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## Jaffa imam arrested on terror claims

Eli Senyor

Ynetnews

November 10, 2010 - 12:00am

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3982473,00.html> <sup>[1]</sup>

November 10, 2010

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**Media Outlet:** Ynetnews

**Date:** November 10, 2010

**Source Link(s):** <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3982473,00.html> <sup>[1]</sup>

Police have arrested an additional imam for terror-related offenses, after Nazareth cleric was arrested this week on charges for inciting to terrorism.

Jaffa's Muhammad Ayash, of the al-Bahr mosque, was arrested on suspicion of involvement in security offences.

The Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court extended his remand by eight days and placed a gag order on most of the details of the case.

Ayash was arrested Tuesday by investigators working in tandem with the Shin Bet. Police searched his home and then took him to an interrogation facility in Petah Tikva.

On Wednesday morning he was brought before the court for a hearing on the remand of his arrest, and a gag order was placed on the precise details with which police plan to charge him.

Ayash's attorney, Eitan On, rejected the allegations against his client after the hearing. "The imam has no ties with these security offenses. He is a resident of Jaffa and a law-abiding Israeli citizen. We hope his name will be cleared in the coming days."

'Police humiliated him without cause'

Tel Aviv-Jaffa city council member Ahmad Mashrawi (Meretz) said he was shocked by the arrest. "The security of the state is important to us all, but I condemn the way this is being done," he told Ynet.

"We have no details on what the imam is suspected of, and it's hard for me to believe he violated any laws. Recently I have witnessed many cases in which these arrests have come up with nothing."

Mashrawi added that police could have been more forthcoming and provided the imam with a warning, so as to arrest him at home and not on the street, "in the eyes of all passersby".

"Kidnapping people off the street like that seems more appropriate for dark regimes. He shouldn't have been humiliated. I'd like to see the police arrest a rabbi like that," he said.

The councilman said Ayash had mainly been occupied with charity work in the past few years, distributing food to the poor and the like. He added that it appeared as though "political agents responsible for the police have ordered them to harshen the treatment of Arab clerics.

A member of the Islamic Movement agreed that the arrest should have been carried out in a more agreeable fashion. "When you do these things to scare people it's ugly," the man, asking to remain anonymous, said.

"This will not deter us and we will continue on our path within the restrictions of the law. This country, with this government, must be taking our sector as an obstacle to defeat, but eventually it will blow up in their faces."

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