



Afrin Under Occupation (296):

Assaults on Kurdish civilians and looting of funds, arbitrary arrests, extensive deliberate forest fires, olive tree cutting, and armed chaos

*Arabic to English Translation**

Serious crimes are being committed against the Kurds and their region, Afrin, with impunity and utter brazenness and hatred by those claiming to represent "religion and revolution," under the supervision of their mentor, Recep Tayip Erdogan, who falsely claims to "protect the Kurds and grant them their rights." Additionally, the Syrian opposition coalition, composed of various factions including the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Negotiation Committee are complicit in these crimes through justification, denial, and protection of militias, even lying to Syrians and the international community by declaring Afrin as liberated, safe, and stable.

The following are facts about the current situation:

= Assault on a Kurdish Woman:

On Saturday afternoon, July 20, 2024, while the Kurdish citizen "**Nisreen Hassan Bilal**" was traveling from her village "Haj Khalil" to the nearby town of Raju, she was intercepted by two young men (**Ibrahim Shahada, Abu Muhammad**) from Adra city in Damascus countryside, affiliated with the "Army of Islam" militia, who were on a motorcycle. They tried to snatch her bag, but she resisted, resulting in being dragged behind the motorcycle and her bag's strap being cut with a knife. She sustained bruises and a rib fracture, approximately /50/ meters from a police checkpoint.

The checkpoint personnel were compelled to pursue the thieves after a villager intervened, apprehending "Shahada" while the other escaped. When Nisreen filed her complaint at the "Raju police center," she faced pressure and threats from "**Kamal Mohieddin Al-Ashqar** nicknamed Abu Hiddo," also from Adra and affiliated with the "Army of Islam," now part of the "Ahrar al-Sharqiya" economic division, to drop her charges in exchange for the return of her bag and its contents of money, gold, and a phone.

= Assault on a Civilian in "Mateeno":

"**Farhad Haj Abdo son of Haidar** /37/ years old, married with two children," from the village of "Mateeno" in Sharra/Sharran, had been kidnapped and severely beaten a year ago by the "Sultan Murad Division" militia and continued to face harassment. On Wednesday, July 24, 2024, while heading to plow his olive field at "Jbabal" site, west of the village, he did not return by evening. His family found his tractor in the olive grove and him lying in a nearby valley in a dire state from severe beating, speechless, mentally disoriented, and bedridden to date.

فرهاد حج عبدو بن حيدر طريح الفراش بعد الاعتداء عليه
في 24 تموز 2024



The olive field is near the "Al-Harsh camp," the headquarters of "Sultan Murad," on the road to "Qartqalak" village, overseen by "Araba Idris," nephew of "Saleem Idris, former defense minister of the Syrian Interim Government."

= Armed Robbery:

On the morning of Thursday, July 25, 2024, "**Abdulaziz Zakaria Khilo**, who runs a money exchange and transfer shop in Afrin," from Khalil village – Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid, and his companion, "Hamdoush Mohammed Hamdoush," were subjected to an armed robbery near Dana city in Idlib province. They were robbed of about \$500,000 by a masked armed group in a jeep without plates. The victims filed a complaint with the "Hayat Tahrir al-Sham" security apparatus, which controls the area, after they were abandoned in an agricultural land outside the main road, but the perpetrators have not been apprehended.



= Tragic Incident:

On the morning of Tuesday, July 23, 2024, residents of "Masarkeh" village - Mobata/Maabatli, heard gunfire from the home of "**Ameena Ibrahim Mamo** /38/ years old, mother of two." Rushing to the scene, they found her covered in blood, and despite being rushed to the hospital, she died on the way. Her ex-husband, "**Ahmad Mohammed Hamo** /45/ years old" from the same village- has an ex-wife and children- also deceased from gunshot wounds, was found inside the house with a hunting rifle (giff).

Witnesses spoke of previous years of harassment and pressure from the security checkpoint leader of the "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade" militia in the nearby "Tarmusha" village, causing their divorce. This tragic event occurred amid chaos and lack of transparent, fair investigations, leaving those responsible unaccountable.

= Assault on an Elderly Man:

On the evening of Thursday, July 25, 2024, a gunman from the "Hamza Division" militia shot "**Mahmoud Al-Mousa son of Hassan** /58/ years old" from the Arab component in the village of "Juiqeh/Jwaiq" northwest of Afrin, wounding his abdomen, after he refused to sell his cow's milk. He was hospitalized in Afrin for treatment.

The gunman was arrested by the "Hamza Division" and handed over to the "military police in Afrin."

= Arbitrary Arrests:

The occupation authorities have detained:

- On July 12, 2024, the youths "**Salah Garbalo son of Rashid** /20/ years old" and "**Mohammed Haj Kanbar son of Khalil** /24/ years old" from the village of "Khalilka" (Raju) by Turkish intelligence and the

"military police in Raju" on charges of links with the previous self-administration. They were released after two days of detention and a fine.

It is worth mentioning that the two youths and others were subjected to severe tortures under the hands of "Hamza Division," after they returned from lightening the Newrouz fires, on the evening of March 20, 2024, on the mountain overlooking the village.

