



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيي سورية
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

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الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Refugees among Dozens Protesting in Deraa to Urge Syrian Regime to Release Prisoners"

- Activists Call for Compulsory Mask-Wearing in Khan Eshieh Camp
- New Coronavirus Victims, Infections Reported South of Damascus
- Parents Gather at UNRWA School in Yarmouk Camp
- 3 Palestinian Families on Verge of Homelessness in Greece

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Latest developments

Dozens of Palestinians and Syrians sheltered in Deraa province, south of Syria, maintained a vigil on Monday calling on the Syrian government to release all prisoners secretly held behind prison bars.

Reporting from southern Syria, an AGPS correspondent said the protests were held across Deraa and its Palestinian refugee camp.

Protesters lifted banners and chanted slogans demanding that the Syrian regime release all prisoners and disclose the condition and whereabouts of victims of enforced disappearance and secret incarceration.

The demonstrators closed off thoroughfares and burned tires in protest at the Syrian government's torture tactics in jail.

In response, the Syrian security forces closed off main entrances to the camp and surrounding zones, blocking access out of and into the area.

As the novel coronavirus COVID-19 continues to grip the Middle East and the world, AGPS urges the Syrian government to free all Palestinians and Syrians held behind prison bars.

AGPS is deeply concerned over an unabated outbreak of coronavirus in Syrian prisons, at a time when the deadly virus continues to claim the lives of thousands of people across the globe.



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There are growing fears that a large outbreak in prisons and Palestinian refugee camps in Syria could be particularly catastrophic.

AGPS fears the coronavirus could spread quickly in jails and in overcrowded displacement camps, where neither hygiene kit nor medical equipment are accessible.

AGPS calls on the Syrian government to immediately release Palestinian detainees and provide those who test positive for COVID-19 with the necessary medical treatment.

The Syrian authorities and all concerned parties should also take precautionary measures and enhance captivity conditions to rein in a tragic propagation of the virus in jail.

The unabated shelling and deadly shootouts rocking the Syrian territories for the tenth year running have claimed the lives of thousands of Palestinian refugees and resulted in the abduction, torture, displacement, and enforced disappearance of thousands more.

AGPS has documented the death of 4,039 Palestinian refugees in Syria, including women and children, since 2011, as a result of war-related incidents.

1,797 Palestinian refugees have fallen prey to enforced disappearance in prisons across the embattled Syrian territories. Hundreds of families continue to appeal for information over the



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condition and whereabouts of their missing or secretly detained relatives in Syria.

Syria's healthcare system, among other infrastructure, has been ravaged by almost ten years of war.

In another development, activists in Khan Eshieh camp for Palestinian refugees have launched calls for wearing face masks to prevent coronavirus contaminations.

The following hastagh “mask is not a sin” has been circulated to urge the residents to abide by such a preventive tip. Photos of a number of Khan Eshieh residents wearing masks have also been posted on social media.

Concerns have mounted over a striking increase in coronavirus cases in and around Palestinian refugee camps in Syria, where the number of confirmed infections has already soared.

Medics sounded distress signals over the acute shortage in staff and equipment along with fuel needed to operate power generators at hospitals. The number of infections is estimated to get at least three times higher.

The Health Ministry's coronavirus team said wearing face masks and respecting social distancing has become an obligation at commercial centers and public facilities. Those who violate such orders will have to pay a fine of 8,000 Syrian pounds.



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Along similar lines, coronavirus cases have been increasingly reported south of Damascus, where hundreds of Palestinian families have been sheltered.

Local sources told AGPS that a number of infected persons succumbed to the lethal virus in Yarmouk and AlSabina refugee camps. An estimated 1,500 cases have been reported in the area.

The Syrian authorities shut down the popular market, swimming pools, and sports halls in AlSabina and AlHusainiya following a swift propagation of COVID-19 among the residents. The government urged the residents to keep to social distancing and wear face masks.

Over recent months, AGPS has warned of a projected outbreak of COVID-19 in Palestinian refugee camps in Syria. Though campaigns to help spread awareness among the camps' residents have seen the day, limited access to running water, pharmacies and medical facilities mean displacement camps are more susceptible to the spread of the highly infectious virus.

Displacement camps set up in northern Syria are especially vulnerable as most hospitals and medical facilities have been bombed, rendering them out of order.

Meanwhile, parents of Palestinian refugee student enrolled at AlTabegha School, run by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), met on Sunday with education officials at the school.



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The meeting was convened at the invitation of the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees (GAPAR) to discuss the situation of Palestinian students at AlTabegha School, in Yarmouk Camp, among other schools in Syria.

Yarmouk's education chief, Walid AlKurdi, said the meeting discussed students' output/input along with the difficulties they face throughout the academic year.

The parents called for opening schools on time and securing means of transportation to and back from schools.

Upon more than one occasion, the UN has raised alarm bells over the striking upsurge in the rate of school dropouts among the Palestinians of Syria, several among whom have left schools to help feeding their impoverished families in unemployment-stricken refugee camps.

Available data by UNRWA indicates that 32 UNRWA facilities have been reduced to rubble in Yarmouk Camp alone, including 16 schools, in the Syrian conflict.

Several other UNRWA facilities were destroyed in the Syrian warfare and others have gone out of operation, including two clinics, a vocational training center, a youth development center, and 28 schools, out of 112 UNRWA schools in Syria.

In the meantime, three Palestinian families from Syria are about to go homeless in Athens after authorities ordered them to evacuate their European-funded rooms.



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The families comprise 19 members, including a six-year-old girl diagnosed with bone cancer. They fled Yarmouk and AlAyedeen refugee camps in Syria to seek a safer shelter.

Palestinian refugees from Syria continue to risk their lives onboard the “death boats” to Greece, rummaging around for a momentary respite from the daily scenes of bloodshed and destruction. AGPS has kept record of the death of dozens of refugees onboard Greece-bound ships. Several others have been arrested by Turkish coast guards.

Activists estimate that around 4,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria are taking cover on such Greek islands as Lesbos, Mytilene, Chios, Leros, and Kos, among other areas.