

INFORMATION SHEET: UPDATE AUGUST 1, 1989
(English Version)

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B'tselem, the Israel Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, was founded in February 1989 by a group of lawyers, intellectuals, journalists, and Members of Knesset. The objective of B'tselem is to document and to bring to the attention of policy makers and the general public, violations of human rights in the territories.

**"Everyone has the right to life, liberty
and the security of person".**

Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 3.

INTIFADA FATALITIES - TOTALS

509 Palestinian residents of the territories were killed by Israeli soldiers and Israeli civilians during the period from the beginning of the Intifada until the end of July 1989, according to data collected by B'Tselem.

- * **477** by **shooting** (including plastic bullets), among them 23 children aged 12 years or less, and 76 aged 13-16
- * **32** were killed from **other** causes (beatings, burns and other). Among them were 3 children aged 12 years or less, and 2 aged 13-16.

A further **71** persons died soon after exposure to **tear gas**, some **30** of them infants. **From a medical point of view it is difficult to determine that exposure to tear gas is the direct and sole cause of death.**

During the period of the Intifada, **7** Israeli soldiers (according to the IDF Spokesperson) and **10** Israeli civilians were killed, **3** of them infants.

FATALITIES IN JULY - ANALYSIS

In July 1989, **31** Palestinian residents of the territories were killed by security forces, **3** of them children aged 12 years or less, **5** of them aged 13-16. An Israeli civilian was arrested on suspicion of causing the death of a further person.

TOTAL: 32 DEATHS IN JULY, COMPARED WITH 20 IN JUNE, A 60% INCREASE

(2 persons not included in the above figures are a woman who died of heart failure while her house was being searched, and a man whose car overturned after it was attacked by stone throwers, apparently Israeli civilians.)

The increase in fatalities continued in July in the districts of Tulkarm (5 dead) and Nablus (6 dead). In the district of Bethlehem, on the other hand, no fatalities in July, and one fatality in June were recorded, a significant decline from the high figures of April (9 dead) and May (5 dead).

"Imprisonment by its very nature necessitates a denial of freedom, but it does not justify degrading a man. Prison walls should not separate the prisoner from humanity. A prison should not become a cage."

Supreme Court Judge, Aharon Barak, High Court verdict 546-540/84,
Yosef et al v. Director of the Central Prison of Judea and Samaria).

SPECIAL REPORT - PRISON FACILITIES

GENERAL INFORMATION

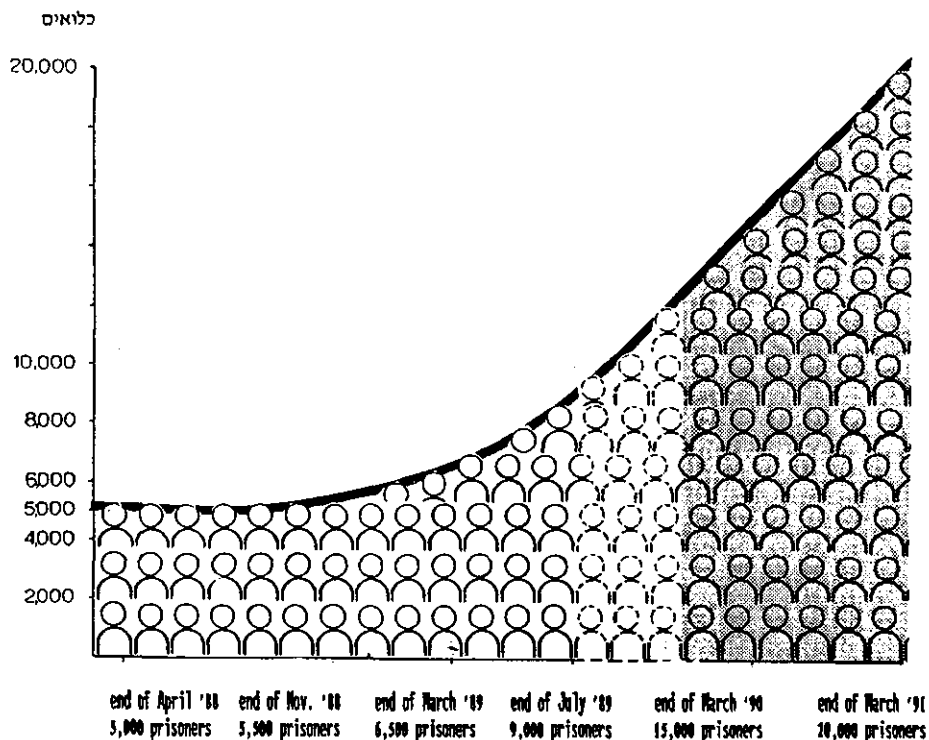
This month's Information Sheet is devoted to the subject of the various prison facilities where Palestinian prisoners and detainees, residents of the territories, are held.

