

Martyrs do not need us

Because we love martyrs so much, or because we are crushed and frustrated, we believe that we need to do something for them. It may be putting their photograph near the window where they used to watch the sun rise, or growing the flowers they liked on their graves. But we need to understand that they do not need us. Somebody must tell the mothers of martyrs that they no longer need to iron their son's shirts, not the casual shirts for daily use or those for feasts, holidays or weddings. It is no longer necessary to set the alarm to wake them up on time. Martyrs do not need us, and they are not disappointed if we forget to invite them to the joy and pleasures of ordinary people.

Martyrs only look forward, with their hearts beating with joy, to the day when we declare that we are triumphant.

To all those preoccupied with paying tributes to martyrs in ordinary ways, step aside slightly and make way for the day the martyrs are waiting for; perhaps it is on its way.

Risk of death in Arrabeh

Zahran Maali

The Bir al-Mai area near the town of Arrabeh, south of Jenin, is a minefield set by the Jordanian army in 1965; a number of people have lost their lives there and others have been injured or disabled. The Palestinian Authority (PA) continues its efforts to clear mines in this and other minefields.

Al-Hal investigated the Arrabeh minefield and interviewed those responsible for undertaking clearance work and completing the task by the end of the year. Lt. Col. Issa Ghneimat, director of operations in the Ministry of Interior's Palestinian Mine Action Center (PMAC), pointed out in his interview with al-Hal that, following claims by the PA, Jordan handed over maps of seven out of 16 minefields, but did not hand over the map showing the type and number of mines planted in the Arrabeh minefield.

He explained that the PMAC does not know whether Israel possesses maps for these minefields, and the Israeli occupation has always denied any connection to these minefields.

Ghneimat added that the Israeli occupation forces cleared the Arrabeh and other minefields on more than one occasion, but did so in an unprofessional way by removing the visible mines only, apparently to prevent Palestinians from using these mines against the occupation.

He explained that Israel had claimed that the minefields had been cleared, including the minefield in Nabi Elias village near Qalqilia, which covers an area of 65 dunums and had 1900 landmines according to the Jordanian authorities. Although Israel advised the PA not to engage in clearing this minefield, the PMAC started clearance work there and had found more than 700 landmines by the time of this report.

According to information obtained by the PMAC from the testimonies of the local population, there are both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines in Arrabeh.

UNICEF statistics put the number of victims of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXOs) in Palestine at 1000 killed and wounded since 1948. The PMAC has documented only 350 cases so far due to the small number of employees at the center, which was founded in 2012.

Ghneimat noted that Palestine has signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), but is still an observer in the Ottawa Treaty to ban landmines; Jordan is a member of the treaty and Israel has not joined it.

He did not conceal that, legally speaking, the clearance of mines in the West Bank is



not under Palestinian jurisdiction but is the responsibility of the Israeli occupation and the Jordanians. He added: "We usually remove mines as a national responsibility with the support of the global Mine Action Programme, which allocated a budget for Palestine spread over five years to conclude this project".

Individuals affected

The spring of 1979 was not an ordinary time in the life of Nabil Taleb (Abu Maizar) from Arrabeh, south of Jenin. The story of the landmine that caused him to lose his eyesight and his right hand is etched on his memory.

Abu Maizar, aged 54, was the first victim of an anti-personnel mine as he was collecting thyme in Bir al-Mai near Arrabeh, accompanied by his friend, Maher Nimer Duqa.

After the incident, the Israeli occupation authorities fenced off the area and put warning signs saying "Danger of landmines. Walking is prohibited on unpaved roads".

The story of Abu Maizar can be concluded with the calamity faced by another five victims: some survived but lost their limbs following the explosion of a mine that

dozed underground for decades before taking innocent lives by surprise. Three others were killed, two of them brothers from Wad Daouk village opposite the Arabbeh minefield, who lost their lives while grazing their livestock on that land.

Promises unfulfilled

Nihad Abdul Aziz, one of the owners of the minefields, which are surrounded by olive groves and pine trees, explained that he, his brothers and their neighbors had been unable to benefit from the produce from their land since 1967. He said that they had submitted many requests to multiple parties, including Jenin governorate and the municipalities of both Jenin and Arrabeh, to no avail; they had received only promises.

Abdel Aziz told al-Hal that a Palestinian NGO, accompanied by someone from a foreign company, had made a field visit to the area a couple of years ago and promised to remove the landmines. He added: "All the promises that we received have been unfulfilled".

Engineer Ahmad Obeid of Arabbeh municipality told al-Hal that the minefield is located near a well. The Dotan Israeli

military camp was established by the Israeli occupation in 1967 and was evacuated in September 2005.

