



Afrin Under Occupation (295):

Exorbitant Royalties and New Violations by Abu Amsha, the Disappearance of Four Detained "Kurds" for Six Years, Fires in the Sarsin Forest, the Killing of a Young Man Deported from Turkey, a Kurd Selling Olive Trees to Pay Royalties, and the Seizure of Other Properties

*Arabic to English Translation**

When "Mohammad al-Jassem/Abu Amsha" fired his pistol into the air, encouraging one of his speakers beside him to repeat the phrase "Tizz America/To hell with America" in front of a crowd of his supporters in the Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid district, it was a mockery and derision of the United States. This act followed the U.S. announcement on August 17, 2023, of sanctions against him, his brother, his car company in Turkey, and his militias, "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade - Amshat" and "Hamza Brigade" led by his partner "Saif Abu Bakr." Despite the sanctions, Abu Amsha was determined to continue committing serious violations and crimes, as long as he received encouragement and protection from Turkish intelligence and the support of Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), and other Turkish officials, both secretly and publicly.



The following are facts about the current situation:

= Abu Amsha's Royalties:

Mohammad Hussein al-Jassem, known as Abu Amsha, born in 1987 in Jousa village, Sqalbieh area in northern Hama, collaborates with "Saif Abu Bakr" in the "Joint Force – Amshat and Hamzat Brigades," alongside the "Sultan Murad Brigade" led by "Faheem Issa." The three leaders and most of their elements are of Turkmen origin. Their power and control expand directly supported by Turkey at the expense of other "Syrian National Army" militias, especially after recent protests against Turkey.

Villages and towns under "Abu Amsha's" control face strict security measures and harsh treatment of civilians, especially the indigenous Kurdish population. Recently, exorbitant royalties have been imposed on them under new pretexts:



- /200/ Turkish lira per Kurdish family (about 500 families) in Mobato/Maabatli town, totaling approximately /100,000/ lira = /3,000/ USD.
- /300/ Turkish lira per Kurdish family (about 50 families) in "Qantarah" village - Mobato/Maabatli, totaling approximately /15,000/ lira = /500/ USD.
- /100-300/ USD per Kurdish family (about 130 families) in "Kakhreh" town during the sumac season, totaling approximately /25,000/ USD.
- /2,000/ USD per olive oil press owner (about 20 presses) in Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid district, totaling /40,000/ USD.
- 2,000 USD per local council head (about 25) in (Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid/district center and surrounding areas, "Ashkan Gharbi, Merwanieh Tahtai and Foqani, Heikejeh" – Jenderes) totaling 50,000 USD, partly collected, with ongoing efforts, as the local council heads are assigned to gather these sums of money from the Kurds who are responsible for the absent ones, owners of the properties.

Abu Amsha's militias reportedly collected around /27/ million USD from olive season royalties alone.

Additionally, they:

- Summon previously accused Kurdish residents- since March 2018- from villages under their control of association with the former autonomous administration, extorting new ransoms of /1,000-3,000/ USD despite previous settlements.
- Demand /6,000/ USD from anyone returning to their homes from Aleppo, Shahba region, or other non-Turkish controlled Syrian areas, and /3,000/ USD from those returning from Turkey, willingly or forcibly, or coming from abroad.
- Restore returnees' properties only after collecting personal royalties and clearing them with "Amshat" and "Turkish intelligence" separately, with a /35/ USD levy per olive tree for absentees. For instance, "**Mustafa Kro Miheh**," returning to Heikejeh village - Jenderes, was detained with his sons and forced to pay large sums to reclaim his property.
- Recently, two shops belonging to **Kamal Saado's** sons in "Anqaleh" village, Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid, were seized, out of four shops which were built a year ago.

These actions are executed with brutality, using local council heads for notifications and collections, often forcing Kurds to comply within short periods, sometimes from noon to evening on the same day. Non-compliance results in insults, beatings, and doubled royalties.



= Arrest and Disappearance of Four Pro-Turkey Kurds for Six Years:

According to various sources, one which is close to the "four arrested Kurds" and other is local, including activist Loungeen Abdo president of Leelon association for victims who are resident in France, who spoke on Rudaw TV on July 8, 2024, about her time with them in the same secret prison, and posts on social media in the beginning of their arrest mid of 2018, it is revealed that:

- The so-called **(Masoud Eibo, nicknamed Abu al-Majd Komalah /35/** years old from Sosenbat village, al-Bab region, and **Issa Aref Kedlo, nicknamed Abu Maryam al-Afrini /30/** years old from "Jelemeh" village, Afrin), were with the "Syrian National Army" during the Afrin invasion in early 2018 and previously with the "Revolution Coordinations and Free Army" since its start.