The Army Spokesperson's office does not release, nor apparently does it keep comprehensive data on the number of prisoners kept in each of the different facilities. In reply to a query from B'Tselem, the Army Spokesperson said that only the number of prisoners held at the moment can be released, listed according to the various categories (see list, page 4). For example, the Spokesperson's office does not have details on the number of minors arrested since the beginning of the Intifada. Thus, the numbers presented in this report, unless some other source is quoted, are estimates based on the known capacities of the various prison facilities, and on testimony given by prisoners or by lawyers.

Estimates put the total number of Palestinian prisoners from the beginning of the Intifada until the end of July 1989 at around 50,000 persons. The Army Spokesperson's office informed B'Tselem that on 28 July there were 9,018 persons being held in military prison facilities. According to data supplied by the Ministry of Police, a further 4,000 residents of the territories are being held in facilities maintained by the Prison Service (some of them sentenced for offenses not connected to the Intifada), which brings the total to about 13,000 persons imprisoned as of the end of July 1989, according to official figures.

According to a report by Dan Sagir (in "Ha'Aretz", 16 July, 1989), the IDF is preparing to double the capacity of the prison facilities for residents of the territories. According to Sagir, the capacity of the prisons will be increased to 15,000 by March 1990, and a year later to 20,000 prisoners. An additional large prison camp to be situated in the West Bank is planned, with a capacity of 5,000 prisoners. According to the plan, prisoners from some of the prison facilities on the West Bank (Tulkarm, Ofer and Dahariya) will be transferred to the new facility. Within Israel proper, the Ketsiot facility, which today holds about 4,200 prisoners, will be enlarged to a capacity of 7,000 persons. Prison Six (Atlit Prison) will become a prison for residents of the territories only and IDF soldiers held there will be transferred elsewhere. According to Sagir, the Operational Command responsible for administering and running the prison facilities will be transferred to the Military Police. According to the Army Spokesperson's Office, today only Megiddo prison is under the direct command of the Military Police. The Army Southern District Command is responsible for the Ketsiot Prison and the Gaza Coast Compound, while the Army Central District Command is responsible for the remainder of the prisons.

Number of Prisoners from the Territories in Army Prison Facilities



NOTES:

1. These data are rounded down from numbers released by the IDF Spokesperson.
2. The projection for the next two years is based upon information from Dan Sagir, which was published in "Ha'Aretz," 16 July, 1989 (See text).

ARMY SPOKESPERSON'S DATA (Updated on 28 July, 1988):

9,018 held in military prison facilities comprising
2050 sentenced prisoners
1615 awaiting trial
3295 held during legal process
2058 administrative detainees

Administrative Detainees

According to the IDF Spokesperson's data 4,215 persons have been held in administrative detention since the beginning of the Intifada at the IDF's Southern Command facilities. Data on Central Command facilities (West Bank) were not given to us. Of this number, 243 persons, according to the IDF Spokesperson, have served more than one period of administrative detention.

The majority of the administrative detainees are held at Ketsiot. Only a few are held in the Central Command facilities, (Fara'a, Dahariya, Anatot).

In an interview published in the IDF magazine "Bamachaneh", 23 November, 1988, the Military Attorney General, Brigadier General Amnon Strashnow, said that from the beginning of the Intifada up to that date, 4,000 persons were taken in administrative detention. The data given by the IDF Spokesperson contradicts the information given by the Military Attorney General. B'Tselem estimates that the number of administrative detainees since the beginning of the Intifada is more than 5,000 persons.

