



Case of Palestinian Political Prisoner Shows Worsening Illness and Starvation in Israeli Occupation Prisons

Palestinian Prisoner's Society

June 1, 2026

Ramallah, occupied Palestine – In a new statement released Monday, the Palestinian Prisoner's Society (PPS) issued an urgent call for intervention to save Palestinian political prisoners being held in Israeli occupation prisons. Health conditions and policies inside these prisons are the worst they have ever been: the story of 31-year-old Palestinian prisoner Azmi Nader Abu Hilal is a case in point.

Abu Hilal hails from the city of Dura in the Hebron Governorate and has been detained by the occupying state since January 2024. He has been suffering from scabies skin disease for over a year due to the conditions behind bars. He first contracted the disease in April 2025.

PPS lawyers visited Abu Hilal at Ofer Prison where he is being held, in October 2025 and he was suffering from the disease at the time. He had also been shot by prison forces and needed medical treatment. He was visited again by PPS lawyers in recent weeks, and he continues to suffer from scabies which has spread sores across his entire body.

Abu Hilal, who has not yet been charged since his arrest, said his health has deteriorated further over the past four months; he has been suffering from constant abdominal and stomach pain, in addition to loss of balance. After numerous requests, blood tests were conducted, but to this day he does not know the results. Despite the requests he submitted through his lawyer, he has received no response regarding the true diagnosis of his condition, especially since the so-called prison doctor expressed doubts that these symptoms might indicate cancer. This has caused him severe psychological distress in addition to his physical suffering, as the prison administration continues to ignore his health condition and refuses to disclose the truth about what he is enduring.

Prisoner Abu Hilal noted that systematic repression and assaults continue at the same pace, alongside the ongoing crime of starvation against prisoners and the escalating spread of scabies among the prisoners.

Abu Hilal, whose family home was demolished following his arrest, is one of thousands of Palestinian political detainees who have contracted scabies in Israeli occupation prisons, where the disease has become a tool of torture due to the prison administration's deliberate maintenance of the conditions that cause it, through a lack of cleaning supplies and disinfectants, depriving prisoners of regular showers, refusing to provide clean



clothing—as most prisoners have only one set of spare clothes—forcing them to wash their clothes by hand, and preventing them from air-drying them, which keeps them damp and contributes to the spread of skin diseases.

The PPS explained that the prison administration ignores the prisoners' repeated demands for treatment or for the transfer of patients to clinics, making the spread of epidemics and skin diseases one of the most prominent manifestations of the systematic crime that worsened after the start of the Gaza genocide and led to the martyrdom of a number of prisoners.

The legal efforts undertaken by specialized institutions—including appealing to the occupation's Supreme Court to compel the prison administration to provide treatment and eliminate the causes of the disease—were met with a superficial and limited response, as the disease has once again begun to spread in central prisons, emphasizing that the continuation of this policy reflects the prison system's intent to kill prisoners and use the denial of medical treatment as a tool for their torture, within the framework of what is known as medical crimes.

The dramatic worsening of conditions in the occupation's prisons following the start of the genocide have created dangerous and historically unprecedented conditions, turning prisons into yet another arena of genocide through a comprehensive, systemic regime of torture that has resulted in the killing of more than 100 Palestinian political detainees and prisoners, 89 of whom have been identified.

The PPS renews its call on the World Health Organization and all international human rights and humanitarian organizations to take urgent and immediate action to stop the systematic medical crimes against prisoners, and to pressure the occupation authorities to end the policies that have turned prisons into hotbeds of epidemics, torture, slow death, and executions, to work to provide urgent medical treatment and healthcare to prisoners, to hold the occupation accountable for the ongoing crimes it commits against them, and to end the state of helplessness and ongoing complicity.

(ENDS)