



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيين 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



"Families of Missing Migrants in Turkey Appeal for Information"

- Yarmouk's New Reconstruction Plan Withdrawn
- Palestinian Doctor Nizar Kassab Forcibly Disappeared in Syria
- Rights Groups Urge Sweden to Ease Citizenship Criteria for Stateless Persons

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Latest developments

Concerns have been raised over the fate of 11 Palestinian and Syrian migrants, including Palestinians from Syria, Palestinians from the Israeli-blockaded Gaza Strip, and Syrian nationals, who have gone missing west of the Turkish seashore, onboard a Greece-bound vessel, since March 27, 2019.

The names that figure on the list are Palestinian refugees from Syria Mohamed Marwan Tamim, Mohamed Dhafer AlNajar, along with Raed Mabrouk, Ziad Radi, Mohamed AlHasasna, and Ahmad Sa'id from Gaza. Four other names—Amar Yaser Amouri, Mohamed Yaser Amouri (minor), Mohamed Nafe' Taeemeh, and Tareq Balout, all from Syria—figure on the list.

There have been conflicting reports about the migrants' condition and whereabouts. Unverified sources said a number of migrants have been detained by the Turkish police while others said they drowned off the Aegean coast.

In late April, the body of Palestinian refugee Mohamed Ismail AlBheisi was spotted off the Aegean coast. Palestinian media sources quoted Palestine Ambassador in Ankara, Fayed Mustafa, as stating that the Turkish Foreign Ministry updated the embassy on AlBaheisi's death southwest of Turkey.

Turkey and Greece have served as major launch-off points for migrants fleeing Syria, among other war-stricken zones, onboard "death boats" bound for Europe.



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AGPS has kept record of the death of dozens of Palestinians at sea, trying to reach European destinations.

In another development, human rights activists told AGPS that the new master plan issued by Damascus Governorate by the end of June 2020 to reconstruct Yarmouk camp has been canceled.

At the same time, activists have warned that civilian property has been subjected to ongoing theft and homes to burglary in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees, in Damascus.

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

Reports of theft have emerged after Syrian government forces grabbed hold of the camp and burglarized civilian homes.

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.

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

Meanwhile, Palestinian refugee Nizar Jawdat Kassab has been secretly jailed in Syria for the ninth year running.



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Nizar, a genitourinary surgeon, was arrested at a government checkpoint pitched near Yarmouk's entrance on December 16, 2012.

Medical staff and structures in besieged Yarmouk Camp came under heavy shelling by the government squads. Dozens of doctors, pharmacists, and paramedics have been pronounced dead in the raging warfare and dozens more have been forcibly disappeared in the country.

Palestinian medics and relief activists have been permanently targeted by the Syrian government forces on claims of assisting opposition affiliates. Several relief workers and volunteers have died under torture in government lock-ups.

In the meantime, the Swedish Organization against Statelessness has called for exempting stateless people from tough citizenship criteria, including permanent residence.

Though Sweden has signed the UN convention to end statelessness, some 30,000 people are still categorized as stateless in Sweden, including hundreds of Palestinian refugees from Syria.

Swedish news outlets quoted the Justice Minister Morgan Johansson as acclaiming the UN efforts to end statelessness, saying calls to cancel permanent residence as a precondition for stateless migrants wishing to obtain citizenship are pointless.

The Swedish Migration Agency set tough requirements for becoming a Swedish citizen.



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Applicants are required to prove their identity—quite a difficult task for Palestinian refugees who lost their documents as a result of war and years of displacement.

The applicant should also be 18 years of age or older, have a permanent residence permit (a temporary residence permit is not applicable), or have a right of residence or residence card (applies to the applicant if he/she is an EU citizen or a close relative of an EU citizen).

In order to apply for citizenship, the candidate should have met the requirements for habitual residence (i.e. lived in Sweden for a certain amount of time) and have conducted him(her)self well while in Sweden.

Activists said such tough conditions make it almost impossible for refugees holding temporary visas and wishing to obtain permanent visas to apply for citizenship in the kingdom.

Since mid-July 2016, the Swedish authorities suspended permanent visa procedures for holders of temporary protection cards.

Over the past few years, thousands of Palestinian and Syrian refugees, among other migrants, who have applied for asylum in Sweden were only granted two-year temporary visas.