TYPES OF PRISON FACILITIES

1. **Prison Service Facilities:** 4,000 security prisoners, nearly 3,000 of them in prisons in the occupied territories and about 1,000 more in prisons in Israel. The great majority of the prisoners are serving sentences handed down by the courts. These figures were obtained from the Ministry of Police, which does not have data regarding the number of prisoners sentenced for "Intifada related offenses".
2. **Israel Police facilities:** Detention centers such as the Russian Compound lock-up in Jerusalem, and detention centers at the police stations in the territories.
3. **Facilities under IDF Authority**

-in the territories

Tulkarm
Fara'a
Anatot
Opher
Dvir (Dahariya)
Gaza Coast Compound (Ansar 2)
Khan Yunis

-in Israel

Megiddo
Ketsiot (Ansar 3)

This category, prisons run by the IDF both in Israel and in the territories, is the subject of this inquiry.

The network of military prisons is made up of facilities designed for short-term imprisonment, in which prisoners are supposed to be kept until the end of the legal proceedings against them. There is also a small number of facilities designed for long-term confinement which are supposed to hold convicted prisoners and administrative detainees.

The heavy pressure on the military courts which delays and draws out the court proceedings against residents of the territories, and the overcrowding in the long-term prison facilities are the reasons that, in many cases, prisoners are held for long periods in short-term facilities which do not provide the necessary conditions for long-term confinement.

EXAMPLE: According to a report on a visit by MK Dedi Zucker on 13 April, 1989, one-third of the 120 prisoners in the Tulkarm facility were prisoners who had already been sentenced.

In addition to the network of official prison facilities, the IDF makes use of the facilities of the Military Government of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, as lock-up facilities for temporary detainees as well as for persons who have been charged and are in the process of a hastened judicial procedure. In these facilities the prisoners are kept in conditions that do not meet the minimal acceptable requirements for persons held in custody. The number of prisoners held in them is not reported and, because these are not official facilities, there are no official criteria applied in their administration.

To the best of our knowledge, lawyers are not permitted to enter these facilities. Meetings between a prisoner and his lawyer during the legal proceedings are of great importance, and the banning of lawyers from these prison lock-ups violates the rights of the prisoner to legal representation.

According to evidence given to us, the treatment of prisoners in these facilities appears to be particularly bad. Recently, the Haifa branch of Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) collected evidence on one of these facilities, situated in the compound of the Jenin Military Government. According to testimony, the local soldiers customarily put "collaborators" into the tented area in order to identify suspects and wanted persons. There was also evidence of beating of prisoners by "collaborators".

4. **General Security Services Facilities (GSS "Shabak"):**

The GSS facilities are affiliated with facilities belonging to other authorities (IDF, Police and Prison Service), but they are operated and administered by the GSS. Responsibility for what takes place in the interrogation facilities lies with the overall commander, but, to the best of our knowledge, the commanders have no authority or operational control. An exception is the commander of the Gaza Coast Compound who says he applies the standards of the IDF facility under his command to the affiliated GSS facilities. (Report by MK Dedi Zucker on visit 16 July, 1989.)

Testimony of persons who were interrogated in the interrogation facilities raises disturbing questions regarding methods used by the GSS and standards followed in interrogation. The severe complaints about the behavior of GSS personnel towards those interrogated, and reported cases of deaths of prisoners during interrogation (see p. 11) raise a deep suspicion that the GSS continues to use methods which are not consistent with the recommendations of the Landau Committee (the committee which investigated the interrogation methods used by the GSS in the matter of hostile terrorist action), recommendations which were adopted by the Israeli Government.

IDF PRISONS

MEGIDDO: one of the two large army prison facilities situated within the borders of Israel. The facility is designed for 1,800 inmates. On 1 June 1989, at the time of a visit by ACRI to the prison, there were 1,300 Palestinian prisoners at Megiddo, 70 of them minors.

Only prisoners whose cases are still before the court are held at Megiddo, from the time when charges are brought against them until the conclusion of the trial. There are no administrative detainees. Most of the prisoners are residents of Samaria - mainly Jenin, Tulkarm and the surrounding district.

