



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

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التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"16 Palestinians among 95 People Executed in Syria's Saydanaya Military Prison"

- **Palestinian Refugee Tortured to Death in Syrian Jail**
- **32 Palestinian Residents of Handarat Camp Forcibly Disappeared in Syrian Detention Centers**
- **New Website Documents Collective Memory of Palestinian Refugee Camps**

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Victims

AGPS documented the death of Palestinian refugee Bilal Ibrahim AlSagheir, from ALAyedeen Camp in Hums, due to torture in Syrian government lock-ups, where he had been held for seven years.

Bilal was arrested at the Duwar Tadmur checkpoint on October 11, 2012.

AGPS documented the death of 590 Palestinian refugees as a result of heavy torture in Syria's state-run penal complexes.



Latest Developments

Brigadier General and political analyst Ahmad Rahal said the Syrian government at daybreak Tuesday, April 30, executed 95 prisoners in the Saydanaya (also spelled Sednaya) military jail, north of Damascus.

The list includes 14 prisoners charged with murder, rape, or forced robbery and 81 others convicted of terrorism or affiliations with a terror organization.



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On his Facebook page, Rahal said of those executed 16 are Palestinian refugees taking shelter in Syria, three Christians, a Druze, and a Saudi national. The other victims are holders of Jordanian, Lebanese, or Egyptian nationalities.

The prisoners were transferred from Adra jail and other penal complexes to Saydanaya military prison in batches last week. Death sentences were issued against them in 2011, 2012, and 2013, pending the final approval of the court verdicts.



The death sentences were carried out by the military police under the administrative order No. 228 of 2019 issued by the Defense Minister. Director of Saydanaya prison, a doctor, and security delegates attended the execution scene.

According to the same source, a new batch of detainees is expected to reach Saydanaya jail in the next few days. Up to 1,100 are expected to be executed.

AGPS has been deeply concerned about the simmering executions carried out against detainees, among them Palestinian refugees, in Syria's Sednaya military prison.



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A report published by the Washington Post daily last year said President Bashar AlAssad's army is doubling down on executions of political prisoners, with military judges accelerating the pace they issue death sentences.

Quoting survivors of the country's most notorious prison, the newspaper said more than two dozen Syrians released from the Sednaya military prison in Damascus last year described a government campaign to clear the decks of political detainees. The former inmates said prisoners are being transferred from jails across Syria to join death-row detainees in Sednaya's basement and then be executed in pre-dawn hangings.

Some of the former prisoners had themselves been sentenced to hang, escaping that fate only after relatives paid tens of thousands of dollars to secure their freedom. Others described overhearing conversations between guards relating to the transfer of prisoners to be killed. The men all spoke on the condition that their full names not be disclosed out of fear for their families' safety.

There have also been reports of many prisoners who died of malnutrition, medical neglect or physical abuse, often after a psychological breakdown.

Satellite imagery of the Sednaya prison grounds taken in March 2018 shows an accumulation of dozens of dark objects that experts said were consistent with human bodies. The imagery was obtained by The Washington Post, which asked forensic experts to review it.



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Other satellite imagery of military land near Damascus, previously identified by Amnesty International as a location of mass graves, appeared to show an increase in the number of burial pits and headstones in at least one cemetery there since the start of 2018. Defectors who worked in the military prison system said this area, located south of the capital, is the likely location for the mass burial of Sednaya prisoners.

A chilling Amnesty International report published in 2017, exposed the “cold-blooded killing of thousands of defenseless prisoners” in a Syrian government jail where an estimated 13,000 people have been hanged in the past five years, and where mass hangings of up to 50 people at a time occur every week, sometimes twice a week.

Most of those hanged were civilians believed to have been opposed to the government, with the killings taking place in great secrecy in the middle of the night. The executions take place after one- or two-minute lawyer-less “trials” using “confessions” extracted through torture, added Amnesty.

Several cases referred to by Amnesty International match data released by AGPS as regards the psycho-physical torture and the dire detention circumstances in Syrian government jails.

AGPS kept record of the secret incarceration of over 1,700 Palestinian refugees in Syrian state penitentiaries. Dozens are feared to be among the casualties of the Sednaya mass-executions.

Based on affidavits and interviews held with activists, ex-detainees, and families of missing Palestinians, AGPS found out that more



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than 560 Palestinians were tortured to death in Syrian state jails, including in Sednaya lock-up.

The figures are expected to be much higher due to difficulties in the documentation process and the government reticence to disclose the fate of Palestinian refugees held in Syrian penal complexes. Difficulties in documentation also stem from the families' reluctance to reveal the fate of their missing relatives over retaliation concerns.

Along the same line, 32 Palestinian refugees taking shelter in Handarat Camp, north of Aleppo, have been secretly incarcerated in Syrian government prisons.

AGPS kept record of the names of 1,750 Palestinians, including 107 women and girls, secretly incarcerated in Syrian state penitentiaries, where 590 refugees also died under torture.

AGPS calls 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.

Many reports issued by AGPS, such as "Enforced Disappearance 1," "Enforced Disappearance 2," and the "Pictures Massacre," provide details about the Palestinian victims of torture and enforced disappearance during the bloody conflict.

AGPS kept record of several cases where Palestinians have been kidnapped at government checkpoints or during assaults carried



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out by government troops on Palestinian refugee camps and shelters. In most such cases, the detainees' families receive their relatives' bodies from a military or government hospital while wrapped up in a plastic bag or in a blood-tainted piece of cloth.

In the meantime, Palestinian activists from Yarmouk Camp launched a website dubbed "yarmoukcamp.net" in an attempt to preserve the collective memory of the Palestinian refugee community in Yarmouk and other refugee camps.

Speaking with AGPS, the founding activists said the move aims to keep record of the socio-political and cultural idiosyncrasies of the Palestinian refugee experience, particularly inside refugee camps, and to help create a psycho-historical springboard from which Palestinian refugees can draw force.



The website is also intended to form a historical and cultural bridge, connecting different Palestinian communities and bringing together a plethora of view points, studies, and experiences regarding the Palestinian cause.



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