Obeid confirmed Abdel Aziz's statement about the Israelis clearing mines in that area, but the landowners had not been notified that the land was safe and the warning signs are still there.

Solution in one month's time Ghneimat explained to al-Hal that the Arrabeh minefield is located on an area of ten dunums. Established by the Jordanian army in 1965, it is currently under Israeli jurisdiction as it is located in Area C according to the Oslo agreement.

In cooperation with The Halo Trust, a British-based international organization for landmine clearance, the PMAC will start to remove mines from the Arrabeh minefield in December, unless weather conditions prevent work from continuing in sodden earth.

Ghneimat pointed out that the clearance of the Arrabeh minefield is a priority after completing the Husan minefield in Bethlehem and Nabi Elias in Qalqiliya governorate, which will be completely cleared during November.

Only three lawyers to deal with the cases of 1,980 detainees in Jerusalem

Hala Zuheiri

Around 1,980 prisoners have been detained by the Israeli occupation since the beginning of this year, including 885 since mid-September up until the preparation of this report. All these cases are pursued in the Israeli courts by just three defense lawyers, which means that cases are handled in haste and the defendants are not granted full rights to a defense that can examine all the details of the case.

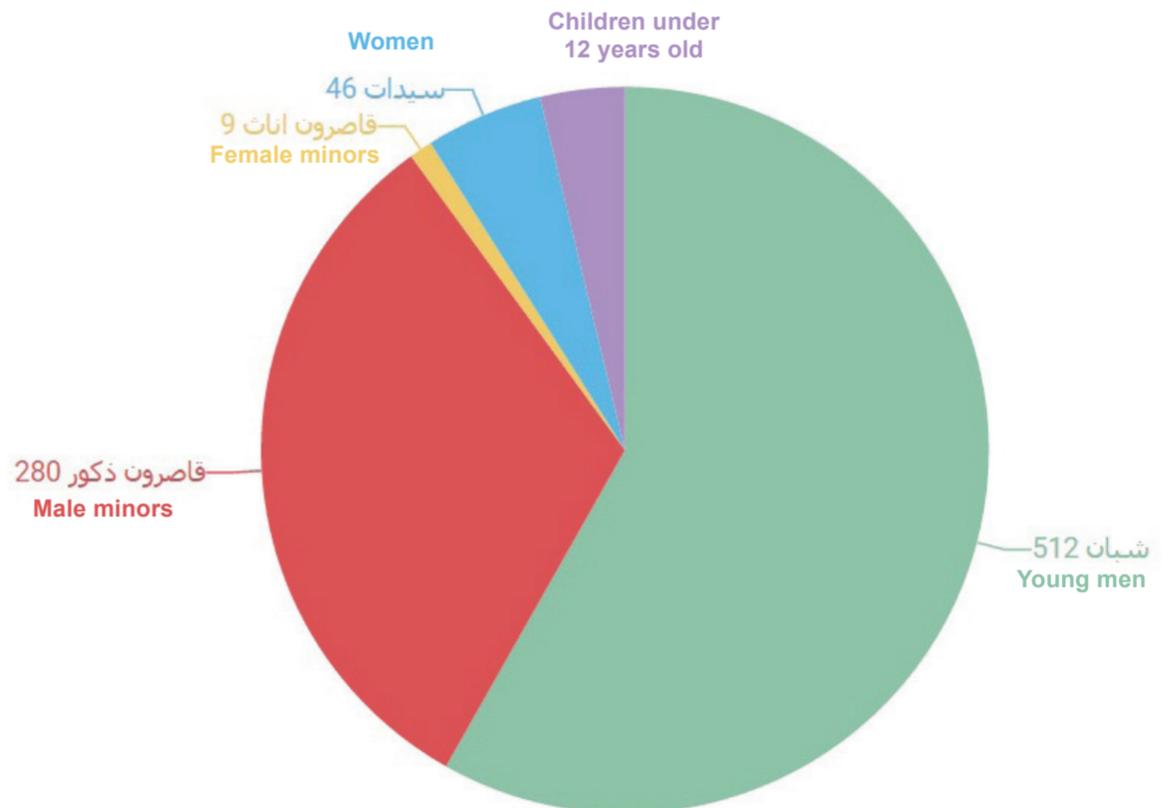
The Israeli occupation has conducted an unprecedented campaign of detention of Jerusalem residents for nearly two months. New laws have been imposed with increased penalties for stone-throwers and periods in detention, administrative detention orders have been extended, high bail and fines enforced, house arrest, entry to al-Aqsa mosque prevented, and other sanctions.

