



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



"Education Services for Palestine Refugees at Risk in War-Torn Syria"

- Palestinian Refugee Students Join Anti-Coronavirus Drive in Syria
- Palestinian Refugees Denounce Property-Theft in Syria Displacement Camp
- Palestinian Refugee Abdul Kader Alyan Forcibly Disappeared by Syrian Regime
- Palestinian Engineer Wins 2nd Place in Saudi Arabia Architectural Contest

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Latest Developments

Palestinian refugee schoolchildren and students continue to struggle with the devastating impact of the ten-year warfare in Syria, amidst a deadly pandemic outbreak.

This school year, 49,000 Palestine refugee girls and boys have gone back to 103 schools run by the UNRWA in Syria, with measures being taken by teaching staff to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The coronavirus pandemic has exposed the weak infrastructure of the education systems in Palestinian refugee camps in Syria. Many teachers, students, and parents agreed that the quality of teaching and learning deteriorated during the distance education period imposed by the lockdown, despite efforts made by teaching staff.

Available data by UNRWA indicates that 32 UNRWA facilities have been reduced to rubble in Yarmouk Camp alone, including 16 schools, in the Syrian conflict.

Several other 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.

Upon more than one occasion, the UN has raised alarm bells over the striking upsurge in the rate of school dropouts among the Palestinians of Syria, several among whom have left schools to help



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feeding their impoverished families in unemployment-stricken refugee camps.

Dozens of Palestinian students, schoolchildren, and teaching staff have been killed or forcibly disappeared in war-ravaged Syria.

Along similar lines, Palestinian refugee schoolchildren joined an activity held by Mikhael Kashour school in Aleppo to raise awareness about COVID-19.

With support of and in coordination with the protection team, a joyful activity called “COVID-19 magazine” was set up to support the students, intending to raise awareness of COVID-19, to alleviate concerns and to teach the students in a child friendly way how to adapt to the new situation.

All 393 students of the Mikhael Kashour school participated in the activity, including 70 students currently living in the very severely damaged Ein el Tal camp, where no playgrounds are left and basic infrastructure is largely destroyed. UNRWA provides daily transportation for them so they can continue their education in the city of Aleppo.

Together, the students prepared coloured papers with DOs and DON'Ts, assembled them and all created their own “COVID-19 magazine”. They also included messages on how to support each other and how to respect and follow the preventative measures necessary to stay protected from the virus and make sure it doesn't spread.



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A variety of activities, adapted to the age of the students, further helped them to understand that being united makes them strong. The youngest ones created colourful drawings, others did competitions. The older ones prepared television shows, where they passed on information as if they were real TV presenters.

All students were given re-useable, colourful facemasks and a bottle of hand sterilizer that they could then take home.

Thirteen-year-old Maryam is one of the 70 students who returned to the Ein el Tal camp and now joins the school from there. She had to flee from the camp when she was just a little first-grader, very happy to go to the school closer to her home. After having been displaced to Tartous, she continued going to a school there.

“We all wanted to return and came back two years ago, after my father repaired our house together with friends, over many months,” she said.

Commenting on her experience with the “COVID-19 magazine, she said, “We don’t have a lot of playgrounds where I live. I had a lot of fun during the activity and learned how to enjoy myself in a safe way. I am very proud that I can now explain to my family what we need to do to stay healthy and protected from COVID-19.” She added, “My dream is to see my camp how it was before and to go to my old school again.”

UNRWA said it will continue to provide protection activities and transportation to Maryam and all other students in Ein el Tal, so



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they can pursue their education in Aleppo in a safe and child-friendly way.

Re-establishing services in the severely damaged camp remains a priority for UNRWA. Maryam is a living example for this. Due to the Agency's unprecedented financial crisis, critical services like those extended to the returning Palestine refugees in Syria are now in jeopardy, putting #PalestineRefugeesAtRisk.

Meanwhile, property-theft attempts have increasingly been reported in Khan Dannun camp for Palestinian refugees, in Rif Dimashq.

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 living in irregular housing, constructed without any formal approval from the municipality.



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Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was already one of the poorest camps in Syria. 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. 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.

In the meantime, Palestinian refugee Abdul Kader Alyan has been enduring a mysterious fate in Syrian government dungeons, where he has been held for over nine years.

Alyan, affiliated with the Islamic Jihad-Palestine, was kidnapped by the government troops from his home in Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus.

AGPS kept record of the secret internment of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government jails.

In another development, Palestinian architect Mohamed Hasan Abdul Kader, a holder of a BA in Interior Design from the Damascus European University, won the second place in a contest held in Saudi Arabia for an architectural design of AlAhsa Square.

Hundreds of displaced Palestinian refugees in/from Syria have achieved success stories, despite the traumatic upshots wrought by the daily scenes of bloodshed and destruction across the embattled Syrian territories.



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This includes scores of refugee students who have obtained the highest scores at their academic institutions; hundreds of refugee sportsmen/sportswomen who snatched the first places in regional and international competitions; dozens of artists who received renowned literary awards for their products and performances; and several housewives who turned trauma into a space of creativity.