



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



Palestinian Family Identifies Dead Son in Leaked Photos of Torture Victims in Syria

- Activists Raise Alarm over Coronavirus Outbreak in Khan Eshieh Camp
- Damascus Governorate: Yarmouk Rehabilitation Plan to Be Announced in One Month
- Arab League Calls for Increasing Support to Palestine Refugees
- Palestinian Doctor Alaa AlDeen Yousef Forcibly Disappeared in Syria for 8th Year

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Latest developments

The family of Palestinian refugee Ahmad Sarhan Soufi, born in 1970, identified their son in a series of photos leaked by the so-called Caesar breakaway.

The family also appealed for information over the mysterious fate of their relative Wisam, after they found out that the latter's father was tortured to death in Syria's state-run penal complexes.

Horror photos showing thousands of people who were tortured to death in Syrian government penitentiaries were leaked by a military police photographer, codenamed Caesar.

AGPS documented the secret incarceration of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in Syrian government prisons, including 110 women and girls.

In another development, activists from Khan Eshieh camp have called on the residents to keep to safety protocols and preventive measures in order to avoid a coronavirus outbreak in the camp.

The calls have been launched after a number of residents of the nearby town of Jdeidat Artouz have tested positive for COVID-19.

An AGPS reporter said the Syrian authorities imposed a full lockdown on Jdeidat Artouz pending the necessary checks.

Palestinian families taking refuge in Khan Eshieh camp have been struggling with squalid humanitarian conditions inflicted by the nine-year long warfare.



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According to UN data, Khan Eshieh camp lies beside the ancient ruins of Khan Eshieh, 27km south-west of Damascus. The Khan historically served as an overnight shelter for trade caravans on the road between Damascus and the southwest, and in 1948, it provided shelter for the first refugees from Palestine. The camp was established in 1949 on an area of 0.69 square kilometers with refugees originally from the northern part of Palestine.

Before the conflict in Syria, the camp was home to more than 20,000 Palestine refugees. In 2012, the farms and fields surrounding the camp became active battlegrounds in which heavy weapons were deployed, often indiscriminately. The population more than halved to 9,000.

Some of the camp's buildings and infrastructure were severely affected including some UNRWA installations; two UNRWA schools and the community centre were almost razed to the ground. In 2016, UNRWA was able to re-access Khan Esheih and the Agency was able to rehabilitate some of its installations. Residents have also slowly started to return, with the camp now accommodating 12,000 people.

Meanwhile, the Damascus City Council said the reconstruction plan for Yarmouk Camp will be released in a month's time after complaints were filed by local residents.

The council said a three-phase reconstruction plan is under examination. The plan will take into account the degree of damage inflicted on houses and infrastructure.



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40% of Yarmouk residents are slated to return to their homes and retrieve their property after the plan enters into effect.

Last year, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) published the results of an assessment of the damage to Syrian cities caused by seven years of relentless bombardment by the incumbent regime and its allies since 2011.

The analysis found out that as many as 5,489 buildings were destroyed in Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees. The damage atlas used satellite-detected damage analysis to identify buildings that are either destroyed, or severely or moderately damaged.

Most of Palestinian families taking shelter south of Damascus fled Yarmouk as a result of the tough blockade imposed by the government troops and also after ISIS grabbed hold of the camp on April 1, 2015.

Scores of other stranded families fled the camp following the 33-day military operation launched by the government forces on April 19, 2018. The Syrian government regained control over the camp and southern Damascus towns following the military operation. Dozens of civilians were killed and dozens more injured. Over 80% of buildings have gone either totally or partially destroyed.

A number of activists have warned of ongoing attempts to alter the demographic character of the camp and blur its identity as a living witness to the Palestinian refugee plight.



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In the meantime, the Arab League Assistant Secretary General for Palestine and Occupied Arab Territories Saeed Abu Ali urged the international community to tune up support for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

This came during the 104th session of the Conference of the Supervisors of Palestinian Affairs in the Host Arab States in Cairo.

Speaking via video-conference, Abu Ali stressed the importance of upholding UNRWA's mission for Palestine refugees pending a just and final solution to their plight.

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA programme budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.6 million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA across its five fields of operation. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight.



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Along similar lines, Palestinian medic Alaa AlDeen Youssef has been enduring a mysterious fate in Syrian penitentiaries, where he has been kept for the eighth consecutive year.

Neurosurgeon Youssef has been forcibly disappeared since December 25, 2012. He was kidnapped from a checkpoint pitched near the main entrance to Yarmouk Camp.

Medical staff and structures in war-torn Syria came under heavy shelling by the government squads. Dozens of doctors, pharmacists, and paramedics have been pronounced dead while others have gone missing. A number of medics have reportedly been tortured to death on allegations of tending to wounded enemies and providing medical assistance to rival parties.

AGPS kept record of serious violations against medics, paramedics, and ambulances by the different warring parties in Syria. Wounded civilians, expectant women, elderly people, and hundreds of humanitarian cases have faced severe difficulties trying to reach hospitals and medical centers.

Lists of dozens of medics and paramedics who have been killed, detained, forcibly disappeared, or tortured to death in Syria figure in AGPS' archives.

AGPS reiterates its calls to the Syrian government and all other concerned parties to protect medics and paramedics carrying out humanitarian missions in tension-stricken zones.