- Issa's brother "**Qasim Aref Kedlo /27/** years old" and nephew "**Khaled Sabri Kedlo /21/** years old" had ties to the former autonomous-administration, returned to "Jelemeh" village after the battles and supporting Issa.

- Months after Afrin occupation in March 2018, armed groups that are so-called "Kurdish" who participated in the Afrin invasion, were dissembled, dispersed, and some of their leaders where cleared while others were arrested by the Turkish authorities. There are no signs to be found about them. They were "six battalion in contact with the National Kurdish Council in Syria," according to a statement by "Foad Aliko" one of the council representative for "The Opposed Syrian Coalition" back then.

- In June 2018, the four "**Masoud, Issa, Qasim, Khaled-** who was a minor back then /16/ years old" were arrested for their Kurdish identity and alleged sympathy with Afrin residents, falsely accused of contacting the YPG.

- They were forcibly disappeared in Hawar Kilis secret prison in Azaz under Turkish-backed militia control and its intelligence, without any outside contact, until transferred to a town prison in al-Rai and presented to its court on July 4, 2024, after six years. They endured severe torture and degrading treatment to extract confessions.

= Forest Fires:

As usual, on Monday, July 15, 2024, a fire was set in a natural forest at the start of Sarisn Valley mountains between Hobko and Atmono villages in Raju district. Locals identified the arsonist as "**Abu Ali**" from Ghouta, Damascus countryside. The "Syrian Civil Defense" confirmed their teams extinguished the fire after seven hours, burning about "300" dunams of forest.



= Chaos and outlaw:

On Wednesday morning, July 17, 2024, locals found a burned body on the road between "Kharabah Sharran" village and "Meydanky" town, Sharran district. The "Syrian Civil Defense" reported the body was taken to forensic medicine in Afrin. Multiple sources identified the victim as "**Mohammad Afif al-Othman**" from al-Safira city, east of Aleppo, born in 1999. He was trying to cross into Turkey to reunite with his family, having been forcibly deported from Turkey two weeks prior.



= Other Violations:

- In "Abla" village, Bulbul, a "Hamza Brigade" official imposed a /6,000/ USD levy on "**Mustafa Bakr Hassan Ossieh** /30/ years old," adding /500/ USD during Eid al-Adha, threatening him with fabricated charges over photos of him at a Nowruz celebration in Iraqi Kurdistan with PKK supporters. Despite being impoverished, he sold /35/ olive trees to pay the levy.

- **Abu Asad Dibo**, a leader in "Faylaq al-Sham," seized two houses (villas) and thousands of olive and grape vines belonging to displaced residents "**Mohammad Abdul Qader Qanber, Shareef Khaleel Ismail,**" from "Meydono" villages in Raju since 2018. Remaining Kurds are forced to tend these fields without pay, and he imposes royalties on grape leaves and sumac seasons annually.

Despite Abu Amsha's severe human rights violations and scandals, he openly expresses his Turkish nationalist tendencies, proudly supporting the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish flag, and Erdogan as his leader. He implements orders wherever he is, inside or outside Syria, emphasizes fighting alongside Turkish forces, celebrates Turkey's occupation of Northern Cyprus, and meets with prominent leaders of the extremist Turkish nationalist movement and the Grey Wolves organization.

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Media Office-Afrin
Kurdish Democratic Unity Party in Syria (Yekiti)

Images:

- Mohammad al-Jassem firing his pistol into the air to encourage one of his speakers to shout "To hell with America" in front of a crowd of his supporters at a festival in Sheikh Al-Hadid, August 21, 2024.
- Mohammad al-Jassem and Saif Abu Bakr with Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the Turkish Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) in Ankara, July 16, 2024.
- Mohammad al-Jassem and Saif Abu Bakr with Alaattin Çakıcı, a leader of the Grey Wolves and a prominent Turkish mafia figure who was released from prison by an Erdogan pardon, July 17, 2024. The photo is from Alaattin Çakıcı's page on Platform X.
- Mohammad al-Jassem and Saif Abu Bakr with prominent figures from the Grey Wolves and the Turkish Nationalist Movement.
- Mohammad al-Jassem with Yusuf Ziya Arpacik, a leader of the Grey Wolves, and other leaders of the "Syrian National Army" militias.
- A fire in the forested mountains of Sarisn Valley in Raju district, July 15, 2024.
- The body of "Mohammad Afif al-Othman" being transported from the place it was found to the forensic medicine facility in Afrin by the "Syrian Civil Defense".

** Under the supervision of the European Organization of the Kurdish Democratic Unity Party in Syria (Yekîti).*