

Hostages in Gaza & Israel

Ill-treatment of Israeli hostages?

On Saturday 1 February three Israeli hostages were released. They were clearly emaciated which led to immediate accusations of unacceptable ill-treatment.

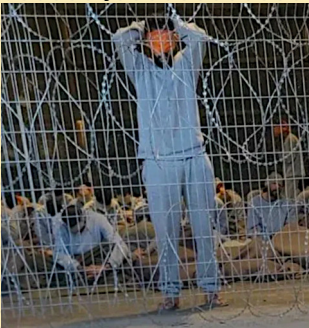
However on 9 October 2023 the then Defence Minister, Yoav Gallant, ordered a "complete siege" of the Gaza Strip; "no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed".

On 21 June 2024 the BBC reported "Gaza's water system, destroyed by war, is sickening its children".

On 21 November 2024 the International Court of Justice issued arrest warrants for Gallant and Prime Minister Netanyahu for the war crime of using starvation as a weapon of war.

The food and water for Israeli hostages was the same for everyone in Gaza.

By contrast there is no shortage of water and food in Israel – except for those in Israeli jails.



Palestinian detainees in Sde Teiman



Ill-treatment of Palestinian hostages!

All those Palestinians released as part of the hostage exchange report severe malnutrition and physical and psychological torture. At least 54 detainees have died since October 2023.

"They all have chronic illnesses," said Mohammad Faqih, an official from the Palestinian Red Crescent Society after the exchange on 15 February, adding that one man had a broken leg.

In August 2024 the Israeli Human Rights organisation B'tselem produced a report "Welcome to Hell", describing the Israeli prisons as 'torture camps' and highlighting Sde Teiman detention facility.

Torture camps

According to the report, inmates were subjected to:

- physical violence and intimidation
- sexual violence
- kept in darkness all day, except during roll call
- denied access and contact with the outside world
- denied medical treatment.

Of the more than 8,000 Palestinians from inside Israel and the West Bank in Israeli jails, more than one-third are held without charge. According to a report from UN experts in August 2024:

"Most Palestinian detainees are de facto hostages of an unlawful occupation". The experts referred to the July 2024 Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory.

Of the 369 Palestinians released on 15 February, 333 had been abducted from Gaza since October 2023 and detained without trial.

Meanwhile, Israel arrested 64 Palestinians including children as young as 7, in eastern Qalqilya in the northern West Bank, one day after 90 prisoners were released under the ceasefire deal.