'Palestinian lost speech ability after PA torture'

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By Khaled Abu Toameh
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A Palestinian man who was detained by the Palestinian Authority security forces in Hebron has lost the ability to speak as a result of severe torture, according to a report released by the Independent Commission for Human Rights.

Mohamed Abdel Karim Dar of Hebron was hospitalized after being tortured while in detention, the report, which documented 28 cases of torture in PA prisons in the West Bank last month, said.

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Dar had been detained by agents belonging to the PA's Preventive Security Service and held in solitary confinement, the document said.

"He lost the ability to speak and suffered from wounds to his body as a result of banging his head against the wall and tying his hands while being held in solitary condiment," the report added.

A representative of the Independent Commission for Human Rights who visited the detainee in the hospital discovered that he had lost the ability to speak.

The human rights organization said that it had filed a complaint with the PA interior minister asking that an investigation be opened and those responsible be held accountable.

The organization did not say why the PA security forces had detained Dar.

It said that it had received complaints of torture and mistreatment against other branches of the PA security forces in the West Bank – 13 against the police, seven against the Preventive Security Service, seven against the General Intelligence Service and one against Military Intelligence.

The organization said it had received another 23 complaints of torture and mistreatment at the hands of the Hamas police force in the Gaza Strip.

In addition, the commission reported that the PA security forces in the West Bank were continuing to arrest Palestinian journalists.

On April 20, the General Intelligence Service detained journalist Tarek Abu Safirah while he was in the hospital awaiting surgery. He was questioned about his writings for the Quds news website and released after a few hours.

One week later, the Preventive Security Service arrested for two days journalist Khaldoun Mazloum while he was visiting relatives in Ramallah. He, too, was questioned about his work as a journalist.