



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



"Palestinian Child Killed in Earlier Strike by Syrian Gov't Forces"

- UNRWA: Only 1 Case of COVID-19 Infection Confirmed among Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon
- Women Launch Anti-Coronavirus Campaign in AlHusainiya Camp
- The UN: The current situation in Syrian prisons is "alarming"
- Sweden Suspends Migrant Deportation Flights over Coronavirus Outbreak

+442084530978

/Actgroup.palsyria

reports@actionpal.org.uk

www.actionpal.org.uk



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Victims

Palestinian refugee Mohamed Ali Fares and his relative Rasha Nabil AlDhawahra died in an air strike launched by the Syrian government forces on Jilin town, south of Syria, sometime earlier, the children's family told AGPS.

On March 19, a number of civilians, including Palestinian refugee Ali Husain Mohamed, were pronounced dead after a mortar shell was unleashed by the Syrian government forces.

AGPS has documented the death of 400 Palestinian residents of Daraa city, south of Syria, due to war-related incidents.



Latest Developments

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) announced one case of Covid-19 among the Palestinian refugee community in Lebanon.

During a meeting held with local committees and international NGOs, UNRWA said suspected cases are being smoothly transferred to Hariri Hospital, despite delays in the transfer process due to sterilization procedures.



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The Agency added that Doctors without Borders (MSF) will provide a medical team for the isolation facility allotted for suspected cases in Sibliin Center for Technical and Vocational Training.

The Palestinian Red Crescent Organization also set a plan to isolate COVID-19 patients at AlHamshari Hospital.

Last week, Spokesperson of UNRWA in Lebanon Huda Samra made clear that the confirmed case of covid-19 is of a Palestinian youth who lives outside Palestinian refugee camps in the Lebanese town of Barja.

Samra said the patient was ordered to stay in home quarantine and the tests of other seven cases are negative.

A few weeks earlier, UNRWA launched a flash appeal to provide a sum of US \$14 million to cover the Agency's immediate needs to prepare and respond to the COVID-19 outbreak over an initial three-month period.

The Flash Appeal outlines the immediate priorities and financial requirements for health and other services related to the pandemic in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

“Overcrowded living conditions, physical and mental stress and years of protracted conflict all make vulnerable population of over 5.6 million Palestine refugees particularly susceptible to the ongoing threats of COVID-19,” said UNRWA Acting Commissioner-General Christian Saunders. “All of the Agency's five fields' host countries and authorities have announced a series of robust measures to cope



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with the spread of COVID-19, which UNRWA will follow and factor into its operations.”

Along similar lines, a number of Palestinian refugee women and girls have volunteered for a campaign to respond to the novel coronavirus COVID-19 in AlHusainiya refugee camp, in Rif Dimashq.

The volunteers tour the camp to raise civilians’ awareness about the virus and remind them of the importance of precautionary measures, most notably home quarantines for children and adults alike.



A couple of days earlier, a sterilization campaign was held across residential alleyways and public facilities in the camp.

In another development, the UN human rights office on Friday described as “alarming” the situation in all the prisons in Syria, especially the overcrowded central ones and also makeshift detention facilities, saying the risk of mass coronavirus infections is exceptionally high.

The Syrian regime and armed groups were urged “to take urgent action – following the example of other countries – to release



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sufficient numbers” of detainees, said Rupert Colville, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Colville said that after rights chief Michelle Bachelet last week urged governments to reduce overcrowding in prisons to prevent catastrophic rates of COVID-19 infection, “we are encouraged to note that a number of countries have indeed been taking action on this front.”

Such releases included specific at-risk groups such as pregnant women, people with disabilities, elderly prisoners, those who are sick, minor and low-risk offenders, people nearing the end of their sentences, and others who could safely be reintegrated into society.

Colville particularly warned of the alarming situation in the overcrowded central prisons and detention facilities run by the Assad regime’s four security branches, and military prison in Sednaya.



“Even before the onset of COVID-19, we have received a significant number of reports of deaths in the facilities run by the four security branches and in Sednaya, including as a result of torture and denial of medical care,” he said.



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He added that vulnerable groups detained in Syria include elderly people, women and children, and many people with underlying health conditions, some of them directly as a result of the ill-treatment and neglect they have experienced while in detention.

“We continue to urge all countries to review who is being held and to take measures as soon as possible to ensure the physical distancing, necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19, becomes feasible,” said Colville.

Meanwhile, the Swedish migration authorities have announced their intent to suspend deportation flights from the country due to coronavirus outbreak.

In line with the new decision, Swedish police have started releasing asylum-seekers who have been held in custody pending their deportation, after their applications have been turned down.

Recently, the Swedish Migration Agency said it has carried out a reassessment of issues related to stateless refugees.

The Migration Agency’s Legal Affairs Department is now going through the entire migration area to see what consequences the current situation will have for those who seek protection, study, work, visit or want to move to Sweden.

Official Swedish statistics have indicated that 3,296 Palestinian asylum-seekers categorized as “stateless” received citizenship documents in Sweden in 2019.

Since mid-July 2016, the Swedish authorities suspended permanent visa procedures for holders of temporary protection cards.



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Over the past few years, thousands of Palestinian and Syrian refugees, among other migrants, who have applied for asylum in Sweden were granted two-year visas.

Eligibility criteria set by the Swedish authorities include a well-paid work contract valid for a minimum of two years and which enters into force before the expiration of the temporary visa. The employer should submit a recruitment declaration at the Swedish tax authority, taking into consideration the conditions defined by the national trade unions. Those aged below 25 should be holders of secondary school diplomas from Sweden or other foreign institutions.