



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

07-02-2021

No. 3129

## التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



**"Syrian, Russian Forces Ravage Yarmouk Camp Cemetery in Hunt For Body Remains of Israeli Soldiers"**

- 100,000 USD Sent from Occupied Palestinian Territories to Northern Syria Displacement Camps
- Palestinian Refugees in Syria's Jaramana Camp Terrorized by Simmering Abductions, Property-Theft
- Stray Dogs Sway Khan Eshieh Camp for Palestinian Refugees
- Palestinian Refugee Faysal Abu Shalah Forcibly Disappeared by Syrian

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## Latest Developments

The Russian military and Syria regime have recently launched excavations in a cemetery at the [Yarmouk Refugee Camp](#) in Damascus allegedly in search of the remains of Israeli soldiers who went missing during the First Lebanon War in 1982, Israeli news reported, citing Syrian media.

The reports indicated that Russian troops began excavating the site on February 4, presumably searching for DNA samples from grave plots on the site suspected of belonging to Israeli soldiers who have been missing for nearly 40 years.

The reports indicated that the Russians had brought in a medical truck equipped with advanced tools for analyzing DNA, while closing the entire area of the cemetery and declaring it a closed military zone.

The missing soldiers are Tzvi Feldman and Yehuda Katz, who participated in the [First Lebanon War](#) and have been considered missing in action since 1982.

Feldman and Katz were members of late Zechariah Baumel's military unit and fought together in the Battle of Sultan Yacub between Israel and Syria in June 1982. The battle took place in Lebanon, near the Syrian border.

Following the battle that lasted several hours, six soldiers were declared missing in action. Later, it became clear that two of the six were captured by the Syrian army and one was killed in action. The



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fate of the other three – Feldman, Katz and Baumel – remained unknown.

That changed in April 2019, when the body of Sgt. Zachary Baumel was finally [returned to Israel](#) after nearly 37 years. He was identified by his DNA at the Abu Kabir Forensic Institute and buried in special ceremony on Mount Herzl attended by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Reuven Rivlin.

Over recent years, activists have slammed the Russian and Syrian government forces for ransacking the old cemetery of Yarmouk Camp, in Damascus, in search of the body remains of Israeli soldiers killed in the Battle of Sultan Yaakoob in Lebanon in 1982.

On April 19, 2018, a military operation launched by Syria's government battalions and their Russian abettors led to the destruction of 60% of civilian buildings and premises in Yarmouk Camp. Dozens of civilians were killed and hundreds injured in the offensive.

Heavy damage was wrought on Yarmouk's AlShuhadaa Cemetery as graves were hit with barrel bombs and headstones smashed by missiles and mortar shells.

In another development, Palestinians from Tuba village, northeast of Tiberias city, collected a sum of 100,000 USD in aid for Palestinian families sheltered in displacement camps in northern Syria.



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The move makes part of a humanitarian campaign launched by Ighatha48 Association to assist Palestinian refugees in war-torn Syria.

Last year, the charity dispatched charcoal-laden trucks to the northern Syrian province of Idlib and distributed the supplies to displaced families.

Palestinian refugees sheltered in northern Syria displacement camps have been enduring a tragic situation. Most of them have been crammed in poorly-equipped tents and denied access to vital services.

Recently, live snapshots have shown refugee tents being flooded with water as torrential downpours have swamped “tent-cities” in northern Syria.

Hundreds of Palestinian families have been struggling for survival in the poorly-equipped Deir Ballout and Muhammadiya camps, after they were forced out of Yarmouk and southern Damascus towns. For many displaced Palestinian refugees, the perils of winter weather add to the torment already experienced throughout the conflict.

Along similar lines, Palestinian refugee families in Jaramana camp, in Rif Dimashq, have raised concerns over the increasing abductions, home-burglary attempts, and sexual harassment reported in the area, particularly overnight due to chronic power blackouts.





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The Syrian authorities reportedly arrested a three-member gang involved in property-theft in the camp.

Over recent years, residents of Jaramana Camp have launched cries for help over the dire socio-economic conditions, high unemployment rates, poor infrastructure, steep rental fees, and chronic water crisis rocking the area.

Jaramana camp is 8km from Damascus on the road to Damascus International Airport. The camp was established in 1948.

UN data indicates that before the start of the conflict in 2011, there were over 18,000 Palestine refugees living in Jaramana camp. During the Syrian crisis, the number of Palestine refugees in the camp and the surrounding area increased to 49,000 due to an influx of displaced Palestine refugees from other areas, including the camp of Yarmouk. As a result, Jaramana has become one of the most densely populated areas of Damascus.

Many of the refugees worked as street vendors, government employees or in nearby industrial plants. Some inhabitants find work in the informal sector through collecting garbage for recycling. The majority of women are domestic workers in Damascus to supplement family income. Like other areas in Syria, displacement, unemployment, inflation, protection and security risks are among the main concerns shared by Palestine refugees and Syrians alike.

This is not the first time that UNRWA operations in the camp were affected; the construction of a highway to Jaramana in 2006 meant



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that parts of the community centre, a health centre, a sanitation office, the newly installed sewerage network, urban development projects and schools had to be vacated. This was accompanied by a large number of refugee families being moved to a nearby new government housing project in the Palestine refugee gathering of al-Husseinieh or to shelters in the nearby villages and camps.

The camp occupies an area of 0.03 square kilometres. Historically, the camp has been inhabited by those displaced by the conflict in 1948, as well as Palestinians who had taken refuge in the Golan Heights and were displaced as a result of the 1967 hostilities.

In the meantime, residents of Khan Eshieh Camp have raised concerns over their children's safety as packs of stray dogs have been spotted in and around the camp.

The refugees appealed to the concerned authorities and NGOs to take urgent action over the spread of feral dogs in the camp, a phenomenon that has seen the day after dozens of civilians were forced out of their homes due to the deadly shelling and deported to northern Syria.

Palestinian families seeking shelter in Khan Eshieh Camp have been facing dire socio-economic conditions in the poverty-stricken area. Chronic power and water blackouts along with the acute dearth in gas and fuel supplies have made the situation far more alarming.

Living conditions in Khan Eshieh have sharply deteriorated due to the lack of financial resources and high unemployment rates



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wrought by the raging warfare. A transportation crisis has added bad to worse.

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 another development, Palestinian refugee Faysal Khaled Abu Shalah, born in 1974, has been secretly held in Syrian government prisons for the seventh consecutive year.

Faysal, a resident of AlMuzeireeb town, was arrested at a government checkpoint in Deraa, south of Syria, in July 2014.

AGPS has been deeply concerned about the upsurge in the number of Palestinian victims of torture and enforced disappearance in Syria.

Over 1,790 Palestinian refugees have been secretly held in Syrian government dungeons since the outburst of deadly hostilities.

AGPS also documented the death of over 600 Palestinian refugees under torture in Syrian government lock-ups, including women, children, and elderly civilians.

Affidavits by ex-detainees provided evidence on the involvement of Syrian government officers in harsh torture tactics, including



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electric shocks, heavy beating using whips and iron sticks, and sexual abuse against Palestinian detainees, in a flagrant violation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, commonly known as the United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT).