



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



### "Displaced Families Fear Unabated Coronavirus Outbreak in Northern Syria"

- Palestinian Refugee Families Distressed as Syrian Regime Escalates Attacks on Besieged Deraa
- Khan Eshieh Camp Grappling with Transportation Crisis
- UNRWA Palestinian Refugees Lebanon Hospitals

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## Latest Developments

Concerns have mounted in displacement camps set up in northern Syria after coronavirus cases were reported in the area.

The residents slammed AFAD for its mismanagement of the health crisis, saying only one nurse has been sent to the area to take nose swabs in order to test suspected cases.

Over recent months, AGPS has warned of an unabated outbreak of COVID-19 in Palestinian refugee camps in Syria, where limited access to running water, pharmacies and medical facilities means displacement camps are more susceptible to the spread of the highly infectious virus.

Displacement camps set up in northern Syria are especially vulnerable as most hospitals and medical facilities have been bombed, rendering them out of order.

AGPS stresses the need to supply Palestinian refugee camps with medicines, detergents, and disinfectants in order to help the displaced communities defend themselves against the deadly COVID-19 virus.

AGPS calls on the national and international humanitarian organizations and concerned authorities to set an emergency plan in order to help curtail the highly-contagious virus.



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Meanwhile, residents of Deraa Camp and adjacent neighborhoods in Deraa city, south of Syria, have raised concerns over the security situation after the Syrian regime escalated attacks on the area.

Tension has been running high at the same time as negotiations have been resumed to adjust the reconciliation agreement between the Syrian regime and the opposition forces.

Syrian regime forces early Sunday escalated attacks on the southern city of Deraa, including its Palestinian refugee camp.

According to Anadolu Agency, the Iranian-backed 4th Division militia group targeted the neighborhood with intense attacks after four days.

Noting that Assad regime forces broke a cease-fire agreement reached September 1, the same source said the regime aimed to force residents to migrate.

Machine guns, mortar artillery, tanks, and grad missiles were used in the attacks.

Since July 29, the Bashar al-Assad regime and Iranian-backed militias have launched a ground operation on the neighborhood, triggering clashes that spread across the countryside.

Deraa was blockaded by regime forces on June 25 after residents, including former members of the Syrian opposition, resisted an order to surrender light weapons and allow regime forces to search houses in the area.



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During recent Russian-led mediation talks with the opposition, regime forces demanded that residents and armed opposition groups surrender all light weapons and allow home searches and the setting up of nine checkpoints in the neighborhood.

The demands, however, were rejected by the Daraa-based Reconciliation Center which was negotiating on behalf of the residents, prompting the regime to conduct fresh attacks on the besieged city.

Daraa, known as the birthplace of the Syrian revolution, is home to 40,000 residents and was an opposition stronghold until 2018.

In another development, a transportation crisis has been rocking Khan Eshieh camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq, where workers and students continue to face serious difficulties getting to their workplaces and schools.

The residents said buses do not show up on time and refuse to take the passengers to Damascus on claims of fuel shortage, forcing several of them to board private means of transportation at high prices. Others have found no other way-out than to walk for dozens of kilometers in order to reach their destinations.

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.



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After ten 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, UNRWA called on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, including 27,000 Palestinians from Syria, to reach out to the Agency's health chief in case of an emergency situation that requires hospitalization.

UNRWA said the refugees can receive medical treatment and hospitalization services exclusively at health facilities contracted to the Agency.

In late August, a Palestinian refugee sheltered in Naher AlBared Camp in Lebanon died after hospitals refused to let him in.

Earlier this year, UNRWA raised concerns over the dire situation of Palestine refugees in Lebanon and the precariousness in which they live, particularly in the last year of acute financial crisis and pandemic. Many Palestine refugees live in 12 overcrowded camps across the country.

Palestine refugees in Lebanon get health, education and social services from UNRWA. The most vulnerable, including Palestine refugees who fled from Syria, get financial assistance to buy food and other basic necessities. But with the current financial crisis,





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most Palestine refugees have found themselves slipping further into destitution. The “dollar crisis” in Lebanon, where the official exchange rate of the US dollar against the Lebanese pound is nearly ten times lower than the black-market rate, has seen the purchasing power of the UNRWA cash assistance slashed tenfold.

Even before the pandemic and the financial meltdown of Lebanon, Palestine refugees lived in poverty and faced systemic restrictions that limited their employment, property ownership and, at times, movement. Joblessness has been high in Palestine refugee camps for many years, but the collapse of the Lebanese economy in the last few months has left many of them feeling desperate, especially as UNRWA has been struggling with an acute financial crisis itself. COVID-19 has been the latest in a series of recent devastating blows to a community that has suffered marginalization and uncertainty for decades.