



Afrin Under Occupation (300):

The killing of a citizen with special needs, the stripping of olive fields, the imposition of levies and seizures, arbitrary arrests, forest fires with evidence revealing deliberate arson, explosions, killings, and internal fighting

*Arabic to English Translation**

Last week, a festival named "**Melody of Peace**" was held in the city of Afrin, despite peace being far from the region. The area continues to experience daily violations and crimes deliberately committed against the region and its Kurdish inhabitants with premeditation and persistence. What's even worse is that the Villas Street, where the festival was held, has witnessed dozens of clashes and threats to civilian life and security since the occupation began in 2018. The street is also characterized by constant armed presence and the existence of /13/ individual weapon and ammunition shops operating without any regulation.



The following are facts about the current situation :

= The Killing of a Citizen with Special Needs:

On Sunday, September 8, 2024, the "Syrian Civil Defense" teams retrieved the body of a 55-year-old disabled citizen, "**Qanbar Hussein Alo**," from the village of "Keila" in Bulbul district. His body was found in a concrete water tank near the village of "Zarko," close to Raju, after a foul odor had spread in the area. According to locals, "Alo" had been missing for /23/ days before his body was found, and a forensic doctor confirmed that he had been murdered. The perpetrators remain unknown.



= Confiscation of Properties in "Halobi Kabir":

On August 27, 2024, a local leader named "**Abu Saleh**," the mukhtar of "Halobi Kabir" village in Sharra/Sharran district, informed the villagers via WhatsApp by three voice messages about an order to inventory village properties on behalf of "Abu Mahmoud Al-Safarani," one of the leaders of the "Sultan Murad Division" militia. Those with olive fields or agricultural land in the village were instructed to present proof of ownership. This is part of ongoing efforts to seize more property or impose additional levies on the lands.

= "Al-Hamzat" Faction's Levies and Property Seizure:

In all the villages and towns under its control since the end of last year, the "Hamza Division," led by the U.S.-sanctioned "Saif Abu Bakr," began reassessing local agricultural properties to seize more or impose additional levies. They annul proxies and the management of properties by relatives of absentee landowners, including those belonging to absent heirs, even if one of them is present. They sell the seasonal crops through a form of contract and rent out the agricultural lands to whomever they choose:



- On September 1st, 2024, audio recordings sent via WhatsApp were obtained, addressing the following individuals: "Khalil Abu Emad, Fatima Um Ali, Zainab Ibrahim , Hameed Bilal, Khadija Resho, Ezzat Ali, Leila daughter of Abu Luqman, Amina Resho, Nazmi Rashid, Khadija (wife of Anwar Qader), Zainab Othman, Zainab Bakr, Anwar Othman, Um Othman, Muhammad Nouri Othman, Sevin Khaled, Ali Murad, Suli Omar Abdo, the widow of Abu Fareed, Habash Bakr, Omar Hussein, Othman Muhammad Hussein, Othman (relative of Fatima Um Ali), Muhammad (relative of Fatima Ali), Amal (wife of Othman Hanan), Shukri Korsido, Muslim Muslim"- all residents of the villages of "Muiskeh and Dawrisho" in Rajo—demanding that they provide original property ownership documents issued by "Syrian government" institutions. According to a voice recording of "**Muhammad Atriya** (originating from Maarat al-Harmah, Idlib Province), "the security and economic officer for the Hamzat faction in Muiskeh," no other documents (such as those issued by the local council or copies of property deeds) would be accepted, despite the difficulty of obtaining property records from the institutions in Aleppo.

This group of Hamzat has effectively seized the properties of some of those named until they provide valid ownership documents and has also seized the properties of some who have returned in the past year and a half, even though they had paid exorbitant levies upon reclaiming their lands.

- On the evening of September 9, 2024, the Hamzat faction announced to the residents of the town of "**Basuta**" and the village of "**Burge Abdalo**" in Sheirawa, through mosque loudspeakers, that they would impose a levy of \$10 USD for each olive tree that bears fruit and \$5 USD for each non-bearing tree owned by the residents, excluding the properties of absentee landowners.

- They informed the residents of the villages of "**Barbaneh**" and "**Kolya Foqani and Tahtani**" in Rajo of a levy of \$7 USD per olive tree, whether fruit-bearing or not, again excluding absentee owners' properties.

- They also informed the residents of the villages of "**Kafr Shileh, Moroteh, Gundi Mezin, and Khlinireh**" west of Afrin of a levy of \$2 USD per olive tree, whether bearing fruit or not, again excluding the properties of absentee owners.

