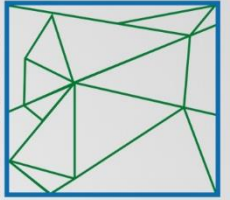


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سوريون
من أجل
الحقيقة
والعدالة
Syrians
For Truth
& Justice



Syria: Unknown Fate Awaits Detainees Beyond Expiry of their Unfair Sentence

dozens due for release are transferred back to Air Force Intelligence Branch facing unknown fate

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*dozens due for release are transferred back to Air Force Intelligence
Branch facing unknown fate*

The sentences of dozens of detainees in Adra Central Prison in Damascus are about to expire and they have received a release order, yet the Syrian government does not intend to free them.

In previous years, the prisoners were referred to trial before the military field court in Damascus and were sentenced to different terms of temporary imprisonment.

Rather than being released, they are to be transferred from Adra prison to Syrian services jails in the exact day when their sentences terminate, sources from within the jail reported to STJ.

The detainees and their families are concerned about the fate that awaits them if they are transferred back to the Syrian services jails. Several inmates/arrested confirmed to STJ that several months ago, the same happened to numerous of their fellow inmates; the fate of some of them is still unknown, but others remain in detention centers run by the Air Force Intelligence Branch in Damascus (Mezzeh Military Airport) beyond the expiry of their sentences.

Well-informed sources detailed what happened with the detainees held in Adra prison:

"In 2013, the military field court sentenced scores of prisoners in the notorious Saydnaya military prison to a term of 15 years' imprisonment. Few days later, their judgments was read to the detainees in the court. After that, the detainees were told that they were temporarily transferred to Adra prison to serve the prison sentences in full and that they are likely to be sent back to Saydnaya at any time or to be sent the security branches, which initially arrested them. Additionally, the officer in Adra prison, told the detainees that they would stay there only temporarily and they were likely to be transferred to the security branches when their sentences terminate or to Saydnaya prison at any time".

Dozens of inmates, including the above mentioned prisoners, got the release order in 2018 and were due for release in early 2019 because their sentences, which was 15 years' imprisonment, were about to terminate.

It should be recalled that for the married detainee, 9 months' imprisonment is counted just as one year of imprisonment. Plus, some of the detainees were covered by the presidential amnesty by one third of the term.

"An officer in Adra prison informed the inmates that as soon as their sentences expire, they would be sent back, in vehicles, to the security branches that initially arrested them. However, the officer gave no reasons for that despite the detainees served the sentences in full and had got the release order", the sources said.

This is not the first time the inmates, who obtain a release order, are detained again. Earlier, the security apparatus has settled with the administration of Adra prison in order to arrest the released prisoners once they are freed, a Syrian lawyer told STJ.

In many occasions, the Syrian authorities rearrested the released inmates to exchange them in prisoners swap agreements concluded with the armed opposition groups. On a regular basis in the prisoner swap agreements, it is the Syrian regime who chooses those to be exchanged with. Consequently, it releases those who have served their sentences in full, the lawyer explained.

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About Syrians for Truth and Justice:

STJ is an independent, nongovernmental organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities.

The initiative strives for SYRIA, where all Syrian citizens (females and males) have dignity, equality, justice and equal human rights.

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