885 arrests since mid-September

Amjad Abu Assab, head of the Committee for Jerusalem Detainees and Prisoner's Families, said that the Israeli occupation authorities had arrested 885 people since 13 September, including 46 women, 280 male and 9 female minors, and 33 children below the age of 13. He pointed out that the number of lawyers appointed by the Commission for Detainees and Ex-detainees Affairs and the Prisoners' Club is insufficient to deal with such a large number of detainees, totaling 1,980 since the beginning of 2015.

Abu Assab added that the Commission provides one lawyer, Tareq Barghout; the Prisoners' Club provides another lawyer, Mufid al-Haj; and the non-governmental Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (Addameer) provides one lawyer, Mohammad Mahmoud. Abu Assab emphasized that this limited number of lawyers makes it impossible to examine all the details of a case and detainees are often deprived of benefiting from the legal right to consult with a lawyer prior to interrogation or preliminary legal counseling.

As a result, Jerusalemites are forced to hire lawyers at



Info graph demonstrating the ages of Jerusalem detainees

their own expense or to go to court without a defense lawyer. The Israeli occupation authorities commission a "state lawyer", but these are usually racist and deliberately act against the detainees' interests. Abu Assab said that promises made by the Commission of Detainees and Ex-detainees Affairs to increase the number of lawyers assigned to Jerusalem are dependent on the approval of the new PA budget by the end of this year and approval of the Commission's budget. In the meantime, "there are

only partial and inadequate solutions".

Mahmoud: I handled 170 cases in November alone. Mahmoud, the lawyer at the Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (Addameer), said that he has single-handedly dealt with 170 cases in November alone. He stresses that the problem lies in the attempts by the Israeli prosecutor to raise the ceiling on penalties. The availability of a team of lawyers would enable pleas to be put forward and more witnesses in trials, thereby countering their rulings.

He stressed the need for permanent lawyers to be present and not only in emergencies. He also noted that Jerusalem needs greater assistance to protect those facing bail and fines from some private lawyers who exploit them financially and immorally without resolving their cases.

Decision to enhance the team of lawyers allocated to Jerusalem governorate

The Chairman of the Commission for Detainees and Ex-detainees Affairs, Issa Qaraq, confirmed that the Commission had decided to increase the number of lawyers in Jerusalem governorate in view of the intense campaign of detentions conducted by the Israeli occupation authorities, which is beyond the capacity of the present team of lawyers.

Qaraq added that a decision had been taken to assign lawyers from other governorates to support the lawyer in Jerusalem until the procedures for the new budget for 2016 are completed; it had been agreed to combine the efforts of as many as ten human rights organizations operating in Jerusalem.

An expert in international law, Dr. Hanna Issa, argued that East Jerusalem is an occupied territory according to UN Resolutions 242 and 339. Therefore, international humanitarian law applies to Jerusalem, mainly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the annexed Protocol I of 1977. The Israeli occupation deliberately violates international law and treats east and west Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel. Jerusalem residents are dealt with in this context and prisoners are tried under Israeli criminal law, which criminalizes any act of resistance based on a hierarchy of: guilt, fault, crime under Israeli law, but in violation of international law.

Issa adds that in view of this, the occupation considers Jerusalem detainees to be the same as Israeli criminal prisoners, although the former are not treated equally or granted even half the rights granted to criminals. Instead, they treat Jerusalem detainees as brutally and inhumanely as other Palestinian prisoners.

From the Palestinian Museum



Rhythmic Exercises Team in Birzeit University during a rehearsal for one sports performance in 1978.

Credit: Kamal Shamsoum Album, the Palestinian Museum.

In collaboration with the Palestinian Museum at Birzeit University, Al-Hal publishes a photo in each edition to remind us of the past and evoke happy memories that have faded as a result of limited documentation and publication.

Photoshopped knives ... the new Israeli propaganda to distort the story of martyrs

Nadin Musalam

A number of photographic experts and graphic designers have expressed doubts about the credibility of photographs published by Israel of Palestinian perpetrators of acts. They believe that some of the pictures have been manipulated using Photoshop and similar software programs.

Israeli propaganda aims to position Israelis as the victim to gain the support and compassion of the international community, and stigmatize Palestinian youths as 'terrorists'. In fact, Israeli forces make brutal attacks on Palestinian youths at any location, whether on the borders of the Gaza Strip, in West Bank governorates, or in Jerusalem. These attacks end in the killing of the young person or a severe injury that renders him permanently disabled. A fake image of a knife is then put next to the body to justify these acts under the pretext that the individual 'attempted to stab an Israeli soldier or settler'.

