



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



"Residents of Handarat Camp Enduring Protracted Displacement"

- Charity Banquet Held in Yarmouk Camp
- Palestinian Brothers Mohamed and Samir Abu Shteivi Forcibly Disappeared in Syria
- Turkey Rescues 35 Migrants Pushed Back from Greece
- Meals Handed Over to Displaced Palestinian Families in Lebanon

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Latest Developments

Ten years into the Syrian conflict, Palestinian refugees displaced from Handarat Camp, in Aleppo, to Latakia city have been confronted with increased hardship due to protracted displacement and the loss of livelihoods.

Some eight years ago, precisely on April 27, 2013, Palestinian refugee families fled the camp in mass due to deadly shelling. They sought refuge in university dormitories and government shelters in and around Aleppo. Scores of other families risked their lives onboard Europe-bound “death-boats”.

The situation is made worse by the socio-economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic and the price leap.

Dozens of families displaced from Handarat Camp continue to call on UNRWA, the Syrian authorities, and international humanitarian organizations to facilitate their return to the camp and work on reconstructing destroyed houses and vital facilities.

Heavy shelling on Handarat and bloody shootouts between the government forces and the opposition outfits led to the destruction of over 90% of buildings in the camp. The confrontations culminated in the government’s takeover of the camp along with other areas in Aleppo and the displacement of its residents on April 27, 2013.



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UN data indicates that Handarat camp (also known as Ein El-Tal camp) is on a hillside 13km north-east of the city of Aleppo in the Syrian Arab Republic. The camp was established in 1962 on an area of 0.16 square kilometers. Most of the inhabitants are refugees who fled from northern Palestine.

Ein El Tal camp was once home to around 7,000 residents. Around three hundred families moved to newly constructed houses in Ein El-Tal from Neirab camp under a 2003 project to reduce overcrowding in Neirab.

In April 2013, armed groups entered Ein El-Tal camp, forcibly displacing the entire population over a period of some 48 hours. The camp was a theatre of armed conflict until 2016, sustaining extreme damage in the process.

In the summer of 2017, families started to return to Ein El-Tal camp. Most of these families had been displaced to a government collective shelter in Aleppo city. As of the end of 2018, there are 90 Palestine refugee families that have returned. The camp is almost completely destroyed and lacks basic infrastructure including water, sewage and electricity.

In another development, the Palestine Liberation Organization held a fast-breaking banquet for 200 families living in Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus.

The residents hailed the move, which they said comes at a time of multiple hardships inflicted by years of protracted displacement and the coronavirus pandemic.



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Meanwhile, Palestinian refugees Mohamed and Samir Ibrahim Abu Shteivi have been secretly held in Syrian government prisons since 2013.

The family told AGPS that Mohamed, born in 1957, was arrested on March 10, 2013 at a government checkpoint in Rif Dimashq. Samir was arrested in April 2013 at a checkpoint in Sehnaya town. Their condition and whereabouts could not be identified.

Lists of hundreds of forcibly disappeared Palestinian refugees and victims in Syria are available on AGPS website, both in English and Arabic. AGPS supplies a database of their names and possible times and places of arrest.

AGPS has documented the secret detention of over 1,790 Palestinian refugees, including women and minors, in Syrian government lock-ups.

In the meantime, Turkey on Tuesday rescued 53 asylum seekers in the Aegean Sea who were pushed back by the Greek Coast Guard into Turkish territorial waters, a security official said.

The asylum seekers, who were stranded on a rubber boat off the coast of the Karaburun district in Turkey's western Izmir province, were rescued by the Turkish Coast Guard, said the official on condition of anonymity due to restrictions on speaking to the media.

Turkey and human rights groups have repeatedly condemned Greece's illegal practice of pushing back asylum seekers, saying it



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violates humanitarian values and international law by endangering the lives of vulnerable migrants, including women and children.

Humanitarian Action

Activists, in cooperation with Saned – Europe group, distributed 200 meals to displaced Palestinian and Syrian families in Lebanon's western and central AlBekaa region.

The move makes part of a relief campaign launched by Palestinian activists in Europe and funded by individual donors to provide 2,000 meals for the displaced families until May 2, 2021.

In its fact sheet entitled "Syria Regional Crisis Emergency Appeal 2021", UNRWA said that Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) in Lebanon are grappling with increased hardship and vulnerability, due to long-term displacement and difficult socio-economic conditions, coupled with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to UNRWA, 87% of PRS live in poverty in the Lebanese territories.

Nearly 65% of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (PRL) live in poverty.

UNRWA's factsheet indicates that 257,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are in need of UNRWA emergency cash assistance.



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Over 470,000 refugees are registered with UNRWA in Lebanon. About 45 per cent of them live in the country's 12 refugee camps. Conditions in the camps are dire and characterized by overcrowding, poor housing conditions, unemployment, poverty and lack of access to justice.

Palestinians in Lebanon do not enjoy several important rights; for example, they cannot work in many professions and cannot own property (real estate). Because they are not formally citizens of another state, Palestine refugees are unable to claim the same rights as other foreigners living and working in Lebanon.