



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

03-08-2020

No. 2841

التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Family Arrested on Way to Turkey"

- Situation of Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon Exacerbated by Lockdown, Price Leap
- Muslim Prayers Suspended in Palestinian Refugee Camp
- 8 Years On, Tragic Traces of AlJa'ouna Massacre Still Present in Yarmouk Camp

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Latest developments

Palestinian refugee Maymoun Naser, born in 1985, was arrested by Syrian security forces last week as he tried to cross Idlib borderlands with his wife and two children, trying to get to safety to Turkey.

Local sources told AGPS that Maymoun's wife and two twin infants have been held at a health center in Aleppo. The father's condition and whereabouts could not be identified.

In another development, the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon has been exacerbated by the anti-coronavirus movement restrictions and absence of humanitarian and medical assistance in the Lebanese territories.

Prices have also skyrocketed in the Middle Eastern country, overburdening the cash-stripped families.

UNRWA has identified PRS in Lebanon as one of the most marginalized and poorest communities in the region.

In its 2020 Syria crisis emergency appeal, UNRWA said that PRS in Lebanon continue to face high vulnerability and marginalization, making them heavily reliant on UNRWA humanitarian support to cover their basic needs. The socio-economic hardships and unrest experienced by the country have compounded PRS' already dire living conditions.

According to a survey conducted by the American University of Beirut in 2015, nearly 90 percent of the PRS population in



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Lebanon live in poverty, including 9 per cent who are in extreme poverty and unable to meet even their most essential food requirements.

PRS's vulnerability is further compounded by their precarious legal status. The lack of a valid legal status, often coupled with outdated civil registration documents, results in severely restricted freedom of movement for some PRS in Lebanon due to fear of arrest, detention or forced deportation.

In the meantime, activists have urged the residents of Khan Eshieh camp for Palestinian refugees to abide by the decision of the Syrian Health Ministry announced on Sunday to suspend congregational prayers at mosques in and around Damascus for 15 days as of Monday to prevent a coronavirus outbreak in the area.

Local sources told AGPS that a number of coronavirus cases have been confirmed in the camp. The residents continue to deny such reports over bullying concerns.

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 means displacement camps are more susceptible to the spread of the highly infectious virus.

According to UN data, Khan Eshieh camp lies beside the ancient ruins of Khan Eshieh, 27km south-west of Damascus. The Khan historically served as an overnight shelter for trade caravans on the



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road between Damascus and the southwest, and in 1948, it provided shelter for the first refugees from Palestine. The camp was established in 1949 on an area of 0.69 square kilometers with refugees originally from the northern part of Palestine.

Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was home to more than 20,000 Palestine refugees. In 2012, the farms and fields surrounding the camp became active battlegrounds in which heavy weapons were deployed, often indiscriminately. The population more than halved to 9,000.

Some of the camp's buildings and infrastructure were severely affected including some UNRWA installations; two UNRWA schools and the community centre were almost razed to the ground. In 2016, UNRWA was able to re-access Khan Esheih and the Agency was able to rehabilitate some of its installations. Residents have also slowly started to return, with the camp now accommodating 12,000 people.

Meanwhile, eight years have passed by since AlJa'ouna massacre, perpetrated on August 2, 2012, took away the lives of over 20 Palestinians in Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus, among them children. Several other Palestinians were left wounded after two mortar shells slammed into the area prior to iftar (fast-breaking) time.

The list of casualties includes the two children Anas Talouzi and Ibrahim Talouzi, along with Yahya Alyan, Fathi Alyan, Alaa Ghuneim, Mohamed Anbatawi, Rafe' AlRefa'i, Abdullah Saleh (aged 13), Mohamed Msheiness, Ahmed Areisha, Mohamed Rafe'



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Ali AlRefa'I (aged 27), Wael Adnan Atiyeh AlAhmed, Bahaa Ayoub (aged 21), Mahmoud Qanah, Alaa Mohamed Ghuneim, Muhssin Walid Msheinesh, Osama Akram Areisha, Yahya Ismail Alyan, Khairou Ahmed Hamida, and Emad Salah AlDin Qadah.

Scores of stranded families fled Yarmouk following the 33-day military operation launched by the government forces on April 19, 2018. The Syrian government forces regained control over the camp and southern Damascus towns following the operation. Dozens of civilians were killed and dozens more injured in the offensive. Over 60% of buildings have gone either totally or partially destroyed in the warfare.

Last year, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) published the results of an assessment of the damage to Syrian cities caused by seven years of relentless bombardment by the incumbent regime and its allies since 2011.

The analysis found out that as many as 5,489 buildings were destroyed in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees. The damage atlas used satellite-detected damage analysis to identify buildings that are either destroyed, or severely or moderately damaged.