



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



"Pro-Govt Squad in Syria Purchases Houses in Handarat Camp for Palestinian Refugees"

- 7 Years On, Tragic Traces of AlJa'ouna Massacre Still Present in Yarmouk Camp
- UNRWA Inaugurates Quarantine Facility in Lebanon
- Palestinian Writer Ali AlShehabi Forcibly Disappeared by Syrian Gov't for 8th Year

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Latest Developments

Liwaa AlQuds brigade, affiliated with the Syrian regime, has reportedly been buying civilian homes and property in Ein Tel (Handarat) refugee camp for Palestinian refugees, in Aleppo, at low prices.

Local sources told AGPS that contractors and brokers having close ties to Liwaa AlQuds commander Mohamed AlSa'id have been telling civilians that their homes will be demolished, pressurizing them to sell their property at very low prices.

Activists said some 50 houses in the camp have been sold so far to Liwaa AlQuds affiliates, holding the Russian forces in Syria responsible for the phenomenon.



Palestinian refugees have been grappling with dire conditions in Handarat due to the lack of humanitarian assistance and life-saving services. The majority of families have been taking shelter in buildings rented at extremely steep costs in the poverty-stricken area. A severe water and power crisis also continues to rock the camp.



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Heavy shelling on Handarat and bloody shootouts between the government forces and the opposition outfits led to the destruction of over 90% of buildings in the camp. The confrontations culminated in the government's takeover of the camp along with other zones in Aleppo and the displacement of its residents on April 27, 2013.

UN data indicates that Handarat camp (also known as Ein El-Tal camp) is on a hillside 13km north-east of the city of Aleppo in the Syrian Arab Republic. The camp was established in 1962 on an area of 0.16 square kilometers. Most of the inhabitants are refugees who fled from northern Palestine.

Ein El Tal camp was once home to around 7,000 residents. Around three hundred families moved to newly constructed houses in Ein El-Tal from Neirab camp under a 2003 project to reduce overcrowding in Neirab.

In April 2013, armed groups entered Ein El-Tal camp, forcibly displacing the entire population over a period of some 48 hours. The camp was a theatre of armed conflict until 2016, sustaining extreme damage in the process.

In the summer of 2017, families started to return to Ein El-Tal camp. Most of these families had been displaced to a government collective shelter in Aleppo city. As of the end of 2018, there are 90 Palestine refugee families that have returned. The camp is almost completely destroyed and lacks basic infrastructure including water, sewage and electricity.



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Meanwhile, Seven years have passed by since AlJa'ouna massacre, perpetrated on August 2, 2012, took away the lives of over 20 Palestinians in Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus, among them children. Several other Palestinians were left wounded after two mortar shells slammed into the area prior to iftar (fast-breaking) time.

The list of casualties includes the two children Anas Talouzi and Ibrahim Talouzi, along with Yahya Alyan, Fathi Alyan, Alaa Ghuneim, Mohamed Anbatawi, Rafe' AlRefa'i, Abdullah Saleh (aged 13), Mohamed Msheiness, Ahmed Areisha, Mohamed Rafe' Ali AlRefa'I (aged 27), Wael Adnan Atiyeh AlAhmed, Bahaa Ayoub (aged 21), Mahmoud Qanah, Alaa Mohamed Ghuneim, Muhssin Walid Msheiness, Osama Akram Areisha, Yahya Ismail Alyan, Khairou Ahmed Hamida, and Emad Salah AlDin Qadah.

Scores of stranded families fled Yarmouk following the 33-day military operation launched by the government forces on April 19, 2018. The Syrian government forces regained control over the camp and southern Damascus towns following the operation. Dozens of civilians were killed and dozens more injured in the offensive. Over 60% of buildings have gone either totally or partially destroyed in the warfare.

A few months earlier, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) published the results of an assessment of the damage to Syrian cities caused by seven years of relentless bombardment by the incumbent regime and its allies since 2011.



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The analysis found out that as many as 5,489 buildings were destroyed in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees. The damage atlas used satellite-detected damage analysis to identify buildings that are either destroyed, or severely or moderately damaged.

In another development, UNRWA, in partnership with Doctors Without Borders (MSF) has opened an isolation center for covid-19 patients in Siblin Training Center, in the southern Lebanese city of Sidon.

The center has been equipped with 100 beds in order to hospitalize coronavirus-stricken patients and suspected cases.



An MSF team of professional doctors and experts have assisted the anti-coronavirus move and pledged to regularly check the patients' condition.

Last week, a photo circulated on social media networks sparked outrage after it revealed the unequipped quarantine room in which a coronavirus-stricken Palestinian family from Syria has been



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confined in AlJaleel refugee camp, in Lebanon's Baalbek city. Only a handful of mattresses and pillows figure on the circulated picture.

Activists said the facility is similar to a prison room and is unfit for extended home quarantines. They lashed out at UNRWA's Director of Lebanon Operations, urging him to take immediate steps in order to transfer the family to Rafic Hariri Hospital or other equipped quarantine facilities.

The calls were launched shortly after UNRWA said five residents of the Jalil (Wavel) Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

Authorities closed all entrances to AlJalil Palestinian camp in eastern Lebanon, heightening concerns the virus could further spread among its overcrowded population.

The people infected with the virus are relatives of a Palestinian woman from Syria who tested positive earlier and have been quarantined inside their home, according to a statement from UNRWA.

Lebanon, a tiny country of five million people, is host to tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees and their descendants, most of them living in squalid camps with no access to public services, with limited employment opportunities and no rights to ownership.

In the meantime, Palestinian writer Ali Sa'id Shehabi has been secretly held in Syria government jails for the eighth year running.



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Shehabi, an English instructor at a UNRWA school, was kidnapped on December 17, 2012. Prior to his abduction, Shehabi had been taking shelter in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees.

Frequent calls by international NGOs and activists to unearth Shehabi's fate have gone unheeded by the Syrian government.

AGPS documented the incarceration of over 1,700 Palestinian refugees in Syrian regime lock-ups, among them children, women, academics, university students, and sick civilians.

