



## Testimonies: Israel's Underground Prison for Palestinian Political Detainees Abducted From Gaza

### Commission of Detainees' Affairs & Palestinian Prisoner's Society

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Ramallah, Palestine - In recent weeks, lawyers of the Commission of Detainees' Affairs and the Palestinian Prisoner's Society (PPS) visited, for the first time, the newly-opened underground section of Nitsan-Ramle Prison, also known as the Rakefet section, which is being used to hold Palestinian political prisoners abducted from the occupied Gaza Strip. In this report, we present key testimonies reflecting the sheer horror that detainees are enduring in this prison.

The visit began with the legal teams being led to the entrance of a building resembling an old warehouse. A door was opened, revealing a staircase descending underground, as described by the lawyers. The area was full of cockroaches with holes in the floors and walls. The visits were conducted under strict guard and heavy surveillance. Lawyers were instructed not to inform the detainees of anything related to their families or events happening outside.

Signs of fear and terror were clearly visible on the detainees who were visited. Initially, it was very difficult to open a conversation with any of them due to the level of surveillance in the place, and the level of paranoia among the detainees. After persistent efforts, the lawyers were able to reassure the detainees that they were legal representatives who had come to visit.

The "Rakefet" underground section is one of the harshest Israeli occupation prisons. Below, we present some of the

**Testimony of Detainee (S.J.):** "I was arrested in December 2023 and was immediately transferred to interrogation, which lasted for six days. These were some of the most intense and difficult days. I was subjected to what is called the 'disco' and 'diaper' interrogation methods. Throughout the six days, I was exposed to nothing but extremely loud music. I was forced to use diapers to relieve myself, and they were only changed twice. I was deprived of food and provided with very little water—half a glass a day. I was handcuffed and blindfolded during the entire interrogation,



Later, I was transferred from the Sde Teiman military detention camp to Asqalan (Ashkelon) Prison, where I was held for 45 days. I was then moved to the Maskobiya detention center in Jerusalem for 85 days, followed by Ofer Prison, and finally to the Rakefet section of the Nitzan–Ramla Prison.”

The detainee noted that the detention conditions in the Rakefet section of Ramla were the worst in comparison to all the other prisons he was held in during his incarceration.

There are three prisoners in each cell—one of whom sleeps on the floor. Outdoor time (known as "fora"—prison yard time) is permitted every other day. During their time outside, they remain handcuffed, and the yard receives no sunlight. While outside, they are constantly subjected to humiliation and degradation, and they are forbidden from lifting their heads throughout the entire duration of the yard time.

### **"We don't know when the sun rises or when it sets"**

**Detainee (W.N.):** “I was arrested in December 2024. I was interrogated by the occupation army before being transferred to a military camp in the Gaza envelope area. I was interrogated by the intelligence services, during which I was beaten and threatened. I was later transferred to Ramla Prison. Today, I suffer from health problems and severe body pain. What worsens my suffering is being forced to sit on our knees for long periods of time.. I was also sexually assaulted—I was struck with a scanning device on sensitive parts of my body.

Today we are in complete isolation from the outside world—we don't know when the sun rises or when it sets. We are provided with tattered and worn-out clothing, which we are forced to wear, and we are denied access to underwear. On top of all this, we are forced to curse our own mothers and are subjected to beatings and repression. During my transfer to prison, I was beaten, resulting in a broken finger. It’s worth noting that prison guards use finger-breaking as a method of torture, and this has happened to more than one detainee.”

### **Finger-breaking as a method of torture**

**Detainee (Kh.D.):** He reported being subjected to “disco” interrogation method, and later interrogated by Israeli intelligence on three to four occasions. He was deliberately shackled to a chair in stress positions for long hours and thrown on the ground while handcuffed. His interrogation lasted 30 days in the cells of Asqalan Prison, during which he was repeatedly and severely beaten. He now suffers from scabies skin disease, which he contracted during his time at Ofer Prison and which continued to affect him after his transfer to Ramla Prison. In addition to scabies, he experiences severe chest pain



worsened by being handcuffed to the back. He stated that prison authorities punish detainees by breaking their thumbs.

### **Cameras inside cells record detainees 24/7**

**Detainee (A.G.):** “I was held for 35 days at the Sde Teiman military detention camp and subjected to the ‘disco’ interrogation method for five days straight. I was already injured at the time of my arrest and received no medical treatment. I developed a severe fever in the early days of my detention and was constantly screaming in pain. I also suffer from heart issues and lost consciousness multiple times. All they would do was check if I was still alive.

During the early days, I had no clothes or blankets. I was extremely cold, especially since I was being held in a partially-open barracks, which worsened my suffering. For 15 days straight, I was handcuffed and blindfolded the entire time. I was then transferred to the Rakefet section of Ramla Prison.

There, every cell has surveillance cameras that constantly monitor our movements. We are prohibited from praying and are constantly threatened with murder. Being taken outside to the prison yard is yet another opportunity for the guards to beat and humiliate us while we are handcuffed. We never see the sun. We are forced to curse our mothers. The guards decide when we are permitted to shower and for how long. Each cell receives only one roll of toilet paper every three days. The food portions are extremely small. We know that it’s dawn only because the guards come to take away our mattresses and blankets.”

Rakefet Prison – Ramla is one of the prisons and military detention camps established or reopened by the occupation since the onset of the genocide to detain Gaza detainees. Among the most prominent detention locations are: Sde Teiman, Anata (Anatot), Ofer Camp, Rakefet, and another camp opened for detainees from the West Bank called Menashe Camp. These camps have become prominent sites of torture crimes, as the occupation has turned them into spaces for continuous physical and psychological torture of detainees.

It is worth noting that the number of Gaza detainees acknowledged by the Israeli Prison Services as of early April 2025 stands at 1,747, classified as “unlawful combatants.” This figure does not include all Gaza detainees held in camps run by the Israeli army—only those under the jurisdiction of the prison system.