- On July 17, 2024, "**Idrees Rasheed Sheikho** /55/ years old" from the village of "Haj Khalil" – Raju, by Turkish intelligence and the "military police in Raju" on charges of belonging to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), remaining in arbitrary detention despite leaving the party in 2000, having been previously imprisoned by the Syrian regime for a year and a half. After being free he left politics for good and focused on his family and managing his properties.

- On July 18, 2024, "**Manan Meho Mamo Naasan** /40/ years old" from the village of "Dumilyo" – Raju, by Turkish intelligence and the "military police" militia, on charges of links with the previous self-administration, after returning to his home from displacement in the Al-Shahba area north of Aleppo. He remains in arbitrary detention.

= Forest Fires:

Over three days, July 23-24-25, 2024, fires ravaged large areas of natural forests in the mountains between the plains of the village of "**Adamo**" and the town of "**Meydan Ekbes (Wadi Ashileh)**," passing through the villages of "**Aleebiskeh**" and "**Bileelko**," reaching the road leading to the villages of "**Meydono**" in the north and the mountains of "**Jalo**" village in the south. Thousands of olive, cherry, fig, and grape trees in the Raju area were also affected, while the Turkish occupation authorities and their militias made no effort to extinguish the fires, leaving the task to the limited efforts of the "Syrian Civil Defense" teams.



- Three days prior, some fires were extinguished by the locals. However, today, the fires have reignited over vast areas of "Baeifeh" mountain and its surroundings, between the villages of "Meydono," "Kuisa," "Bneirka," and "Shingeileh" in the Raju area, consuming natural forest areas and thousands of olive, grape, and fig trees, including about a thousand trees near "Kuisa" village belonging to the brothers "Hassan and Bakr Mustafa Khaled."



Evidence of Arson:

- These fires are part of the Turkish occupation's hostile policies towards the Kurds and their region, aimed at destroying their natural resources and severing their connection to their roots and natural environment.
- Even in the worst climatic conditions, such extensive fires in terms of number and area have not occurred during the period of self-administration (2012-2018) nor in previous decades.
- The fires serve military and security purposes, removing any cover for potential hostile movements against Turkey and its militias.
- The militias have been encouraged to systematically cut down forests, exceeding 65% of the natural and artificial forests in the region, and millions of olive trees have been partially or completely cut down.
- The fires are set in multiple distant points simultaneously.
- Turkish authorities on both sides of the border and their militias completely refrain from extinguishing the fires. The only organization working in this field is the "Syrian Civil Defense," which relies on external donations and operates with modest means.
- The fires help cover extensive logging operations or remove debris to extract buried tree trunks using heavy machinery for wood and charcoal production.
- Locals have seen elements of the "Syrian National Army" militias setting the forests on fire.

The militias' relentless pursuit of firewood is evidenced by the daily extraction of large quantities over the past six years, transporting and selling it in other areas and Turkey, while continuing to find excuses to seize more agricultural properties of the absent, especially olive fields, leading to further tree cutting.

= Olive Tree Cutting:

Local sources confirm that militias of the joint forces "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade – Al-Amshat and Al-Hamzat Brigade," controlling the villages of "Al-Mazraa, Maaraskeh, Shawargha, Maryameen, Anab" in the Shara/Sharran area, load about /20/ pickup trucks daily with wood by cutting pine and olive trees and transport it to their centers for sale via the Mount Leelon – Tirendeh road south of Afrin city. About ten days ago, they partially cut around /200/ olive trees from adjacent fields south of "Qatma" village in the Shara/Sharran area, including nine trees belonging to a citizen from the neighboring village of **Sijraz – Azaz** and /40/ trees belonging to "**Abdel Mannan Kamal Jumaa**" from Qatma.



= Chaos and outlaw:

- July 16, 2024, armed men from Damascus and its countryside – Ghouta, gathered in Afrin city and announced their mobilization against "Faylaq al-Rahman" militias, who had kidnapped "Abu Fahd" from Ghouta and residing in Afrin city. Their main headquarters is located in "Qeebar" camp. The conflict was eventually resolved after "Faylaq al-Rahman" expelled a protesting delegation and issued threats.

- July 24, 2024, a grenade owned by a militant close to "Saif al-Jasim," brother of the leader of the "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade – Al-Amshat," exploded in the hands of his children, injuring three of them inside the house taken over in "Qarmitliq" village – Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid, originally belonging to the forcibly displaced "Jameel Sheikh Hibo."

The international community's continued silence on the violations and crimes committed in Afrin is a crime in itself, especially amidst excessive media blackout and appeasement of the Ankara government in the context of intertwined international and regional conflicts.

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

Images:

- Photos of "Farhad Haj Abdo son of Haidar," bedridden in "Mateeno" village, Shara/Sharran area, July 27, 2024.
- Photos of the armed robbery victim "Abdel Aziz Zakaria Khilo."
- Photos of forest fires in the mountains between the villages of "Adamo, Meydan Ekbes, Aleebiskeh, Bileelko, Seimalk-Meydono, to the mountains of "Jalo" village in the south," Raju area, July 23-25, 2024.
- Photos of forest fires in "Baeifeh" mountain and its surroundings, between the villages of "Meydono, Kuisa, Bneirka, and Shingeileh" in Raju area, July 27, 2024.
- Photos of olive tree cutting in fields belonging to "Qatma" village in the Shara/Sharran area, from a video published on July 26, 2024, by the media activist Ahmad Al-Barhou.

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