

BBC correspondent missing three weeks

by UPI

GAZA - Journalists in Gaza protested the disappearance of a BBC colleague Tuesday by boycotting coverage of the Palestinian government. The head of the Palestinian Journalists' Union, Naim Tubasi, told the BBC journalists were refusing to report on Palestinian government proceedings because leaders had not done enough to secure the release of veteran BBC journalist Alan Johnston. "This is unacceptable for us ... We will boycott coverage of (President Mahmoud) Abbas if Johnston is not released," Abu Dhabi TV correspondent Majed Said told the BBC. Tubasi said no Palestinian news outlet will cover the presidency or the new unity government until Johnston, who it is suspected to have been abducted when he disappeared three weeks ago, is freed. Also in Gaza, 300 journalists wore gags in a protest for Johnston. In London, hundreds of journalists took out a full-page ad in Monday's Guardian calling for Johnston's release. The BBC said it had not heard from Johnston, who has reported from Gaza for three years, since March 12.

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