross to visit “security” prisoners held in Prison Service and army facilities, Haaretz reported on July 12. The rules run for six months and allow only limited, rationed visits, screened in advance and subject to prior approval and an intelligence check. Haaretz wrote that the rules run counter to the High Court’s ruling, and that the step was taken without consulting Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara.

The rules permit the Red Cross “to visit just 20 prisoners per year at every detention facility,” The Times of Israel reported. That works out to four visits a year, with five prisoners at each.



The card as published

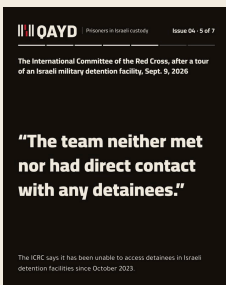
In its response, as published by Haaretz, the Israel Prison Service added that if a claim is raised, it should be examined in the forums designated for that purpose.

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of 6

The International Committee of the Red Cross, after a tour of an Israeli military detention facility, Sept. 9, 2026

“The team neither met nor had direct contact with any detainees.”

The ICRC says it has been unable to access detainees in Israeli detention facilities since October 2023.



The card as published

IN DETAIL

On Sept. 9, 2026, an ICRC team “held a technical meeting, assessment and tour of a military detention facility in Israel,” the committee said in a statement. The statement’s title says the team met the authorities at the facility “as part of efforts to reinstate access.”

We haven’t had access to prisoners or detainees in Israel since October 7.

The president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, to The National, Sept. 25, 2026



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The card as published

The Red Cross visits case · Sept. 27, 2026

Israel's High Court: Israel's government is not complying with the court's ruling.

It gave the government until Oct. 11, 2026, to say whether everything needed to resume Red Cross visits had been completed.

As of Oct. 12, 2026, we found no published response.

IN DETAIL

On Sept. 17, 2026, nearly four months after the ruling, four human rights groups led by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel asked Israel's High Court to enforce it. They asked the court to order Prison Service Commissioner Kobi Yaakobi to resume the visits in line with international law, in the form they took before they were stopped on Oct. 7, 2023, Haaretz reported.

The operative meaning of the ruling is that the respondents [the state authorities named in the petition] are obligated to allow Red Cross visits to the detention facilities with due speed. More than three months have passed since the ruling.

Justices Yitzhak Amit, Noam Sohlberg and Daphne Barak-Erez, in Israel's High Court decision of Sept. 27, 2026

On Sept. 27, Supreme Court President Yitzhak Amit, Deputy President Noam Sohlberg and Justice Daphne Barak-Erez found that the government was not complying with the ruling. Their decision answered the four groups' request, which argued that the failure to comply was contempt of court. The justices told the government to clarify by Oct. 11 whether "all the necessary preparations have been completed," in the words of The Times of Israel, and to update the court on any steps decided or already carried out.



The King–Crane Commission
report
1919

To subject a people so minded to unlimited Jewish immigration, and to steady financial and social pressure to surrender the land, would be a gross violation of the principle just quoted, and of the peoples' rights,

**though it kept within
the forms of law.**



One request

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1	Palestinian prisoners' organizations — The same paper (in Arabic) · Oct. 6, 2026 ppsmo.ps/home/studies/18506
1	U.N. Independent International Commission of Inquiry, via the U.N. human rights office (OHCHR) — "More than a human can bear": Israel's systematic use of sexual, reproductive and other forms of gender-based violence since October 2023 (press release on report A/HRC/58/CRP.6) · March 13, 2025 ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/more-human-can-bear-israels-systematic-use-sexual-reproductive-and-other
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3	B'Tselem — "Living Hell," testimony of Tamer Qarmut: the medical exam · January 2026 btselem.org/publications/202601_living_hell/testimony_of_tamer_qarmut
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3	Palestinian prisoners' organizations — Three Years of Genocide (English edition) · Oct. 6, 2026 ppsmo.ps/home/studies/18507
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Part 9