= Levies Imposed by "**Faylaq Al-Majd** :

In late August 2024, "Al-Majd Legion" militia, led by "**Major Yasser Abdel Rahim**," informed residents of "Keila" village (Bulbul district) of a new levy of \$3 per olive tree on the properties of residents, paid before the start of the season, with higher rates imposed on absentee-owned properties, through a meeting held by each of "Abu Azhar – the village's official, Abu Walid – the nearby village of Zarko official, Abu Diyab – the legion's economic official, with some from the village of Keila". A similar announcement was made to residents of "Zarko" village - Raju, with threats of punishment for non-compliance.

= Arbitrary Arrests :

A campaign of arbitrary arrests targeting Arab citizens in "Nasriyeh and Muhammadiyah" villages (Jenderes district) was reported, though specific names were not available. Among the notable arrests:

- In late August, the elderly "**Salah Al-Din Qaderk**" from "Seimolo- Meydana" village (Raju district) was detained by the "military police" for days, accused of participating in efforts to extinguish fires set in "Baifa" Mountain, after photos and videos published by the families exposing the environment extermination crime and the Turkish occupation authorities' reluctance of extinguishing it. His release came after he paid a \$800 ransom.

- Three weeks ago, during the industrial area campaign, Turkish intelligence alongside the "military police" militia arrested 52-year-old "**Nabhan Hassan Hajo**" in Jenderes, accusing him of links to the former self-administration.

= Forest Fires:

• On August 26, 2024, the "Syrian Civil Defense" reported extinguishing a fire in the forests of "**Bassouta**" (Sheirawa district) which destroyed a part of it.



- According to a local source, fires were set to "Shingeileh" village's – Bulbul mountains, during August 31, 2024, until September 3rd, 2024. The fires consumed large areas of the natural forests and some of the bearing trees fields. The "Syrian Civil Defense" confirmed that its teams contributed in extinguishing the fire, and on Friday, September 13, 2024, it was set again.



حريق في جبال قرية "شنگل" - بلبل/عفرين، ٣١ آب ٢٠٢٤

- The "Syrian Civil Defense" reported that its teams quelled a fire in a natural forest in "Hobako" village – Raju, and today the fires were set yet again.



حريق في جبل هوبكا - راجو، ٢٠٢٤/٩/١٤

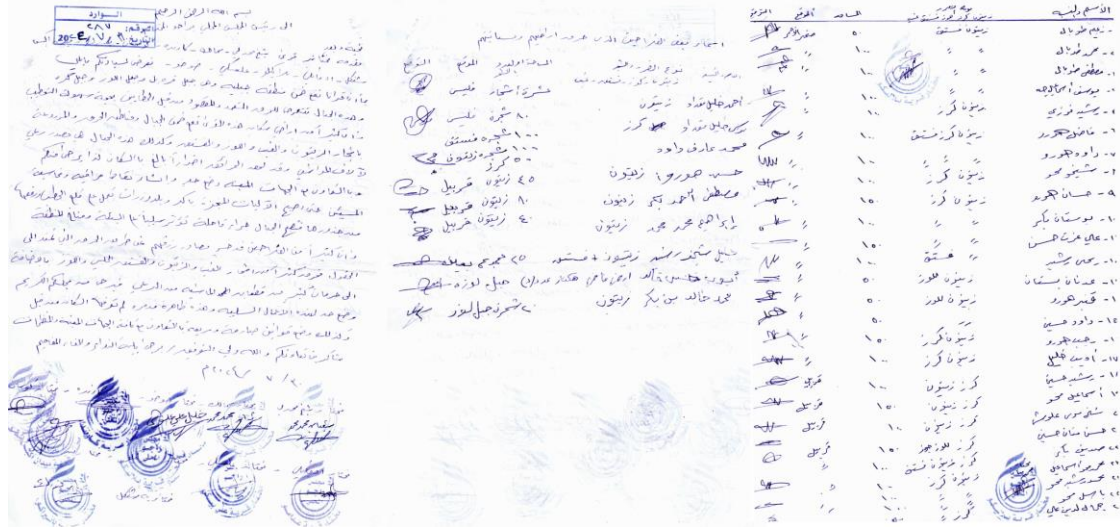
- According to a local source, fires were set on September 10, 2024, in the forests near "Haj Hasna" village (Jenderes district), burning vast areas, while the "Syrian Civil Defense" asserted that its teams had narrowly extinguished the fires, and through the published photos trunks and remains of previously chopped trees are noticeable. And on September 11, 2024, the fires came back burning five donums according to the Civil Defense and on Friday, September 13, 2024, they were set again.



حريق في جبل قرية "حج حسنا" - جنديرس، ١٠/٩/٢٠٢٤
جذوع اشجار خراجية مقطوعة سابقاً

- On September 13, 2024, fires were set in a natural forest near "Baflooneh" village – Sharra/Sharran, and were quelled by the Civil Defense.

