



Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association

Abu Dis Human Rights report

A month in Abu Dis, June 2015

The people of Abu Dis continued to suffer on a daily basis from the restrictions and violence of the occupation: the huge Separation Wall, the ID system and the checkpoints all round them, the



constriction and loss of land to the settlements, and the almost-daily incursions of fully-armed Israeli soldiers because of the presence of a military camp right in the middle of town. June 2015 saw the beginning of Ramadan. It was the 48th anniversary of the beginning of the occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The report this month tells some of the more dramatic events that happened in the town, but it should be remembered that the people of Abu Dis suffer many quieter daily violations of their human rights.

Friday 5th June. There were clashes in Abu Dis that started below the military camp in the middle of town. The Israeli army fired tear gas especially around the area of Ar-Ras and wounded more than ten people with rubber bullets. People are scared of reprisals if they bring such thing to attention, so it is not possible to give an accurate figure.

Friday 12th June After Friday prayers, an Israeli military jeep came to the mosque near Kobsa in the middle of Abu Dis and put up a checkpoint outside. As people came out of the mosque, they stopped them to ask for their IDs. Some young people from Aizariyeh and Abu Dis were provoked by this and threw stones; soldiers threw sound bombs into the middle of a crowd. One of these wounded the feet of two young people aged 12 and 17. Another young man of 17 was hit on the

shoulder with a 'tutu' bullet and was taken to the health centre in Abu Dis. Trouble continued till late in the evening.

Tuesday 16th June. An army force invaded the house of Ghalib Ayyad near Dar Assadaqa and arrested his son, Amer, 19 years old. Amer had been imprisoned earlier for a year and a half and his brother has been in jail for three years. While the army was in the house, young people gathered outside and the army dispersed them with tear gas.

Ramadan started on 18th June. **The first Friday was 19th June.** Thousands of people wanted to go to the Al Aqsa Mosque to pray. The Israelis gave some permissions for this month but none of these included Friday, which is a special day for Muslims; on Fridays people had to go to the 'terminals' in the Wall* and take their chance. These checkpoints are not able to cope with thousands at a time.

Some were able to go through, others had to wait not eating anything (because of the Ramadan fast) and standing for hours under the sun even before they were allowed through.



Many were not given permission to go through and thousands moved to other parts of the Wall where they tried to enter Jerusalem with ladders and ropes, putting themselves at risk of being captured or shot. Even if they managed to get into Jerusalem, they found that there were Israeli checkpoints on all the gates of the Mosque so they were not able to go in.

Thursday 25th June Israeli soldiers invaded a house near the Al Quds University and arrested a master's student, Dahood al-Ghoul (32). He was taken to Al Muskobiya Prison in Jerusalem, famous for being one of the most terrifying of the Israeli interrogation centres. Dahood had spent years inside jail and was then deported from his home in Jerusalem to the West Bank.

Friday 26th June. The Israeli authorities decided to close Qalandia checkpoint for people coming in or going out of Jerusalem. West Bankers with permissions were not able to go at all. Only cars with Jerusalem number plates were allowed to go through a side gate. Soldiers told people to use different checkpoints to get to Jerusalem, which led to loss of time for thousands of people and then crowded terminals* like Zaitouneh, near Abu Dis, massively more than even before.

Sunday 28th June. The Israeli Civil Department Officer entered the area of Abu Nuwar on the east of Aizariyeh (next to Abu Dis), facing Maale Adumim – an area where Bedouin are living. They ordered 25 families to leave their tents and their steel houses (they are not allowed to build) in the coming two months. This has been a long-standing home for the Bedouin and includes people from 22 different tribes; there are two kindergartens in the area (one in the photo) while the children then go on to the two schools of Wadi Abu Hindi and Khan al-Ahmar (both under threat from the E1 project) and to the local Aizariyeh school.

According to the military order, this is land that belongs to Israel, and they should



move to the east of Abu Dis, an area that had been taken by the Israeli military and where they plan to house the Bedouin on Abu Dis land (This is the place where the protest camp of Bawabit al-Quds was based in January/ February,

see earlier reports)

Prisoners During June there were about 40 prisoners from Abu Dis in Israeli jail. Five of them were imprisoned under **administrative detention** (that is with no trial). Four of them were **children**. The issue of prisoners was very much in the public eye especially with the reimprisonment of Khader Adnan, who had been released in 2013 after three long months of hunger strike. He was rearrested in 2014 with no charge against him. Khader Adnan began another hunger strike and was very much in danger.

The treatment of child prisoners was brought into focus in June as DCI (Defence for Children International Palestinian Section) took a case to court accusing the Israeli army of torturing Palestinian children.

One of the children described what happened on his arrest. He said that four soldiers attacked him with their hands, feet and guns continuously for ten minutes before blindfolding and handcuffing him very tightly indeed with narrow plastic ties. He described how one of the soldiers kicked him all over his body with military boots which had metal on him and then stepped on his right leg with both feet: this made

his leg bleed. Two of the soldiers threw them into the steel floor of the jeep and he was driven, lying down, for what he thought was an hour with soldiers sitting around him. Soldiers were kicking him all the way and no one told him where he was taken. When he asked for some water, a soldier hit him in the face and told him he had no right to drink water. Thrown from jeep, he was searched while hands tied, and shouted at to get up and left standing for about 5 hours under the hot sun. When he asked again for water, he was hit and told not to speak.

The two children in this case were from Balata refugee camp in Nablus and Faraon village, Tulkarem, both aged 16 and who had been arrested in May. However their experiences would be recognised by the child prisoners of Abu Dis.



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Demonstration in Abu Dis about imprisonment.