Families and the Red Cross

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6	International Committee of the Red Cross — ICRC team meets authorities at Israeli military detention facility as part of efforts to reinstate access · Sept. 9, 2026 icrc.org/en/news-release/icrc-team-meets-authorities-israeli-military-detention-facility-efforts-reinstate-access

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Part 10

A ruling not enforced

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1	Haaretz — The government tells the High Court it will allow Red Cross visits without meetings with the prisoners (in Hebrew) · May 8, 2026 haaretz.co.il/news/politics/2026-05-08/ty-article/.premium/0000019e-065f-d995-a1be-1effcfe00000
1	Association for Civil Rights in Israel — The Supreme Court Rules: Red Cross Visits Must Resume · June 3, 2026 english.acri.org.il/post/the-supreme-court-rules-red-cross-visits-must-resume
2	Ha-Makom — On the ruling: about 25 requests to postpone, and a conditional order in August 2024 (in Hebrew) · June 4, 2026 ha-makom.co.il/icrc-prison-visits-ruling/
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6	Haaretz — Four rights groups ask the High Court to enforce the June 3 ruling (in Hebrew) · Sept. 17, 2026 No link available

Corrections and notes

We edit published posts only to correct factual errors. Errors we found while compiling this file are corrected in the text and listed below.

Corrections

Part 1, card 6. Published on X: “Israel’s Public Defender’s Office found that at the end of 2024, about 3,200 ‘security’ prisoners slept without a bed.” Should read: “According to the Public Defender’s report for 2023–2024, 3,200 ‘security’ prisoners slept on mattresses, without a bed.”

Part 2, card 3. Published: “A lawyer at Israel’s National Security Ministry gave the September 2026 figure, saying the number had stabilized and new construction would add room for about 3,000 more by late 2026 and early 2027.” Should read: “A lawyer at Israel’s National Security Ministry gave the September 2026 figure, saying the number had stabilized and construction steps were expected to add room for about 3,000 more by late 2026 and early 2027.”

Part 3, caption. Published in the post text, and in nearly the same words on X: “In April 2026, ruling on a contempt motion by two Israeli rights groups, Israel’s High Court found insufficient basis to prove a systemic violation, but said all ‘security’ prisoners, not only the underweight, must be able to get extra food on request.” Should read: “There were two decisions, not one. On March 28, 2026, Haaretz reported a decision by Israel’s High Court that the Israel Prison Service must provide enough food to all ‘security’ prisoners, not only to the underweight. On April 23, 2026, Arutz Sheva reported the court’s decision on the contempt motion: no ‘sufficient basis to prove a systemic violation’ of the ruling had been laid; the duty to provide enough food applies to all ‘security’ prisoners; individual prisoners’ claims are to be heard in personal petitions; and extra food is allowed ‘when the need for it arises.’ The published text was right to date that principle to April, but it left out the March decision, which states the same principle. ‘On request’ has support: the report allows extra food ‘when the need for it arises,’ and its subheadline says each prisoner must be able to get extra food according to his request.”

Notes on what we published

Part 3. The English text published with this part left out that the duty to provide enough food covers all “security” prisoners, and said only that they

“must be able to get extra food on request.” The same omission appeared in posts published with this part on X, in English and in Arabic.

Part 5. The Israel Prison Service’s response to the solitary-confinement figures (“distort reality”) was published as The New Arab and Middle East Eye reported it. Haaretz, which reported it first, is behind a paywall, and we did not read the response in full there, so it is not repeated in the text.

Part 6. On the death penalty law, the source does not make clear whether the authorities’ response of May 24, 2026, answered the May 19 request or the petition itself. Ynet wrote on Sept. 20, 2026, that the attorney general had not responded to the petitions.

Part 8. The text published alongside the figures on army investigations said most of these deaths occurred “inside military detention facilities with cameras and witnesses.” We did not have the exact wording of this sentence from the Haaretz report (July 2026) it was attributed to, so it is not repeated in the text.

Part 8. In the count by place of death, the 94 cases from official data are the 98 minus the four deaths +972 Magazine added later.