Some of the prisoners are kept in tents, 26 men to a tent filled with rows of beds. The rest are kept in a building. In the room visited by representatives of ACRI, 48 men were confined. It was not overly crowded, but the ventilation was inadequate, the windows covered with metal sheets, and only small holes pierced to permit air to enter.

TULKARM: the facility is intended for prisoners held until the end of legal proceedings against them, most of them on charges of hostile terrorist activity. Because of the backlog in the courts, many of the prisoners are held for several months in the short-term Tulkarm facility. Of the 120 prisoners at Tulkarm prison, one-third have already been sentenced. There is a severe problem of overcrowding. Knesset Member Dedi Zucker, who visited the Tulkarm prison in April 1989, estimated that each prisoner has less than two square meters of space. An interrogation facility run by the GSS is situated within the Tulkarm prison facility, but it is not clear under whose responsibility it falls (see page 4).

FARA'A: situated north of Nablus. According to prisoners' testimony, 450 prisoners in the first stage of their imprisonment, and a few prisoners serving short-term sentences are held here; in general, administrative detainees are not. There is an interrogation facility at Fara'a, run by IDF in contrast to most of the other prisons, where interrogation centers are run by the GSS. According to former prisoners, behavior towards the prisoners is bad and prison conditions harsh. Showers for prisoners are rare; there is no provision for exercise activities; the only newspaper allowed is "Al Kuds," and this usually arrives more than a week late.

ANATOT: this facility, north of Jerusalem, is opened and closed according to need. The facility consists of two large hangars, packed with beds crowded together. The beds are arranged in blocks, each block separated by barbed wire. The physical conditions at Anatot are substandard. Buckets are provided for sanitary needs, and armed guards accompany prisoners to the showers. Anatot prison can accommodate up to 400 persons. The numbers change constantly.

OFER: situated between Nebi Samwel and Ramallah. 250 prisoners are held here for lesser offenses (disturbing public order). It is considered a prison where conditions are acceptable. The facility comprises two compounds, each with 5 tents, each tent holding 20-25 inmates. The men have free use of a shower, water taps and an open space for prayers and exercise.

DAHARIYA: Most of the prisoners are held here for a relatively short period. There are also a few sentenced prisoners and some administrative detainees. Up to the end of 1988, conditions at Dahariya were particularly bad. 330 prisoners were held in small stone cells, with about 1 square meter of space per person. There was no running water in the cells. A bucket screened by a blanket served as a latrine. There was very little room and light in the cells. The small windows were covered with boards pierced by small holes. Prisoners were taken out of the cells once a week for a shower and exercise. A further 140 prisoners were held in tents, 5 persons to a tent, in somewhat better conditions, but severely overcrowded.

Following a petition to the High Court by ACRI, early in 1989, conditions at Dahariya improved somewhat. Another tented area was introduced and the crowding was reduced in the cells, providing about 2 square meters of space per person. In most of the cells, windows were opened and a screen was provided around the bucket serving as a toilet. Prisoners are now taken for 45 minutes of exercise daily, and showers are permitted twice weekly.

In April 1989, when Judges of the High Court and representative of ACRI visited Dahariya, there were 470 prisoners, 240 kept in 10 tents, and the rest in cells. In the High Court verdict on Dahariya, the judges found that the facilities had been improved. They recommended that the committee created to supervise the conditions at Ketsiot (see below) should also supervise those at Dahariya.

KETSIOT: known as Ansar 3, is the largest prison facility in both Israel and the territories. It was established to cope with the situation that arose at the beginning of the Intifada. It is designed for 3,000 prisoners, and recently has been enlarged to a capacity of 4,500. Currently underway are preliminary works on the infrastructure for a further extension. At the beginning of July there were 4,275 prisoners at Ketsiot (according to "Davar" 21 July, 1989). Most of the administrative detainees from the territories are held at Ketsiot. All the prisoners are kept in tents, with about 24 persons in each tent.

In November 1988, administrative detainees at Ketsiot petitioned the High Court. They were represented by attorneys Lea Zemel and Avigdor Feldman. The plaintiffs protested the conditions under which they were being held, and also claimed that their imprisonment within the state of Israel was a violation of the 4th Geneva Convention. The Judges rejected the plea, but recommended that improvements be made in prison conditions, and that a committee, headed by a judge, be set up to supervise prison conditions at Ketsiot. The committee was set up, headed by the military Judge Colonel Dr. Oded Modrick.

