



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



"6 Palestinian Refugees Arrested South of Damascus"

- Palestinian Refugees in Jdeidat AlFadhli Sound Distress Signals
- UN Official Shows Up in Palestinian Refugee Camp in Syria
- UNRWA Resumes Aid Distribution in Lebanon
- Mobile Dental Clinic Installed in Khan Dannun Camp

+442084530978

/Actgroup.palsyria

reports@actionpal.org.uk www.actionpal.org.uk



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Latest developments

Over 35 young men, including Palestinians, were arrested in southern Damascus.

Local sources said that last week, Syrian government forces issued a list of people, among them Palestinians, wanted for military conscription and others involved in security/criminal allegations.

At the same time, Syrian security forces pitched makeshift checkpoints on the access roads between Yalda, Beit Sahem, and Babila towns, south of Damascus. Dozens of young men have been arrested.

Syrian security forces also raided abandoned Palestinian houses in Beirut Street and arrested six Palestinians. AGPS has kept their names secret over security concerns.

In another development, Palestinian refugees displaced from Yarmouk to Jdeidat AlFadl town, in AlQuneitra province, have appealed to the Palestinian authority, political factions, and UNRWA to provide them with urgent cash and medical assistance.

The displaced families said they have been enduring squalid humanitarian condition. Their situation has been exacerbated by the lockdown slapped by the Syrian Health Ministry as part of anti-coronavirus measures following confirmed COVID-19 cases in the area.



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In letters emailed to AGPS, activists said Palestinian taking shelter in Jdeidat Fadl town have not received cash and in-kind aid donated by local and international relief institutions.

Meanwhile, Director of UNRWA operations in Syria Amanyah Michael-Ebye paid a visit to AlNeirab and Handarat refugee camps, in Aleppo, in order to inspect UNRWA facilities in the area.

The UN official kept count of the damage inflicted on Handarat in the bloody shootouts between the government forces and opposition outfits.

He also met with a number of Palestinian refugees who returned to the camp and hailed their patience and strong determination.

Palestinian refugees have been grappling with dire conditions in Handarat due to the lack of humanitarian assistance and life-saving services. The majority of families have been taking shelter in buildings rented at extremely steep costs in the poverty-stricken area. A severe water and power crisis also continues to rock the camp.

Heavy shelling on Handarat and bloody shootouts between the government forces and the opposition outfits led to the destruction of over 90% of buildings in the camp. The confrontations culminated in the government's takeover of the camp along with other zones in Aleppo and the displacement of its residents on April 27, 2013.



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UN data indicates that Handarat camp (also known as Ein El-Tal camp) is on a hillside 13km north-east of the city of Aleppo in the Syrian Arab Republic. The camp was established in 1962 on an area of 0.16 square kilometers. Most of the inhabitants are refugees who fled from northern Palestine.

Ein El Tal camp was once home to around 7,000 residents. Around three hundred families moved to newly constructed houses in Ein El-Tal from Neirab camp under a 2003 project to reduce overcrowding in Neirab.

In April 2013, armed groups entered Ein El-Tal camp, forcibly displacing the entire population over a period of some 48 hours. The camp was a theatre of armed conflict until 2016, sustaining extreme damage in the process.

As of the end of 2018, there are 90 Palestine refugee families that have returned. The camp is almost completely destroyed and lacks basic infrastructure including water, sewage and electricity.

In the meantime, UNRWA announced its decision to resume delivery of cash grants to displaced Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon.

In a statement, the UN relief agency said cash aids will be transferred to the registered families as of June 30. Concerned refugees will receive text messages determining the transaction code and distribution office.



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Last month, UNRWA suspended cash aid transfer for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon pending the finalization of the required checks.

UN data indicates that the majority of Palestinian refugees, particularly those fleeing war-torn Syria (PRS), continue to face dire conditions and high vulnerability in Lebanon.

According to information collected by UNRWA, more than 80 per cent of PRS indicate that the Agency's cash assistance is their main source of income.

95 per cent of PRS are food insecure, while about 89 per cent of PRS live in poverty. 36 to 57 per cent of PRS youth face unemployment.

In August and September 2019, UNRWA conducted a verification exercise of PRS in Lebanon and verified the physical presence of 27,803 PRS in the country. The number of PRS in Lebanon has been gradually decreasing over the past two years, and UNRWA estimates that in 2020 the country will continue to host approximately 27,700 PRS (8,450 families).

According to a survey conducted by the American University of Beirut in 2015, nearly 90 percent of the PRS population in Lebanon live in poverty, including 9 per cent who are in extreme poverty and unable to meet even their most essential food requirements.



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UNRWA said PRS's vulnerability is further compounded by their precarious legal status. According to the Agency's monitoring data, around 55 percent of PRS do not possess valid legal residency documents. The lack of a valid legal status, often coupled with outdated civil registration documents, results in severely restricted freedom of movement for some PRS in Lebanon due to fear of arrest, detention and being issued a departure order.

Along similar lines, UNRWA has established a mobile dental clinic in Khan Dannun camp for Palestinian refugees which operates weekly on Monday and Wednesday.

The clinic will provide medical assistance and checks to patients.

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.



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

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.