



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



**"Syria's Khan Dannun Camp for Palestinian Refugees Subjected to Dire Conditions"**

- UNRWA to Deliver Cash grants to Palestinians of Syria Prior to Eid Festival
- Students of Yarmouk Camp to Sign Up for School Transportation
- Palestinian Refugee Mahmoud Maw'ed Enduring Mysterious Fate in Syria Jail
- Hungarian Court Jails Migrants for Breaching Border

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## Latest developments

Living conditions in Khan Dannun camp have sharply deteriorated due to the lack of financial resources, high unemployment rates, and the price leap.

Civilians' life has also been marred by the frequent power blackouts and the scorching heat rocking the area.

At the same time, water supplies have been repeatedly cut off across residential neighborhoods in Khan Dannun, forcing civilians to buy drinking water from privately-owned tanks at steep prices.

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.



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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 school premises were converted into collective shelters to give 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.

In another development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said cash grants will be transferred to Palestinian refugees in Syria shortly before the holy occasion of Eid AlAdhaa.



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In a statement, UNRWA said a sum of 2 million dollars will be delivered to the refugees in total. Every registered person is expected to receive a sum of 40 USD.

UNRWA said in its 2020 Syria regional crisis emergency appeal that 126,000 Palestine refugees in Syria (PRS) are identified as extremely vulnerable; 89% live in poverty; 91% live in extreme poverty; and 80% rely on UNRWA cash assistance as their main source of income.

UNRWA also said that 55% of PRS do not possess valid legal residency documents; 100% of PRS are in need of winterization assistance; and 86% of PRS households are reported to be in debt.

UNRWA said that the continuous depreciation of the Syrian pound and the deteriorating socio-economic conditions experienced by all civilians in Syria during the last year have increased the hardship faced by Palestine refugees, whose resilience is at breaking point.

Meanwhile, Walid AlKurdi, the education chief in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees, called on families taking shelter in the area to subscribe for school transport for their children enrolled at schools located outside of the camp.

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.



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In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Mahmoud Maw'ed, from Yarmouk Camp, has been secretly held in Syrian state prisons for the sixth consecutive year.

Mahmoud was arrested by Syrian security forces in Yarmouk Camp on February 2, 2014 following an altercation with a government officer. His condition and whereabouts have been shrouded in mystery.

AGPS data indicates that nearly 1,800 Palestinian refugees have been forcibly disappeared in Syrian government jails, among them dozens of women and minors.

Along similar lines, two Palestinian and two Syrian men were sentenced to a year each in jail by a Hungarian court on Tuesday, July 7. They are accused of being part of a group of 50 people who tore down a border fence in order to enter the country illegally at the beginning of this year.

The incident took place on January 28, according to the news agency AFP. An appeals court followed the jail sentences by saying that the men should be deported and banned from re-entering Hungary for two years, once they have served their sentences.

According to AFP, police footage depicts the group, "many wearing backpacks pulling down a wire fence and entering Hungarian territory, while police fire several shots in the air."



After the shots were fired, it is reported that most of the group "retreated into Serbia" but the four men on trial remained in Hungary and were subsequently arrested.

According to a video published by the Hungarian Helsinki Committee for World Refugee Day 2020, the numbers of those allowed to seek asylum in Hungary continue to diminish. "Since 2017, anyone found in Hungary without documents permitting them to be there will be pushed back to Serbia," states the video's narrator.

In fact, the video states that "according to [Hungarian] police statistics, almost 40,000 people have been pushed back to Serbia since 2016." During the same period, continues the video, "Hungary registered 15,400 asylum seekers." Every year these numbers get less and less. In 2019, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee say that only 468 people were permitted to seek asylum in Hungary.

This is partly due to the fact that most don't want to stay in Hungary but mostly due to a series of laws which Prime Minister Viktor Orban has introduced to stop migrants entering Hungary and the Schengen zone.

His measures have attracted criticism from the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) which ruled in May that Hungary was "unlawfully detaining people in the transit zone and depriving them of their right to apply for asylum."