The geographical location of Ketsiot contributes to its problems: first, because it is in an enclosed military area, and second, because of the harsh climate of the Negev desert. Some of the prisoners have been there more than 18 months. Tent accommodation in the severe climatic conditions of the Negev is not suitable for long-term imprisonment. According to security sources, every prisoner who arrives at the prison is examined by a doctor who confirms his fitness for confinement at Ketsiot. It is not clear what criteria are applied in determining a man's fitness for imprisonment in general, and whether there are special criteria for approving his fitness for Ketsiot, in particular.

Another problem is that of visits by relatives. Because of Ketsiot's location in a military area and its distance from the territories, the IDF had ruled that visitors can come only by transportation provided by the IDF. The IDF demands that in order to use this transportation and visit the prisoners, relatives must obtain permission from the civil administration in their area of residence. Residents of the territories have rejected these arrangements. The Red Cross has volunteered to handle the logistics involved in organizing the visits in cooperation with the IDF, and the Palestinians have indicated their agreement. The IDF has consistently rejected this arrangement, however. In effect, there are no family visits to Ketsiot, and many of the prisoners have not seen their families for a year, 18 months or even longer.

GAZA COAST COMPOUND (Ansar 2): intended for detainees to be held for 18 days until they are brought before the judge, but in fact prisoners are held here for much longer periods. Administrative detainees are held here before being transferred to another facility. About 1,200 prisoners are held here.

KHAN YUNIS: a new facility was opened here at the end of July 1989, near the Military Government building in Khan Yunis. It is intended for up to 1,000 prisoners, and will serve the southern Gaza Strip. Up to now there were improvised compounds where prisoners from the Rafah and Khan Yunis areas were held for preliminary questioning, and from there were sent to other facilities.

DIFFERENCES AMONG THE VARIOUS FACILITIES

Conditions at Tulkarm and Ofer prisons are reasonable. There is a readiness on the part of the prison commander to respect the dignity of the prisoners. In Dahariya, on the other hand, the conditions are extremely harsh and only a petition to the High Court brought about some improvement in the situation.

The level of discontent in those prisons situated within the borders of the State of Israel (Megiddo and Ketsiot) is higher than in those located in the territories. This is mainly because these are large facilities with many hundreds of inmates, imprisoned for long periods of time.

There is a significant difference between those facilities that were designed as prisons, and those installations hastily improvised in order to solve the "housing crisis" in the prisons, which do not meet the minimum standards.

The IDF moves very slowly in introducing improvements. Both in Ketsiot and Dahariya some improvements were made, but only after the High Court was petitioned. Even in those army facilities where the prison conditions are acceptable, conditions are inferior to those in facilities run by the Prison Service.

TYPICAL PROBLEMS IN PRISONS

OVERCROWDING in cells/tents, with two square meters of space or less per person.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS: prisoners kept in stone buildings (Dahariya, Tulkarm) usually sleep on mattresses on the floor, and not in beds.

EATING ARRANGEMENTS: decent arrangements for eating are lacking in all the prison facilities. Tables and chairs for eating are not provided, and prisoners are obliged to eat sitting on the floor.

WASHING ARRANGEMENTS: in Dahariya, prisoners are allowed to shower twice a week. In Ofer the prisoners have the use of a shower at all times. In Tulkarm the prisoners are allowed a hot shower daily. In Megiddo and Ketsiot the allocation of soap is rationed, for no apparent reason.

FOOD: in most of the facilities the prisoners prepare their meals themselves with food products provided by the prison authorities. In most cases the prisoners complain that the food is unvaried, lacking in fresh fruit and vegetables, spices and coffee. It seems there is little attention paid by the prison command to the accustomed diet of the prison population.

WATER SHORTAGE: According to prisoners, there is often a shortage of water in the Gaza Coast Compound, and in Block 1 of Ketsiot. In these places water is brought in large tanks and often the supply is inadequate.

