



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



"30 Palestinians from Syria Pronounced Dead since Start of 2020"

- Residents of AlSabina Camp Grappling with Dire Conditions
- Palestinian Families in Syria's Khan Dannun Camp Denounce Water Dearth
- Anti-Coronavirus Emergency Plan Set by Palestinian Red Crescent
- Food Parcels Distributed to Displaced Families North of Syria

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Latest Developments

AGPS has recorded the death of 30 Palestinian refugees from Syria since the start of 2020 until mid-April due to war-related incidents.

The list includes 11 Palestinians who were fatally gunned down; four refugees who were tortured to death in Syrian jails, and five more Palestinians who drowned at sea.

Another four Palestinian refugees were assassinated while two others were extra-judicially executed during the same period. Two more people died in Israeli air strikes targeting Damascus city. Four Palestinians were, meanwhile, killed in blasts.



According to AGPS database, two children and a woman appear on the victims list.

In another development, Palestinians taking refuge in AlSabina camp, in Rif Dimashq, said they have been unable to fetch much-needed food and non-food items after severe movement restrictions have been slapped in the war-ravaged country to curb coronavirus contaminations.

The situation is worsened by the water crisis rocking the area amid the COVID-19 outbreak. Civilians said they are unable to wash their



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hands and bodies regularly, raising fears of a swift propagation of the deadly virus among the camp residents.

At the same time, civilians said they have been forced to walk for several kilometers to purchase vital items after the Syrian government suspended public transportation from and to the camp, among other areas.

The residents continue to lash out at the apathy maintained by UNRWA and the local municipality regarding their calls for supplying the area with power generators and filling main water tanks.

Located some 14 kilometers away from southern Damascus, AlSabina Camp has been gripped with an abject situation owing to the absence of humanitarian assistance, relief aids, proper infrastructure, and vital facilities.

UN data indicates that the camp was established in 1948. Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was home to 22,600 Palestine refugees. It was taken over by armed opposition groups in 2013. The camp remained closed to civilians for almost four years and houses and infrastructure were damaged in the fighting. In September 2017, civilians were able to return to their homes. All UNRWA installations were in need of repairs.

The whole Palestine population in AlSabina camp suffered from displacement during the crisis and many families left the country and sought refuge in neighboring countries or fled to Europe.

During the conflict, labor opportunities have dwindled and the unemployment rate is still very high with very limited financial



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resources to help Palestine refugees restore their livelihoods. Like other areas in Syria, displacement, inflation, protection and security risks are among the main concerns shared by Palestine refugees and Syrians alike.

The camp is situated on an area of 0.03 square kilometers. Palestine refugees who came to Syria in 1948 first settled the camp. It also accommodates Palestine refugees who were displaced as a result of the 1967 conflict.

Along similar lines, Residents of Khan Dannun Camp for Palestinian refugees in Rif Dimashq have set off alarm bells over the acute water crisis which has been ongoing for years across a number of residential neighborhoods, saying civilians have been forced to purchase drinking water from privately-owned tanks at steep prices.

The residents said the main water line in the area has only been operated for three days weekly for a period of no more than a couple of hours each over the past two weeks. A number of neighborhoods situated in the old camp have been left without water for nearly seven years and a half.





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The residents continue to call on the government institutions and UNRWA to urgently step in and take serious measures in response to the crisis.

Living conditions in Khan Dannun have sharply deteriorated due to the lack of financial resources and high unemployment rates wrought by the unbridled warfare.

According to UN data, Khan Dannun camp was built several centuries ago to give overnight accommodation to trading caravans on the ancient route between Jerusalem and Constantinople (modern day Istanbul). In 1948, the ruins of the city provided shelter for refugees from villages in northern Palestine.

The camp, which lies 23 km south of Damascus, was officially established in 1950-1951 on an area of 0.03 square kilometers. The camp was home to 10,000 Palestine refugees by 2011, almost all of whom were live in irregular housing, constructed without any formal approval from the municipality.

Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was already one of the poorest camps in Syria. Most refugees worked as farm workers on Syrian-owned lands, others are wage laborers, while a few commuted to industrial plants.

The conflict exerted additional pressures. The camp was surrounded by armed opposition groups and many refugee families displaced from other areas of Damascus took refuge in the camp, tripling the number of residents to some 30,000 during the crisis. Two UNRWA schools premises were converted into collective shelters to give



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accommodation to more than 130 families between 2012 and 2018. Currently, the camp is home to 12,650 Palestine refugees.

The increase of the camp population has had a negative impact on the camp's infrastructure, affecting the electric network and the sewerage system. The camp suffers from sporadic sewage blockages due to the increased pressure on the existent sewerage system, which was designed for only 10,000 inhabitants, while there are now significantly more. Water supply resources have also been affected and the camp suffers from water shortages, especially during the summer months.

Many school children have dropped out or work after school hours to support their families. The camp also suffers from a high incidence of inherited diseases such as thalassaemia and sickle-cell anemia.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Red Crescent Organization in Syria has developed an emergency plan in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Medical inquiries will be received by the organization via an ad hoc helpline.

The organization said the plan is going to be put into effect in the next few hours as part of ongoing attempts to help curb the virus in Palestinian refugee camps and raise awareness about COVID-19 symptoms and precautionary tips.

Recently, AGPS expressed has deep concern that the lack of transparency maintained by the Syrian government regarding the pandemic will result in a catastrophic situation in displacement



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camps, at a time when the deadly virus continues to claim the lives of thousands of people across the globe.

AGPS said it fears coronavirus could spread quickly in jails and in overcrowded displacement camps, where neither hygiene kit nor medical equipment are accessible.

The Syrian government has reported only 29 cases of confirmed COVID-19 tests and two deaths from the virus.

In the meantime, Melhem charity handed over on Tuesday food items to Palestinian and Syrian families taking shelter in Deir Ballout and AlMuhammadiya displacement camps, in the northern Syrian province of Idlib.

Hundreds of Palestinian refugee families sheltered in displacement camps set up north of Syria continue to launch cries for help over their tragic living conditions in the poorly-equipped and highly unhygienic facilities.



Recently, AGPS has warned that a projected outbreak of COVID-19 in Palestinian refugee camps in Syria could turn particularly catastrophic. Though campaigns to help spread awareness among



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the camps' residents have recently seen the day, 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.