

الخاص بأوضاع اللجئين الفلسطينيينفي سورية The situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria

Damascus Governor: Efforts Ongoing to Rehabilitate Yarmouk Refugee Camp

- AGPS Conducts Poll about Palestinian Refugees' Salaries in Syria
- Palestinians among Dozens of Asylum Seekers Deported from Serbia
- Palestinian-Syrian Sportsman Garners High Score at Damascus Competition

### **Latest Developments**

Damascus Governor Mohamed Tareq Kreshati said efforts have been under progress to rehabilitate vital services in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees.

He said several reconstruction drives have seen the day in cooperation with CSOs and concerned authorities.

In a statement released during the inauguration of Nour Centre for Community Development, the governor said starting next week buses will be transferring the residents back to and from the camp.

He added that so far, nearly 5,000 families have returned to Yarmouk refugee camp.

According to the official, debris has been removed from access roads and the water and power networks are being repaired.

Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, Talel Naji said efforts have been ongoing to facilitate the families' return to their homes at the soonest possible time.



In another development, more than a decade since the conflict in Syria began, the number of Syrians at risk of hunger has reached record high levels. The average cost of food in the country has, for months, been the highest.



Palestinians and Syrians trying to survive in the war-torn country continue to work for minimum wages.

In a poll conducted by AGPS, a Palestinian refugee said he had resigned from a job offering him no more than 160,000 Syrian pounds, which does not cover the cost of living in Damascus.

Another refugee said he also quitted his job and decided to work as a driver as his previous wage does not cover basic needs.

Economic researcher Younes Karim said the wage ceiling in Syria is 20 - 35 USD due to the decline in the purchasing value of the Syrian pound.

Over recent years, Palestinian refugee camps in Syria have been witnessing an increasing number of cases of counterfeiting and promotion of counterfeit currency, and traders and residents in the camps have fallen victim to the counterfeit dollar, which has caused many to lose their money in light of the sharp collapse in the value of the Syrian pound.

UN data indicates that an estimated 12.4 million people - about 60% of Syria's population – suffer from food insecurity.

Syria faces multiple, interlinked crises. While active conflict has abated somewhat over the past year, rampant inflation and a severely struggling economy have increased needs to the point that they are outpacing families' abilities to cope.

Every day, Syrians can afford to buy less of what they need to survive. Their incomes and savings are declining in value as the costs of necessary goods – water, food, fuel, electricity – are increasing, becoming out of reach. On average, households are now spending 50% more than their incomes.

Families can no longer afford the fuel to run generators to power their homes, transport, and water systems. Across Syria, many people have less than four hours of public electricity per day. Higher fuel prices mean transport and daily labor is more expensive. Farmers have less money to plant their fields, while it costs more to irrigate their crops and transport their harvests to market.

Russia and Ukraine are among the most important grain exporters for the Middle East. According to the United Nations, the conflict



in Ukraine could lead to a shortage of wheat supplies to the region. They report that Syria has already reacted by rationing its grain reserves, which has impacted prices for basic foods, such as bread and flour.

Environmental shocks, including record low rainfall, are also driving hunger. This year, Syria faced the worst drought in 70 years, crippling the expected harvest. Wheat production in 2021 was estimated to be about 1.045 million tons in 2021, down from 2.8 million in 2020, and only a quarter of the pre-crisis average.

Limited rainfall, as well as the decimated water infrastructure throughout the country, means that growing capacity – and the costs for farmers to try and make a living - is intolerably high.



In the meantime, Serbian authorities conducted an operation in Sombor city that led to the detention of dozens of migrants, including 17 Palestinian refugees.

The undocumented migrants were reportedly taken to reception centers pending their forced deportation to camps set up in borders with Macedonia.

Police burned down tents in and around Sombor and attacked abandoned houses where migrants have been taking cover.



In the meantime, Palestinian sportsman Mohamed Ibrahim AlBakhit came on top of the list in the Syrian Arab Republic Championship for Sports Clubs, held in Latakia.

Muhammad, born and raised in Jaramana camp for Palestinian refugees, won the first place in the collective kata competition, and the third place in collective fighting.

The tournament was organized by the Syrian Karate Federation.

Hundreds of displaced Palestinian refugees in/from Syria have achieved success stories, despite the traumatic upshots wrought by the daily scenes of bloodshed and destruction across the embattled Syrian territories.

This includes scores of refugee students who have obtained the highest scores at their academic institutions; hundreds of refugee sportsmen/sportswomen who snatched the first places in regional and international competitions; dozens of artists who received renowned literary awards for their products and performances; and several housewives who turned trauma into a space of creativity.