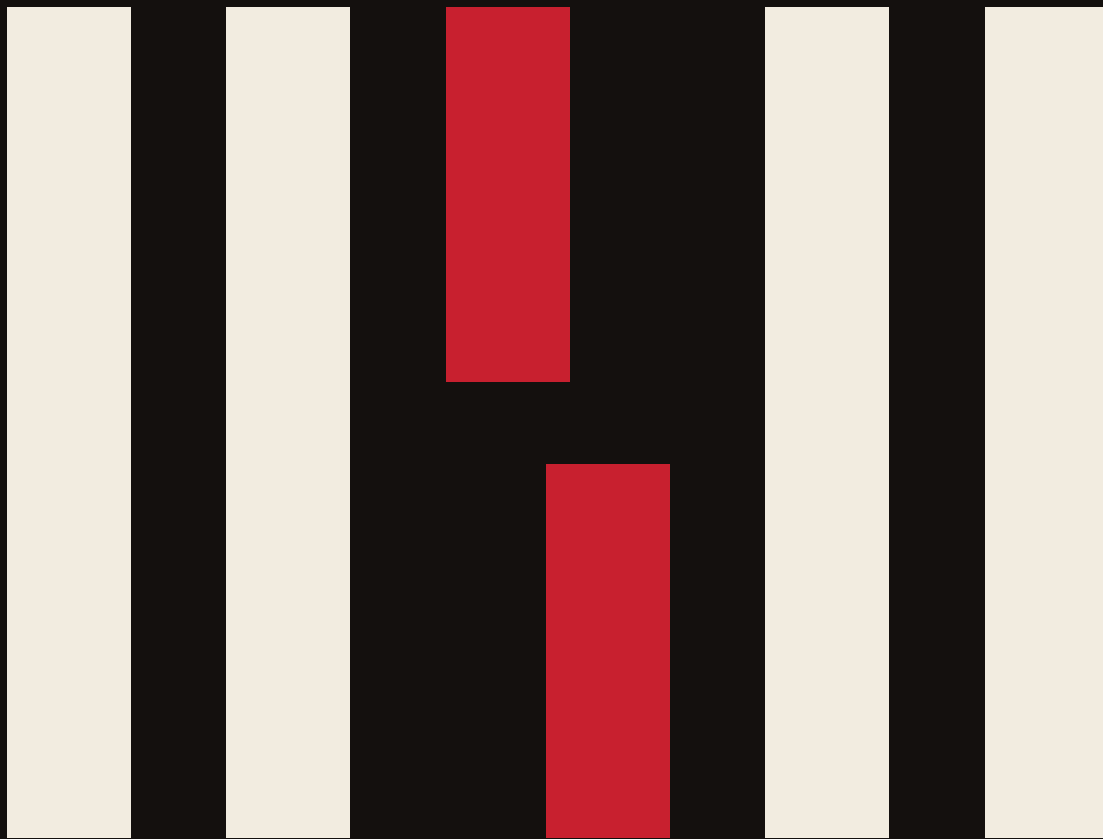
Part 9. In his testimony, Sami Khalili says he was arrested on Feb. 10, 2003, and sentenced to 22 years, and that his sentence ended on Feb. 8, 2024, which is about 21 years later. We give both dates as they appear in the testimony.

Part 9. We published that he “was released in February 2024 when his sentence ended.” His testimony gives Feb. 8, 2024, as the day his sentence ended and says he was released at the beginning of February, without giving the exact date of release.

Method and photos

On method. Every sentence in this file rests on a published source we read before the part was published; the sources and links are on the preceding pages. Where two sources differ on a number or a date, we note the discrepancy where it arises rather than choose between them. A serious event reported by only one source is attributed to that source in the same sentence.

On the photos. The photos on the three photo pages come from the Activestills archive and are used with permission; each page carries the agreed credit lines. Photo pages have no headline or caption, and the people in the photos are not the people named in the surrounding text.



The chains must break.



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