



Afrin Under Occupation (313):

Deliberate Killing of an Elderly Person, "Al-Amshat" Violations, Arbitrary Arrests, Chaos and Widespread Looting, Extortion, and Non-Return of Homes

*Arabic to English Translation**

With the departure of settlers from Afrin to their original regions, some of the armed groups and civilians among them are hastily seizing as much money and property as possible. This is achieved through the imposition of taxes and financial ransoms on the indigenous Kurdish population, as well as the theft of their possessions, including machinery, equipment, livestock, and the contents of shops and homes, even dismantling windows, doors, and more. Additionally, other violations are being committed against them.

The following are facts about the current situation:

= Deliberate Killing:

On the evening of Tuesday, January 7, 2025, after leaving the mosque, 58-year-old citizen **Abdul Hamid Rashid Mustafa (from the Aqeel family)** was deliberately killed in his village of "Qurneh" – Bulbul. He was shot with live bullets by two masked gunmen on a motorcycle who then fled the scene. The victim was rushed to a hospital in Afrin but succumbed to his injuries. His body was laid to rest on Wednesday afternoon amidst widespread condemnation by the locals.



According to testimonies from villagers, the victim's olive field had been subjected to theft over two years ago. When members of the "Sultan Murad Brigade" security office—who control the village—were contacted by the victim, a clash ensued between the thieves and the security forces, resulting in the death of one of the thieves. This recent crime appears to be an act of retaliation against the victim, under the pretext that he had reported the incident. It is widely believed that the security office is aware of the perpetrators, who are settlers or at least members of their families.

= "Al-Amshat" Violations:

Despite Syria entering a new era, the "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade" (Al-Amshat) militia has not relented in its abuses:

- In the town of Mobato/Maabatli, the militia summoned four Kurdish women to its headquarters, pressuring them for their inability to pay olive harvest taxes. It has also refused to return homes to approximately 20 families who had returned to their homeland, even though the settlers had vacated the properties. The militia demands payments of \$1,000–\$3,000 per home as a condition for handing them

over. For instance, the family that had occupied the late "**Hussein Khalil Khoja's**" house since 2018 left the town but stole all the house's contents and dismantled its doors and windows before departing.

- In the village of "Heikejeh" in Jenderes district, residents were forced to pay exorbitant amounts as olive harvest taxes under pressure, torture, and threats. Many had to sell personal belongings, machinery, or borrow from relatives, often selling their entire olive oil production to meet the demands. For instance, citizen "**Qazqli Sheikho Ibrahim**" recently paid \$15,000.

- In the village of "**Qarmitlaq**" in **Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid** district, over the past month, residents "**Hamid Sheikho, Ramzi Habash, Zaki Ha j Hamid, Mustafa Ahmad Beklaro, Shams Al-Din Suleiman Abdullah, Ahmad Ali Karo, Walid Hussein Beko, Yilmaz Hassan Abbo, Mohammed Rashid Abbo, and Fakhri Rifaat Sheikho**" were taken to the militia's headquarters. They were forced to pay the remaining amounts of their olive harvest taxes under torture and threats.

- In Shiyeh/Sheikh Al-Hadid town, approximately 50 residents have fled or gone into hiding due to the threats and pressure they faced for being unable to pay outstanding olive harvest taxes. Al-Amshat publicly insulted and beat elderly men "**Mustafa Akkash and Zakaria Agha**" in the Naba town square for this reason. Recently, ten other residents were summoned to the militia's headquarters to be coerced into making payments.

= Arrests:

Since early December 2024, most Afrin residents arrested on political grounds have been subjected to humiliating treatment, with penalties including imprisonment and fines ranging from \$600 to \$1,200, in addition to ransoms and bribes. Some detainees are transferred to Al-Rai prison in Al-Bab, where harsher punishments are imposed. The following cases are notable:

- On December 15, 2024, residents "**Rami Hassan Mustafa** (25 years old), **Ibrahim Jaafar Mustafa** (28 years old), **Jaafar** (53 years old) and **Zardasht** (40 years old), **sons of Ibrahim Mustafa, Shiyar Ahmad Hambasho** (44 years old), **Habib** (26 years old) and **Izzat** (28 years old), **sons of Khalil Habib**, all from Mobato/Maabatli, and **Shiyar Ahmad Jalo** (33 years old) from the neighboring village of Qantara," were arrested by the "Military Police" militia at the Azaz-Western Junction checkpoint in collaboration with Turkish intelligence.

- On December 23, 2024, "**Hassan Mohammed Mando** (30 years old)" from "Zivingeh" village – Bulbul was arrested by the "Political Police" militia while attempting to resolve his legal status after returning with his family to Afrin from displacement. He remains in arbitrary detention.