Our propaganda supports theirs

Journalist and graphic designer Asem Naser believes that Palestinian media need greater awareness about the use of programs like Photoshop by Israeli media to show a knife near the body of a young Palestinian martyr killed by Israeli occupation forces. In some cases, TV channels have broadcast the news as an attempted stabbing by a young Palestinian, without taking into account Israeli manipulation of photographs and videos aimed at creating negative public opinion about Palestinians.

Naser added that it is simple technically to add a knife to a picture using a photo editing program like Photoshop. Certain aspects must be taken into account such as shading, lighting, direction and dimensions so that the knife and its surroundings fit together logically to make a false, but unquestionably credible, picture. This also applies to videos with the use of other software programs. Graphic designer Sabah Fityani stated that it is possible to add a knife or any weapon to the picture of a martyr's body lying on the ground and claim that he was killed for carrying a weapon. The process takes no more than ten minutes on a computer. All that is required is a picture of the martyr and a picture of the weapon: simply cut and paste.

She added that they take into consideration not to change the light and colors of the original photograph, and to add an image of an appropriate size. Some photo processing software is available that can hide any additions or omissions that may be revealed on the photo.

Video forgery

Fityani explained that video editing differs from photo editing and each is performed separately according to specific technical requirements and strategies. Photos can be edited and fabricated using programs like Photoshop and CorelDraw, among many others. Photos that are edited are primarily modified to enhance their



quality by boosting clarity and accuracy. It is possible to add anything; even pictures of people can be added to the original image.

Suing the Israeli media

Lawyer Yusra Hassouneh said that it is possible to present a lawsuit to the International Criminal Court (ICC) about false videos and photos in the Israeli media because the Palestinian people are being deliberately targeted in organized crimes of execution by Israelis at point blank range. She adds that all the executions aired on news channels clearly show that the Israeli army resorted to violence immediately and as a first option. This can give

rise to a strong legal case when accompanied by all the available witnesses.

Lawyer Mousa Sayyad said that a lawsuit should be filed with the ICC, but evidence must be gathered of videos and photos in which a knife was placed near the body of the martyr. He stated that Israel will be convicted when the claims made by the Palestinian Authority are presented under the names of the families of the martyrs or the wounded.

Nadin Musalam is a student at the Media Department of Birzeit University.

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He revealed that there are 16 minefields in the West Bank covering a total area of 620 dunums. These were set by the Jordanian army and spread from Hebron in the south to Jenin in the north. He hints that there are no Israeli minefields in the West Bank, with the exception of Israeli military training areas in the Jordan Valley and the war remnants resulting from them, as well as the minefields on the eastern borders with Jordan.

He noted that Israel planted mines in the Jordan Valley; these spread along the eastern borders with Jordan and the borders with Jericho. "The estimated number totals about one and a half million landmines in that area."

The fault of Oslo

Shawan Jabarin, the director of al-Haq organization for the defense of human rights in Palestine, explained to al-Hal that one of the drawbacks of the Oslo agreements was that the PA did not obtain complete maps of landmines in the West Bank. The agreements did not even mention this issue. He stressed that it is the responsibility of the Israeli occupation to provide maps for each landmine that exists in the Palestinian Territories, just as in the case of Lebanon, which was given detailed maps of landmines.

He said: "This is Palestinian land and Palestinians have the right to obtain maps of landmines. However, the clearance of mines is the responsibility of the occupation state".

Jabarin added that the 2002 report by the Israeli observer remarked that anti-personnel mines are present around some Israeli settlements, water wells, and army training camps, and that many landmines are not marked and have no warning signs.

He also noted that Israel is trying to clear anti-tank and personnel mines from the Jordan Valley for economic reasons or special interests such as investing in agriculture, rather than for a humanitarian purpose. "The reason for the ban on anti-personnel mines is that it is a blind weapon that could kill a child or an ordinary person. It is an old and outdated type of weapon that is not directed at soldiers. In addition, water and natural elements may lead to mines sliding to different areas and posing great dangers to the population. Thus this is a random killer that is prohibited by the Geneva Convention and an aimless weapon that is not controlled and may explode underneath anyone."



The Palestine Youth Orchestra ... Musicians



A performance by the Palestine Youth Orchestra (taken from the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music website).

Dania Dasouki

The Edward Said National Conservatory of Music (ESNCM) founded the Palestinian Youth Orchestra (PYO) in 2004 with a vision to mobilize Palestinian musicians from all over the world in one unified music ensemble. Today, the PYO comprises 80 musicians from Palestine and the Diaspora, in addition to volunteers from all over the Arab world. They form a highly professional orchestra on a par with international ensembles.