- we got an electronic version – pdf - of a memo presented by a number of villages makhateers belonging to Raju district (Shiekh Muhammadli, Seimalka, Dewdew, Gawenda, Kuisa, Adamo, Alibiskeh, Bililko, Paneirako, Meydan Akbas) and "Shingeileh" – Bulbul to the "President of the local council in Raju," registered in the Diwan under the No. /287/ on September 31, 2024, about the fires set out in the mountains around their villages where they confirmed that:



- Several fires have ravaged the region's forests, with suspicions of deliberate arson. It is a destructive phenomenon that the inhabitants didn't know before.

- It affected the livestock pastures, olive, grapes, almonds, pistachios and cherries fields, damaged the population, and a lot of farmers lost their livelihoods.

- Logs are extracted from the stems by heavy machinery (Backer, Bal douser) to the point the mountains became denuded and dry, affecting negatively on the region's environment and climate.

The memo presented a list with the names of /35/ farmers and the number of bearing trees that were destroyed by the fire, totaling /3150/ olive, almonds, cherries and pistachios tree and /2/ hectares of lands.

The memo demanded to put an end to the firing set up, the "establishment of an observation and accountability points for abusers" and "put strict and quick laws".

= Chaos and Lawlessness:

- On August 25, 2024, an explosion occurred inside a military headquarters of the "Sultan Mohammed Al-Fatih Division" militia due to an ammunition blast, black fumes escalated over the headquarters which sites behind the building of the "Local Council in Afrin" near the west main street of the city, killing one soldier and wounding another.



- On August 25, 2024, a body of a man killed by a sharp object was found, covered in stones, near the Tlal street on the Yalanqoz road in Jenderes city. Several local media channels confirmed that it belongs to the so-called "**Safa Fayez Saloum** – from Khattab family," descended from the town of Al-Hwaiz in Al-Ghab plain northwest of Hama, who was kidnapped days before. He was an element of "Gaish Al-Nasser" militia in Idlib, affiliated with the operation room of "Al-Fattah Al-Mobayn".

- On September 3, 2024, in "Qastal Maqdad" village – Bulbul, violent clashes erupted between two armed factions over the seizure of olive fields, located between "Shaeqiyah, Akka" neighbouring villages of "Qastal Maqdad," belonging to displaced Kurdish citizens. The first group is led by "**Adnan Al-Khweilid/Abu Waleed Al-Azzi**" affiliated with the "Sultan Murad Division" militias, and the second one from "Al-Hamza division" militias, resulting in injuries among the fighters and panic among civilians.

- On Thursday 12, 2024, "112 Legion" militias were alerted and deployed in the town of "Badino" – Raju, preparing for a possible attack by some armed men from the new comers of Al-Rastin town – Homs, after the militia expelled an armed man from the town who happens to be one of its elements, because of a fight between him and a family descended from "Kafr Bateekh/Saraqib"- Idlib where most of the legion elements are from. While most of the /70/ Rastin families' sons who live the town parted away from the legion and are working with the Turkish intelligence device and "Police – Counterterrorism" militia, the situation between the two sides remains intense.

= Other Violations:

- In a video recorded on September 6, 2024, "**Salah Al-Din Qaderk**" an owner of an olive field in "Seimolo – Meydana" – Raju, appears to lament the theft of olives from /15/ trees from his field by militias on September 5, 2024, where branches were broken, and unripe olives were scattered.



- Because of expensive levies imposed by "Sultan Suleiman Shah Division – Al-Amshat" on the Kurdish families who have returned home, which were between /1-3/ thousand US dollar to let them live there, numerous Kurdish families have been forced to live in Afrin city due to exorbitant fees imposed by militias for the return of homes or properties.

- Last night, armed men stole a herd of sheep weighing /15-40/ KG from "Seiwiyo" – Mobato/Maabatli, which belongs to the village's mukhtar.



With the olive harvest approaching, theft of crops is rampant despite their immaturity. All of "Syrian National Army" militias are expanding their seizure of absentee Kurdish-owned properties, with some seizing all of it, or imposing heavy levies on the production, in addition to the levies imposed on the production of olive fields belonging to the existing citizens, all amid deafening silence from the international community and Syrian opposition forces.

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

Images:

- Weapon shop on Villas Street in Afrin.
- The late "Qanbar Hussein Alo".
- Saif Abu Bakr, leader of the "Hamza Division," next to "Hasan Al-Hamada – Interim Syrian Government's Minister of Defense".
- Fire in "Bassouta" forest, September 26, 2024.
- Fire in "Shingeileh" mountain forest, August 31, 2024.
- Fire in "Hobako" village, September 14, 2024.
- Fire near "Haj Hasna" village, September 10, 2024.
- Memo from village makhateers of Raju district villages about deliberate forest fire to its mountains, July 31, 2024.
- Explosion in the "Sultan Mohammed Al-Fatih" military headquarters in afrin city, August 25, 2024.
- Olive theft from a field in "Seimolo - Meydana" village, September 5, 2024.
- Sheep herd theft in "Seiwiyo", night of September 14, 2024.

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

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