UNSATISFACTORY CONDITIONS FOR MEETING LAWYERS: in most of the facilities the meeting place is at best a covered area that provides little shelter from wind, sun or rain, and generally lacks minimal conditions such as tables and benches. Attorney Tamar Peleg of ACRI reports that at Ketsiot the guards make a practice of monitoring conversations between lawyers and their clients - a violation of the regulation which requires such meetings to be confidential. In Megiddo, lawyers are required to wait, often for long periods, before meeting their clients. Attorney Dan Simon of ACRI who asked to set a time to meet a prisoner was given an appointment for five weeks hence. At Ketsiot only some of the prisoners were brought for meetings with the lawyers, despite the fact that the lawyers had submitted a list of names in advance.

DELAY IN DISTRIBUTION OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAIL: the Red Cross is responsible for distributing newspapers at the prison facilities. At the various prison facilities the prisoners receive different newspapers. At Fara'a for example the prisoners receive only "Al Kuds" (Arabic). At Ketsiot they also receive "Ha'Aretz" (Hebrew) and "The Jerusalem Post" (English). Complaints were heard at all the facilities about delays ranging from two days to two weeks in the distribution of newspapers and mail.

RADIO BROADCASTS, CENSORING BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS: in Ketsiot, the Voice of Israel's Arab Service news bulletins are broadcast on loudspeakers four times daily. This arrangement is not found in other prisons. In all the prisons, including Ketsiot, prisoners are not allowed to have radio receivers. The regulations regarding permitted reading matter vary from prison to prison. At Megiddo there is, to the best of our knowledge, a list of 1,000 permitted books. At Ketsiot the list of books numbers 26, mostly books on Islam. There are no clear criteria for permitting or banning books, and it would seem that decisions on this matter are made at the discretion of the command of the facility. At Ketsiot, prisoners claim that some of the news items are censored and cut out of the newspapers.

PRISON KILLINGS

The Army Spokesperson's Office reports that from the beginning of the Intifada to the end of June, 6 prisoners who were residents of the territories were killed at Ketsiot prison by fellow prisoners who suspected them of collaborating with the authorities or of "immoral activity" (Palestinian term). The Army Spokesperson did not give us data on prisoners killed by fellow prisoners in other prison facilities.

There are at least another 9 cases of prison deaths where there is a suspicion that the prison authorities or GSS personnel were involved, directly or indirectly.

1. ATA IYAD, 21 years, from the Kalandia refugee camp, died in Dahariya prison on 14 August 1988. The official announcement said he had committed suicide in his cell. Iyad's family declared that his mental and physical state were normal at the time of his arrest. Witnesses who were imprisoned at Dahariya at the time said that they heard him shouting during the two days before his death.
2. ASSAD A-SHAWA, 25 years, from Gaza.
3. BASSAM IBRAHIM SAMOODI, 27 years, from Yamoun.
Both of the above were killed during a prison riot at Ketsiot on 16 August, 1988. Eyewitnesses claim that at least one of the two was shot even though he was not endangering anyone's life. According to "The Jerusalem Post" (23 July, 1989), the officer who shot one of the two prisoners was Colonel David Zemach, Commander of the Ketsiot facility. The IDF opened an inquiry into the incident, and testimony was taken from soldiers and prisoners who were present. To the best of our knowledge, the inquiry has not been completed.
4. NABIL MUSTAPHA IBDA, 20 years, from the Beit Hanina quarter of Jerusalem, died 16 August, 1988 at the Russian Compound prison in Jerusalem. The official announcement said he had been found hanging in his cell. The Spokesperson for the Jerusalem Police said that the prisoner hanged himself with a sheet which he tied to a pipe, and that this was undoubtedly a case of suicide. An investigation headed by a judge was ordered by the Jerusalem Civil Court, and a file was opened. The results of the inquiry have not been made public to date.
5. IBRAHIM AL MATOUR, 32 years, from the village of Sa'ir, died 19 October, 1988 at Dahariya prison. The official announcement said he had committed suicide in his cell. Fellow prisoners testified that they heard him shout from the prison interrogation area. Attorney Felicia Langer appealed to the High Court on behalf of the family and asked for an independent committee of inquiry to be set up. The plea was rejected (Reported in "Hadashot," 1 August, 1988).

