



التقرير اليومي



الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

The situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



Residents of Yarmouk Camp Continue to Rail Against Property-Theft

- Palestinians in Syria Displacement Camp Grappling with Price Surge
- Humanitarian Drive Launched in Hindarat Refugee Camp
- Educational Courses Held for Palestinian Refugee Students in Hindarat Camp



Latest Development

Reports of burglary continue to emerge in Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus, where hundreds of Palestinian refugees had been taking shelter.

Trucks laden with furniture stolen from abandoned buildings continue to freely enter and exit the camp.

Palestinian families displaced from the area continue to call on the concerned authorities to allow them a safe return to their homes and to press ahead with reconstruction projects.

Over recent years, pro-government militias have been raking through evacuated homes in Damascus and holding sway over furniture, copper, iron, and kitchenware belonging to displaced families.

The Syrian government forces regained control over Yarmouk Camp and southern Damascus towns following a 33-day military operation launched in April 2018. 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.

UN data indicates that before the eruption of the conflict in 2011, Yarmouk was home to approximately 160,000 Palestine refugees, making it the largest Palestine refugee community in Syria. Located eight kilometers from Damascus, it is one of three unofficial camps in Syria.

In December 2012, fierce clashes erupted in Yarmouk, causing numerous civilian casualties, severe damage to property and the



displacement of thousands of Palestine refugees and Syrians. The camp was under siege from July 2013, drastically restricting the entry of commercial and humanitarian goods.

In April 2015, armed opposition groups captured over 60 per cent of the camp, containing over 90 per cent of the remaining civilian population. This not only made UNRWA unable to carry out any distributions inside Yarmouk but also displaced most of the remaining 18,000 Palestine refugees and other civilians to the neighboring areas of Yalda, Babila and Beit Saham (YBB).

Almost all the remaining Palestine refugees left during the final government offensive for Yarmouk in April-May 2018, after which the government retook control of the camp.

UNRWA was able to return to the camp to conduct a needs assessment in October 2018. Of the 23 UNRWA premises in the camp and nearby Hajjar al Aswad, including 16 school buildings, all have been affected by the conflict.

Meanwhile, as the conflict in Syria continues into its 11th year, Palestinian and Syrian families across the country are facing unprecedented levels of poverty and food insecurity.

A Palestinian refugee called Fatma, a resident of Deraa Camp, south of Syria, told AGPS that her family, including her disabled brothers, are struggling to put food on their tables today than ever before.

“An egg dish costs 12,000 Syrian pounds while jams are sold at 4,000”, said Fatma. “A small butter box costs up to 4,000; A cheese



box is estimated at 7,000 and halva (Middle Eastern sesame candy) at 13,000.

Fatma said years of conflict, displacement, soaring food prices and a decline in the value of the Syrian Pound have put additional pressure on families who are now struggling to afford the basics.

Large-scale hostilities and mass displacement across Syria, combined with a severe economic downturn, mean that the overall food security situation is rapidly deteriorating across the country, and families require support to meet their needs and rebuild their lives.

The World Food Programme (WFP) estimates that 12.4 million Syrians are now food insecure. This is an increase of 4.5 million in the last year alone and the highest number ever recorded.

Syria's continuous crisis has depleted community assets, erased livelihoods and eroded household and community resilience. Food systems have been severely disrupted across many areas, leading to widespread food insecurity and the need for food assistance to fight hunger and malnutrition.

Along similar lines, Palestinian activists and volunteers have distributed food items and cash aid to vulnerable families sheltered in Hindarat refugee camp, in the northern Syrian province of Aleppo.

A volunteer has handed over a sum of 11,000 Syrian pounds to underprivileged Palestinian families in the camp. Others distributed food baskets in the area.



Palestinian refugees have been grappling with dire conditions in the area 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.

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.

Handarat Camp (also called Ein AlTel Camp) is located to the northeast of Aleppo's Hill, overseeing the Turkey-bound traffic lanes. It stands on a rocky hill and is situated some 13 kilometers away from the city center.

According to data by the General Commission of Arab Palestinian Refugees in Syria, some 8,000 Palestinian refugees used to take shelter in Handarat Camp. Only 200 displaced families returned to the camp following the heavy onslaughts launched by the Syrian government battalions.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Red Crescent Organization has held educational courses for Palestinian refugee students in Hindarat Camp, north of Syria.

The move comes in response to Palestinians' lack of access to education services and the increasing school dropouts due to



protracted displacement, absence of transportation means, and war-inflicted psychological distress.

Extreme poverty, child labor, early marriage, and enforced disappearance are among the factors that have led to an increase in school dropouts among the camp residents.

Palestinian refugee families have frequently denounced the inadequate educational services and poor-quality input delivered children at local schools.

Upon more than one occasion, UNRWA has raised alarm bells over the striking upsurge in the rate of school dropouts among the Palestinians of Syria, several among whom left schools to help feeding their impoverished families in unemployment-stricken refugee camps.

Several UNRWA facilities were destroyed in the Syrian warfare and others have gone out of operation, including two clinics, a vocational training center, a youth development center, and 28 schools, out of 112 UNRWA schools in Syria. Other education facilities have been turned into prisons or field hospitals, imperiling Palestinians' academic careers.