



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



"Children in Yarmouk Camp for Palestine Refugees Pluck Up Courage & Join Schools"

- UNRWA Honors Laureate Palestinian Student from Syria's Daraa Camp
- 4 Palestinian Refugees Arrested by Syrian Security Forces in Rif Dimashq
- As Thousands of Palestinians Fall Prey to Forced Disappearance, Syrian President Issues Amnesty to Cut Criminal Sentences

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Latest Developments

Despite the traumatic fallouts brought about by Syria's relentless warfare, Palestinian children sheltered in Yarmouk refugee camp have returned to their schools as of September 3, in a move backed up by the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees.

With dozens of families denied access to their homes in the camp and hundreds of school children walking for dozens of kilometers to get into their schools, civilians have voiced deep concern over their children's academic performance with the advent of the new school year.



Schoolchildren gather at around 11 a.m. in Salah AlDeen Street, Safad Street, and the crossroads of Haifa and Loubiya streets, awaiting public means of transport to give them a lift to their schools.

Sometime earlier, Yarmouk's education chief, Walid AlKurdi, said a meeting between the director of the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees, Ali Mustafa, and UNRWA's Commissioner-General, Pierre Krahenbuhl, along with UNRWA's director of operations in Syria, Michael Amanaia, culminated in



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serious promises to rehabilitate educational premises in Yarmouk Camp.

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

Several 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.

The residents continue to call on concerned authorities to open up local schools, recruit qualified teaching staff, and secure transportation means back to and from the camp.

In another development, UNRWA paid tribute to Palestinian student Sai'd Mahmoud Sa'id, enrolled at Ein AlZaytoun School (9th grade) in AlMuzeireeb, south of Syria, after he garnered the highest score at the institution.

The ceremony was held by UNRWA, in cooperation with the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees.



Dozens of schoolchildren were pronounced dead in government onslaughts on UNRWA-run schools in Syria.



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A massacre perpetrated by the government military on Ein AlZaytoun school on February 18, 2014 took away the lives of over 15 Palestinian schoolchildren.

UNRWA figures have shown that 70% of all the Agency's schools in Syria are inoperative. This is due to school buildings being destroyed, damaged, rendered inaccessible by fighting, or because they have been turned into shelters housing the displaced.

The devastating impact of the war in Syria has diminished the academic achievement of students in UN-run schools as educational facilities had come under heavy shelling by the Syrian and Russian forces.

Meanwhile, four Palestinian refugees were detained by Syria's government forces in a manhunt targeting residents of Qudsaya, in Rif Dimashq.

According to Sawt AlAsima news website, a Syrian government patrol arrested on Friday, September 13, two Palestinian youths after they broke into their home in AlSakhriya neighborhood.

A squad from the Fourth Division deployed on the outskirts of the city also arrested two other young men on their way back from their workplaces in Qudsaya.

The security forces tightened military grip, restricting civilians' free access out of and into the area.

Displaced Palestinian families taking shelter in Qudsaya town, in Rif Dimashq, continue to sound the alarm over the security turmoil overwhelming the area and the heavy deployment of political security forces across residential alleyways.



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Local activists said a number of young men were arrested by the government security forces in Qudsaya without explainable reasons, amid rising concerns about forced military conscription at pro-government squads.

Some 6,000 Palestinian families displaced from Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus, continue to face dire socio-economic conditions in Qudsaya.

Along the same line, Syria's President Bashar AlAssad has issued a decree to release or decrease the punishment of various prisoners, including some detained under the war-torn country's "terrorism law".

“The president promulgated decree No. 20 for 2019 that grants general amnesty for crimes committed before September 14 this year,” the Syrian presidency posted on Facebook.

The so-called "general amnesty" is the latest in a line of such decrees, including one in 2014 that saw thousands released. Sunday's decree also promised to reduce sentences of some detainees.

It would include freeing some prisoners detained under a 2012 "terrorism law", using a catch-all term for anti-government activists and rebels.

Those imprisoned under the 2012 law over "conspiracy" or failing to inform the authorities of an act of "terrorism" are to be released, according to the decree. But the amnesty does not extend to those condemned over killing someone or rendering them paralyzed.



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Exceptions aside, prisoners sentenced to death are instead to serve life in jail with hard labor. Those sentenced to a life of hard labor are instead to work for 20 years, and those handed a life sentence are to do time for 20 years instead.

Prisoners with incurable diseases over the age of 75 years old and who have been condemned would also be released.

Deserters who hand themselves over within three months inside Syria or six months outside the country are to be exempted from punishment. The same goes for kidnappers who release their hostages safe and sound within the next month.

In 2014, after securing a new term in a controversial election conducted only in government-controlled areas, Assad issued an amnesty. Later the same year, a minister said around 11,000 detainees had been released.

But the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, said the number released was close to 7,000 -- just a tenth of prisoners that had been expected to benefit.

Upon more than once occasion, AGPS has called on the Syrian government to disclose the fate of hundreds of Palestinians forcibly disappeared in state-run dungeons.

AGPS believes that the arbitrary internment of Palestinian refugees in war-torn Syria amounts to a war crime.

According to AGPS statistics, over 540 Palestinian refugees, including scores of women and dozens of minors, died under torture in Syrian government lock-ups. Several causalities were identified through live snapshots leaked from Syrian penal



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complexes, where over 1,700 Palestinian refugees continue to be secretly jailed.