



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



UNRWA
الاونروا

"AGPS Urges UN Refugee Agency to Protect Rights of Day Workers"

- Coronavirus Claims Life of 1st Palestinian Refugee in Netherlands
- Displaced Palestinian Families in Syria's Khan Eshieh Camp Left without Bread for 3rd Week
- Anti-Coronavirus Sterilization Drives Held in Daraa Refugee Camp

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Latest Developments

The London-based Action Group for Palestinians of Syria (AGPS) has called on the UN Works and Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to protect the rights of day laborers particularly in light of the socio-economic discomfort inflicted by COVID-19 outbreaks.

In a Tuesday statement, AGPS urged UNRWA to reconsider a decision to suspend the wages of day laborers after its operations got curtailed in its five fields of operations as part of the anti-coronavirus battle.

AGPS said the diminution in UNRWA operations is the outcome of agreements made with host countries to prevent further COVID-19 contaminations, rather than a personal decision willingly taken by the workers themselves.



AGPS said the decision has sparked panic among the Palestinian refugee community in Syria and other areas where Palestinian families have been struggling to provide for their families.

In light of the coronavirus crisis and the unprecedented employment rates rocking the region, the decision will result in a further deterioration of the calamitous humanitarian condition



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endured by Palestinian refugee workers. UNRWA represents a lifeline for nearly 95% of Palestinian refugees in Syria, many of whom work in favor of the agency on a daily or monthly basis.

UNRWA's decision stands in sharp contrast to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. UNRWA should live up to its legal, moral, and humanitarian responsibilities regarding Palestinian refugees and work on securing the financial dues of workers and their families.

AGPS also stresses the need for UNRWA to provide Palestinian refugees with vital services, much-needed food and non-food items, and life-saving medical assistance.

A few days earlier, UNRWA's Human Resources chief said day laborers will be laid off due to financial difficulties.

AGPS believes that responses to coronavirus outbreaks should not be made at the expense of workers' sole livelihoods and to the detriment of their humanitarian needs.

In another development, a Palestinian refugee from Syria has succumbed to the novel coronavirus COVID-19 in the Netherlands, Palestinian activists have reported.

The victim, Hasan Tershahani, aged 72, was pronounced dead a few days after he left a hospital in the Netherlands, to which he was transferred after COVID-19 symptoms figured on his body. He tested positive for coronavirus.

A few days earlier, medics said he recovered from the virus and gave him a permission to go back home. He breathed his last shortly after.



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Human rights sources said the casualty was born in 1943 in Tershiha town, in Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1948. He fled with his family to Syria following the 1948 “Nakba” (catastrophe). He had taken refuge in Aleppo’s AlNeirab camp and headed for the Netherlands following the outbreak of the Syrian conflict.



On Monday, the Dutch Health Ministry reported 864 cases of coronavirus-related deaths, after 93 persons succumbed to the virus. Another 884 persons were contaminated, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in the country to 11,750.

Meanwhile, a number of Palestinian families sheltered in Khan Eshieh refugee camp, in Rif Dimashq, said they have been striving to fetch bread loafs in the area.

The residents said the promises recently made by the local development committee, including adding another 1,300 kilograms to the bread quantity previously allotted to AlJalil Bakery by Monday March 30, 2020, have not materialized on the ground.



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They added that extended families receive a maximum of seven bread loafs per every three days, forcing the cash-stripped civilians to purchase bread from other distributors at extremely steep prices.

A few days earlier, a set of measures was announced to control bread distribution in the camp and prevent long queues and overcrowding.

Over recent years, residents of Khan Eshieh camp have spoken up against the poor-quality bread sold in the area, saying it is unfit for human consumption and holding the government's quality control staff responsible for the crisis.

Living conditions in Khan Eshieh have sharply deteriorated due to the lack of financial resources and high unemployment rates wrought by the raging warfare. A transportation crisis has added bad to worse.

After eight years of conflict, Palestine refugees continue to be one of the most vulnerable groups in Syria with immense humanitarian needs.

Survival for the majority of Palestinian families in war-stricken Syria has largely hinged on relief assistance. The vast majority of families have been living below the poverty line.

In the meantime, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has embarked on a sterilization campaign in Daraa refugee camp, south of Syria, in cooperation with local civil committees.

The move comes as part of responses to the novel coronavirus COVID-19.



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Streets were disinfected and chlorine tablets distributed in order to help civilians sterilize water tanks and other property.

All the way through Syria's eight-year conflict, residents of Daraa Camp for Palestinian refugees, south of Syria, have been grappling with dire humanitarian conditions owing to the high rates of unemployment and absence of vital facilities. The propagation of coronavirus means that hundreds of Palestinian refugees will be left at the threat of contamination, in an area where neither healthcare services nor hygiene kit are made accessible.