- On January 1, 2025, "**Walid Jamil Nabo** (45 years old)" from "Basleh" village – Sheirawa was arrested by the "Military Police" militia at his brother's shop in Afrin's industrial zone. This occurred one week after his return to Afrin from displacement.

- On January 2, 2025, "**Hussein Hafiz** (70 years old), **Sabri Abdulmanan Amin** (60 years old), and **Hikmat Qanbar Hussein** (65 years old)" from the village of Khirabi Sharo/Xirabî Şera were arrested upon their return from displacement. They were accused of fabricated charges by "Ahmed Ali Al-Issa (Abu Bilal Hanish)," the Chief of Staff of the "Malik Shah Brigade," and his deputy "Abu Ghazi." The militia demanded a ransom of \$3,000 for each detainee's release.



- On the night of January 7, 2025, a masked armed group kidnapped "**Salah Abdulrahman Khalil** (41 years old)," a member of the Seiwy Ponto family from Khirabi Sharo/Xirabî Şera, from his brother's home in Afrin city. This occurred shortly after his return from displacement, with the kidnappers demanding a large ransom for his release.

= Thefts:

- In the past two weeks, thefts have surged across Afrin, particularly targeting shops, grocery stores, and mobile phone outlets. Below are specific incidents:

- A shop on Rajo Street owned by a resident from the town of Jalameh – Jenderes was burgled.
- On the night of Sunday, January 5, 2025, two armed individuals stole a pickup truck from in front of the home of its owner, "**Imad Jamil Muhammad (Osqutik)**," in central Rajo. Despite surveillance footage capturing the theft, the perpetrators have not been apprehended, and the vehicle has not been recovered.



- Over the past ten days, armed individuals have stolen livestock from residents of "Korzeileh" village – Sheirwa ("**Salah Khalil Mahmoud**": 5 sheep, "**Mohammed Adel Othman**": 1 sheep and 1 goat, "**Shukri Saleh Abdo**": 5 sheep, 1 ram, and 4 lambs).

Despite these incidents, the "Sultan Suleiman Shah Brigade" (Al-Amshat), which controls the village, has taken no action.

- Since the joint forces of "Al-Amshat" and "Al-Hamzat" brigades took control of the village of "Beineh"– Sheirawa early last month, thefts of village property have continued during nighttime curfews. Recent thefts were All doors, windows, and furnishings from the villa of retired Brigadier General **Abdul Hamid Al-Ghubari**, and from the home of expatriate **Mohammed Ali**, a tourist vehicle belonging to citizen **Fadel Hassan Hamada** and, garbage transport tractor belonging to the local municipality.

- Last night, armed individuals stole another pickup truck from in front of the home of its owner, "**Idris Ahmad Ibrahim**," in the town of Badino.

- Recently, the home of "**Ibrahim Mohammed Kosa**" in Maydanki – Sherra/Sharran was burglarized by two masked gunmen who stole cash and olive oil. In response, the village headman urged residents via WhatsApp to remain vigilant and take precautions to protect their homes, property, and personal safety amidst the ongoing chaos.

= Other Violations:

- The main checkpoint at the entrance to Rajo, controlled by the "Military and Civil Police" militia in the presence of Turkish intelligence, has intensified security measures, harassing locals and imposing taxes on them.

- On December 30, 2024, 15 residents from the village of "Qasim" – Rajo were forced to visit the economic office of the "Ahrar Al-Sharqiya" militia in the district center under threats of arrest. They were coerced into paying outstanding olive harvest taxes after being notified through the village headman.



عبد الرحمن أبو رضا عبد اللطيف أبو تيماء علاء مرزوق أبو خالد
مسؤولي ميليشيا "أحرار الشرقية" في بلدة راجو - عفرين

- The family of "**Mohammed Mando**" from "Zivingeh" village – Bulbul has been living with relatives in the nearby village of "Dikeh" since their return mid-last month. They have been unable to reclaim their home in Afrin city because settlers, who have occupied the house since 2018, refuse to vacate it.

The return of Afrin's displaced residents to their region continues as an inevitable choice, albeit at a slow pace. This is due to the lack of suitable conditions provided by Turkish occupation authorities. Instead, security measures have been tightened, while chaos, widespread crimes, and various violations persist across the area.

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

Images:

- "Ahmed Ali Al-Issa (Abu Bilal Hanish) ": Chief of Staff of the "Malik Shah Brigade" militia.
- Theft Incident: On January 5, 2024, a pickup truck was stolen from in front of the home of citizen "Imad Jamil Muhammad" in the town of Rajo.
- Three Key Officials of the "Ahrar Al-Sharqiya" Militia in Rajo District (Alaa Marzouk Abu Khaled: Deputy head of the Security Office, originally from Adra in Damascus countryside, Abdul Latif Abu Tayma: Head of the Economic Office, originally from Deir Ezzor and Abdul Rahman Abu Reda: Member of the Economic Office, originally from Homs).

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