Since its inception, the PYO has taken part in many successful performances. For the first three years they gave performances in the Terra Santa hall in Jordan. A new initiative began in 2007 when the PYO performed in Germany, the center for classical music in Europe. Three performances were conducted in Berlin, Vickersheim, and Goterslo.

Said Atari, academic director of the Edward Said National Institute, told Al-Hal: "The musical education that we offer is far better than many institutes of music in the Arab world. Our students excel over their counterparts and have proved their abilities in international orchestras. We still fall short of the Egyptians and Turks in terms of instrumentalists, but we may create a special standard of performer in the coming years."

He added that the PYO embodies the dream of Palestinian youth for a state and unity. The PYO reflects the special characteristics of Palestinian cultural life in its highest humanitarian aspect through the language of music, which touches all people and transmits a message of hope for freedom in spite of the difficult Palestinian political reality.

Atari said that the PYO invites performers other than Palestinians every year: Musicians from Greece, Italy, Spain and some from Arab countries, namely Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, have taken part in the PYO, enriching it with versatility and musical experience. The PYO also seeks to promote the works of Palestinian and Arab composers alongside the Western classical repertoire. Thus recent performances included music by Marcel Khalife.

The PYO was recently under the supervision of Sian Edwards, who worked with many of the world's leading orchestras, in addition to Maias al-Yamani, Mohammad Najem, Fadi Deeb, Marcel Khalife, Omaira Khalil, Basil Zayed, Reem Talhami, and Basil Theodore.

Talent and studies combined

Hiba Omari, a student at the Media Department of Birzeit University, did not find her school studies to be an obstacle when she joined the ESNCM at the age of ten as a cello player. Since then, she has participated in many Arab and foreign music ensembles, primarily in the PYO. Hiba believes that the PYO provides the most important phase of her life because it gives her the opportunity to express herself through a group of talented and professional musicians. In addition, she appreciates the opportunity to travel to many countries and learn about new cultures. Most importantly, she wants to deliver a message to the world that Palestinians are a people with a culture, a people who love to live and have their voice heard in a beautiful way and in a language that is understood worldwide. She also believes that the PYO demonstrates the love of music, and the talents and abilities that exist among Palestinian youth.

Rejected military service and turned to music

Omar Saad is not only a talented student of music and a brilliant viola player. As a Palestinian from the 1948 Palestinian territories, he faced a dilemma of serving in the Israeli occupation army or undergoing a term of imprisonment! He rejected the military and served a term in detention before he was able to deliver his message to the world through music.

On his journey with the PYO, Saad says: "My two brothers, Mustapha and Ghandi, our sister Teebah and I are members in the PYO. This is how we contribute to making the voice of our people heard in the world. This is a significant and cultural form of resistance against the Zionist media which tries to distort the image of our people with the stigma of terrorism and backwardness. They try to transmit pictures that show the world that Palestinians love death and kill just for the sake of killing."

Saad believes that rejection of military service counters attempts by the Israeli occupation to divide Palestinians. "How can I carry weapons against my people? How can I contribute to their humiliation and suppression? Besides being a musician, I reject all forms of aggression and believe that the military apparatus is the pinnacle of physical and psychological violence."

The Israeli government's response did not take Saad's opinions into consideration and he was detained seven times, spending about 200 days in a military prison. "I may have been kept for longer if I had not been sick and was released. This year, my brother Mustapha will also

refuse to become a member of the Israeli occupation forces and I guess he will also be imprisoned."

Saad says that being a member of the PYO has won him international solidarity for his refusal to exchange his musical instrument, which promotes peace, for a gun to kill a boy or girl of his nationality. Musicians, artists and members of parliaments organized many solidarity campaigns in his support.

Music is a journey for life

Fadwa Qamhieh, a student of French at Birzeit University, says that music has brought about a big change in her personality and life. She plays the contrabass, which she finds challenging, and it enables her to participate in international music ensembles.

Qamhieh says that the most positive feeling is when she sees the reaction to her performance. During the performance, Palestinian musicians can demonstrate their professionalism and talents; this upsets those who support the Israeli occupation. There were attempts by those who organized the French music festival to have a performance that brings Palestinian and Israeli musicians together, but the ESNCM and the PYO completely refused to present the occupation and Palestinians as equals. Eventually, the PYO conducted a high quality professional performance.

Qamhieh believes that being a member of the PYO and having the opportunity to travel the world and get to know people of different cultures has contributed to her skills and given her the motivation to continue. She even met her fiancé at one of the international performances that she participated in.

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