6. ABDULLAH IBRAHIM ABU MAHROKA, killed 12 December, 1988 at the Gaza Coast Compound. The official announcement said that Abu Mahroka was shot after he ran wild, wielding a knife. Two soldiers fired at him and he fell wounded. According to testimony received by MK Dedi Zucker and Military Police investigators, an officer with the rank of Major arrived on the scene and shot the prisoner twice, as he lay bleeding profusely. The Military Attorney of the Southern Command recommended that the file in the inquiry regarding the officer's action be closed. (Reported in "Ha'Aretz", 2 June, 1989).
7. RIYAAD AHMED SHALABI, 23 years, from Silat Harthiya, killed 8 February, 1989 in Megiddo Prison. In the course of a family visit to the prison, a violent brawl broke out, with many prisoners taking part. Shalabi was shot in the chest as the riot was being dispersed.
8. MAHMOUD AL MASRI, 37 years, from Rafah, died in Gaza Prison, 6 March, 1989. Al Masri was arrested on 3 March and held in the interrogation wing of Gaza Prison (administered by the GSS). The official announcement said that Al Masri died from a burst ulcer. A team of senior jurists headed by State Prosecutor Dorit Beinisch investigated the case and recommended to bring the GSS operatives involved in the interrogation of Al Masri before a disciplinary tribunal.
9. MUHAMAD ASA'AD FOKHAH, 50 years, from Shweikah, near Tulkarm, died 16 May, 1989, in Megiddo Prison. Fokhah was held in Megiddo Prison for eight months; he died following a hunger strike, apparently from dehydration. The IDF announced that the Military Police had begun an inquiry to determine whether there was any negligence in the medical treatment administered to him.

WOMEN PRISONERS

The number of Palestinian women arrested since the start of the Intifada is estimated at about 300, 18 of them administrative detainees. At the end of June 1989 there were 32 women prisoners, 2 of them administrative detainees, 13 of them awaiting trial, 17 of them serving sentences following trial. (Data according to the Israeli organization "Women for Political Prisoners.")

Most of the prisoners are held in the Sharon (Tel Mond) Prison, in Israel. During the first stage of detention some of them are held in the Russian Compound in Jerusalem, in the Kishon (Jalami) lock-up, or in the Ashkelon Prison.

NOTIFICATION TO RELATIVES UPON ARREST

In many cases, residents of the territories are arrested on the street or after they have been summoned to the Military Government for questioning. In these cases the families of the detainees are not aware of the arrest nor of the place of detention. Even when persons are arrested in their own homes, the relatives do not know where they have been taken.

Over and above the natural anxiety and uncertainty regarding the whereabouts of the prisoner, there is the need for the family to know of his arrest in order to secure the services of a lawyer to represent him. Minister of Defense, Yitzhak Rabin, in reply to a Parliamentary Question from MK Haim Oron on 2 May, 1989 stated:

Today the matter of informing families of detainees of their arrest has been regulated, and such announcements are brought to the families within 48 hours by the Civil Administration.

On 30 May, 1989, the Defense Minister wrote to MK Yair Tsaban:

The announcement is made to the family in three different ways:

1. Where the arrest is made in the person's home, the family knows of the arrest and can of course go about securing a defense attorney.
2. Where the man is arrested outside his home, he is allowed to send a message to his family regarding his arrest.
3. In addition, lists of prisoners are given to the Red Cross, which takes care of informing the families.

On 29 June, 1989 the Minister of Defense wrote to the Speaker of the Knesset in response to the findings of the Parliamentary Committee for Law and Constitution as follows:

(regarding) informing families of a person's arrest, it seems that there has been an improvement in this matter. Nevertheless, a further step is being examined - to inform the families by telephone, where this is possible.

The Order Concerning Security Instructions (Judea and Samaria) #387, 1970: clause 78a. Notification upon arrest.

(B) Upon arrest, notification of the detention of the detainee and of his location will be conveyed without delay to a person close to the detainee, unless the detainee requests that such notification not be conveyed.

There are inconsistencies in the various pronouncements of the Minister of Defense. Furthermore, the IDF violates the regulation quoted above. To date, in most of the arrests, the prisoners were not allowed to inform their families of their arrest, nor was the family notified within 48 hours through the Civil Administration. In a number of cases, the family was notified through the Red Cross, but in most cases many days elapse before the notification reaches the family.

