



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

09-08-2020

No. 2847

التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Refugee Students Achieve Excellent Academic Results in Syria"

- UN Agency Highlights Needs of Vulnerable Palestine Refugee Families in Wake of Beirut Explosion
- 265 Palestinian Refugees Affiliated with PLA Killed in War-Torn Syria
- Syria's Khan Dannun Camp for Palestinian Refugees Subjected to Dire Conditions
- 35 Migrants Pushed Back to Turkish Waters from Greece

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Latest developments

A number of Palestinian students garnered excellent marks at high school exams (main session) for the scientific and literary branches across the Syrian territories.

The results were released by the Syrian Ministry of Education on August 8, 2020.

Palestinian girl Israa Mohamed AlRefa'i, raised in Yarmouk displacement camp, in Damascus, has received the highest score (3100/3100) as part of 9th grade exams at Mahmoud Yousef Issa alternative school.

Naya Mohamed Saleh Abdul Al also got the highest score in Aleppo and Syria (3100).

Palestinian sisters Hana and Rana Ahmed Zaki Khayrat, from AlAyedeen refugee camp, in Hama, also got the highest scores in Hama city. Their father died under torture in Syrian jails.

Dozens of displaced Palestinian refugees have achieved success stories, despite of the traumatic upshots wrought by daily scenes of bloodshed and destruction across the embattled Syrian territories. Thousands of children have gone orphaned after they lost one or both of their parents in the deadly warfare.

The conflict in Syria has had traumatic fallouts on Palestinian refugee children in and outside of Syria. Post-traumatic stress disorders, mental psychosis, sleeplessness and nightmares, eating



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disorders, and intense fear have all been reported among Palestinian children from Syria.

In another development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has expressed its concerns over the condition of Palestinian refugee families after the catastrophic explosion in the port of Beirut.

UNRWA said in a statement that it fears that the aftermath of the blast will hit the vulnerable communities in Lebanon the hardest, sinking people such as Palestine refugees further into despair.

The explosion that shook Beirut on 4 August has destroyed most of Lebanon's grain reservoir when the silos where the grains are stored collapsed along with most of Beirut's harbor. The harbor is the main commercial entry point to Lebanon, a country that imports most of what its population consumes.

The explosion that shook Beirut on 4 August has destroyed most of Lebanon's grain reservoir when the silos where the grains are stored collapsed along with most of Beirut's harbor. (Photo via Twitter)

This tragic incident is the latest in a series of events that have plunged Lebanon in the most serious existential crisis of its recent history, and comes on the heel of the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis on people's health and livelihoods.



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“The entire country is shaken by the scale of the damage, something that we fear will add further hardship on already vulnerable communities,” said Claudio Cordone, Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon. “Palestine refugees are already amongst the most vulnerable in the country, many of them largely depending on emergency cash assistance that they receive from the Agency to be able to feed their families.”

UNRWA said that the huge financial and economic challenges that are sweeping across the country have put a large percentage of the population under the poverty line. The lockdown and restrictions caused by COVID-19 stripped vulnerable communities, including Palestine refugees, from the meager access they had to employment opportunities.

While the harbor explosion did not have a major physical impact on Palestine refugee camps and UNRWA installations, the overall effect on the country will most likely affect the vulnerable communities most.

“Everyone in Lebanon needs support in the aftermath of this traumatic event, including Palestine refugees, who are in particular need of a lifeline,” said Cordone. “The international aid community must include Palestine refugees in its immediate emergency response, hence the need to ensure that they continue receiving much needed cash assistance so that they can buy food and stay safe.”

“Every dollar UNRWA receives in Lebanon will go towards supporting Palestine refugee families. UNRWA will also need



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financial support to boost the economic recovery and livelihoods for Palestine refugees”, he added.

UNRWA said it has made its medical warehouses and logistics available and remains ready to contribute to the overall UN humanitarian effort in the country.

Along similar lines, Palestinian refugee families taking shelter in Khan Dannun camp, in Rif Dimashq, continue to rail against the poor infrastructure and absence of vital facilities in the area.

Water supplies have been repeatedly cut off across residential neighborhoods in Khan Dannun, forcing civilians to by drinking water from privately-owned tanks at steep prices. Ther residents have also denounced the ongoing electricity blackout.

At the same time, the families have spoken out against the mistreatment they have been subjected to by staff members at a UNRWA-run clinic in the camp.

According to UN data, Khan Dannun camp was built several centuries ago to give overnight accommodation to trading caravans on the ancient route between Jerusalem and Constantinople (modern day Istanbul). In 1948, the ruins of the city provided shelter for refugees from villages in northern Palestine.

The camp, which lies 23 km south of Damascus, was officially established in 1950-1951 on an area of 0.03 square kilometers. The camp was home to 10,000 Palestine refugees by 2011, almost all of



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whom were living in irregular housing, constructed without any formal approval from the municipality.

Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was already one of the poorest camps in Syria. The conflict exerted additional pressures. The camp was surrounded by armed opposition groups and many refugee families displaced from other areas of Damascus took refuge in the camp, tripling the number of residents to some 30,000 during the crisis. Currently, the camp is home to 12,650 Palestine refugees. The increase of the camp population has had a negative impact on the camp's infrastructure.

Meanwhile, 265 Palestinian refugees fighting alongside PLA forces were pronounced dead since the outbreak of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Most of the casualties died in such Rif Dimashq areas as Tel Kurdi and Tel Sawan and also in AlSweida region, south of Syria.

15 PLA members were pronounced dead after they broke away from the battalion. Several others were tortured to death in Syrian government jails.

Scores of Palestinian youths have been forced to join the PLA. Those who refuse forced conscription are often subjected to manhunt and imprisonment. Thousands of young men have fled the country in the hunt for a safer shelter.



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Sometime earlier, the PLA's Chief of Staff, Major General Tareq AlKhadra, said nearly 6,000 conscripts have been fighting alongside PLA at over 15 sites across war-ravaged Syria.

In the meantime, Greek coast guard has repulsed on Sunday a boat carrying 35 irregular migrants.

The migrant raft was intercepted by Greek coast guard and pushed back to Turkey, leaving dozens at the risk of death.

Human rights activists said several migrants sailing from Aegean coast have been forced back to Turkey by Greek police over recent years.

The activists slammed the Greek authorities for violating European Union treaties and human rights conventions.

Activists have held the Greek authorities responsible for the mounting tension in overcrowded migrant facilities, saying refugees have been psychologically distressed due to the substandard living conditions they have been made to endure in reception centers and the absence of life-saving healthcare services at a time when reports of coronavirus cases have soared.

The migrants, including hundreds of Palestinian refugees, have been subjected to dire conditions on the island and deprived of their basic human rights, including access to water, power, and relief services.



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Recently, human rights groups have warned that Greek police have been using tear gas, water cannon, and stun grenades to push back the border crossers.

Greek authorities have made no secret of their resolve and even their use of aggressive tactics to block illegal crossings. But the government in Athens is denying accusations of deadly attacks on migrants.

In a March 17 report last year, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said Greek security forces and unidentified armed men at the Greece-Turkey land border have detained, assaulted, sexually assaulted, robbed, and stripped asylum seekers and migrants, then forced them back to Turkey.