

FREE HEBA LABADI

PALESTINIAN WOMAN TORTURED & CAGED BY ISRAEL : NO CHARGE - NO TRIAL

What is this protest about?

This protest is to show solidarity and demand freedom for Heba Labadi, a young Palestinian woman of Jordanian citizenship, who was abducted on 20th August 2019 by Israeli occupation forces whilst she was travelling to the West bank from Jordan to attend a family wedding.

Tortured

Heba has been horrifically tortured and physically abused during 35 days of interrogation. For the first 16 days, the interrogation sessions lasting 20 hours a day, tied to a chair in stress positions to cause maximum pain whilst interrogators violently shouting at her. She was only permitted two 30 minute breaks at mealtimes when she was dragged back to her isolation cell. Heba has had to endure degrading strip searches, sexual harassment, abuse, and humiliation with interrogators provocatively touching her legs whilst she is tied up, and entering the bathroom with a machine gun starring at her whilst she is changing her menstrual pad. They have used physical violence and spat at her, insulted her religious beliefs and threatened to arrest her mother and sister to try and coerce a confession from her. Her lawyer was prevented from seeing her for the first 23 days of torture. Her mother has not been allowed to see her, even after 2 months of imprisonment.



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Heba, in a statement to her lawyer said ""What I suffered in the interrogation and the detention conditions of cruelty and atrocity, I felt that this might be just imagination, but I lived it. It is abnormal and unjust, where I heard about their treatment but it is different from the reality. This experience is the greatest injustice to humanity, thus, we prefer death rather than humiliation."

Caged without charge, without trial

When all the torture failed to secure a false confession, they told her "we do not have any evidence against you, but we have the administrative detention with the authority to renew it for seven years and a half, and then we will detain you in the West Bank and prevent you from going to Jordan and deprive you of family visits". On 24th September Heba was slapped with a six month Administration Detention (AD) Order. AD is a practice whereby Israel arbitrarily imprisons Palestinians, often children, without charge or trial indefinitely on rolling 6 month detention orders. It is often used to jail Palestinians when there is no evidence for a trial, or as punishment. Since 2000 Israel has issued over 26,000 AD orders against Palestinians. In May 2016 the United Nations Committee Against Torture demanded Israel end its practice of AD. Today over 400 Palestinians, including a child, are caged under AD orders.

Hunger strike for freedom

Two days after receiving a 6 month administrative detention order, on 26th September, Heba started her hunger strike to protest her unjust treatment. In the first 20 days of her hunger strike, she lost nearly 10 Kg in weight and now after two months, her health condition is very precarious. Having depleted the body's glucose, and processed her body fat into energy, her body has entered "starvation mode" whereby the body "mines" the muscles and vital organs for energy, this is life-threatening.

As punishment for her hunger strike Heba has been caged in isolation in a tiny cell underground which previous prisoners have described as a "hole in the ground" and "a coffin".

Despite the pressure to end her hunger strike, Heba is defiant, she insists "I will continue until the end [of Administrative Detention] or I shall die."

