

# Information Center of Afrin Resistance



Information Center of  
**AFRIN**  
RESISTANCE

Weekly News Bulletin from Afrin

**# 15**

18.05.2018 - 24.05.2018

The Information Center of Afrin Resistance is providing direct information from the inside of Afrin. Since the 26th January 2018 we report up-to-date about the invasion and war crimes of the Turkish state and the resistance of the people in Afrin.

This is the weekly summary of the developments in and around Afrin.

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# **The Developments in Afrin and Northern Syria 18<sup>th</sup> May to 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2018**

## **Introduction**

With the defeat of the IS in Syria and especially after the liberation of Raqqa in October 2017, the Turkish State intensified its threats and attacks on the Democratic Confederation of Northern Syria. Within this context, the Turkish occupation war on Afrin started on the 20th of January 2018, violating international law and the sovereignty of its neighbor country. The Turkish army has launched this war in cooperation with jihadist groups from the FSA ranks. Many of them are former Al-Qaida or IS members. Since the beginning of March, all districts and the city centre of Afrin had been under heavy bombardments, shelling and drone surveillance by the Turkish army, targeting especially civilians. On March 18th more than 200,000 people left the town centre and were evacuated in order to avoid a genocide. Since then, the majority of refugees are staying in the Shehba region without guarantee of security and international support. In this new phase, the confrontation between the international powers and their interests is increasing all over Syria.

## **Last week's Developments inside Afrin**

After 123 days of resistance against the second biggest army of NATO, hundreds of people from the Afrin Canton are still displaced from their land and are facing difficult life conditions. The Turkish army and its FSA allies are implementing ethnic cleansing, assimilation and colonization policies, preventing the population from returning to their villages and continuing preparations to add the Afrin region to Turkey's State territory. Currently, the resistance of YPG-YPJ forces in all districts of the Afrin Canton carries on, as well as the resistance of the displaced people of Afrin inside Shehba region. Tensions between regional and international powers are clear in a war with multiple actors and layers.

## **Afrin**

The Turkish army and Turkish-backed forces, among which are FSA and ex ISIS members, continue with the attacks over the Afrin residents. The looting and destroying the property of residents continue in all districts of Afrin's Canton. An anonymous source said that members of the militias groups are threaten the population in order to steel money and other properties, at the same time that they confiscate agriculture products. Also Turkish army puts a 95% tax on products and militias groups also charge money for electricity provided by generators and put their own taxes. [1]

In the Badina district some areas and houses were cleaned of rubble by the Turkish authorities, but according to the declaration of people of the region, only for the exclusive use of the Turkish army, militant groups and their families. Also the Turkish institutions set up a hospital that can not be use for the original population of Afrin. By the other hand, according with the declaration of some of the owners, at least 50 residents homes had been destroy in the same district. [1]

The attacks against Ezidi population still continue in Afrin Canton. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of May in Afrin city center, the Turkish-backed jihadist forces destroy the Ezidi Center and a statue of Zarathustra, the founder of Ezidi philosophy. The statue had been built as a present for the Ezidi community of Afrin Canton. [2] The next day the Ezidi temple (Sheikh Jened) and the cemetery in the village of Gundê Feqîra were desecrated and destroyed. [3]

The abduction, persecution and murder continues in the districts of Afrin Canton. Local sources said the invading forces kidnap the citizen Mihemed Haci Sirur (28) in Mabata district. Another citizen, Riyad Murad Cabo (40) from the Kaxire village also in Mabata district was abducted from his shop a month ago and hasn't been heard from since. [4] Zenab Jaafar Kozo an elderly Kurdish woman has died in Afrin after the FSA denied her entry into her village of Qirtghe. [5] According to Afrin Activist twitter account, Moustafa Mouhammed Shaheen, original from Abrax village in Mabata district, has been killed with 3 shots by a Turkish-backed faction this early morning on May 22, in al-Zaida neighborhood in Afrin city, in addition his family disappear. [6] ANF news agency has provide a list of disappeared in different places of Afrin Canton, also Afrin Activist and Afrin Media Center are giving information about abducted cases in the region. [7]

ANHA agency (Hawar News) has reported that since the beginning of May, 1,139 militiamen and their families have been settled in the region of Afrin Canton, in Norther Syria. Militiamen with their families came from Eastern Ghouta, Damascus and the surrounding area, Qelemun, Dimer Muedemiya, Babila, Risen, Telbise and Homs have been settled in the districts of Jindires, Sherawa and Mabata in the Canton of Afrin. [8]

Turkish state is setting militar permanet militar bases in differents parts of Afrin area. Turkish army has established a military base in Mount Nishan known as Sarteh, adding that the Ankara forces have also built another military base in Bish Baraq region West of Kakhara between the villages of Khalta and Kakhara. In addition the Turkish army has set up another base in the farms Northwest of the village of Kazeh in Jinderese district. [9]

### **Shehba and Northern Syria**

Displaced Afrin children and residents in the Sheba region, Northern Syria, are suffering from an outbreak of disease because of a lack of medicines. [10] In the Shehba region it is not any help from the International Community or international NGO's, the only health organization that is working on the ground is Kurdish Red Crescent (Heyva Sor a Kurd).

An old men from Brad village has been return with his family to the Shehba refugee camps because when he came back to his home in Afrin, Turkish-backed forces beaten and threat him, the fear force them to abandon again their home. [11]

In Shehba area, the Til Rifaat People's Municipality managed to get water to 80% of the district, with six underground wells, pumps, generators and 15 daily water tanks. They also provide electricity and will open vegetable market to control the prices of the black market. Also in the Berxwedan Camp in Shehba, has being open the second market for 26 shops.

Afrin's people bid farewell to 32 martyrs fallen in the resistance against the Turkish occupation on Afrin. The funeral took place in Serdem refugee Camp.

In Kobani and Qamishlo cities, in Northern Syria, the Turkish army has been attacked workers who were working in the maintenance of different water installations close to the border. In both places the works have to stop due the risk for the workers.

In other hand the Trump administration has withdrawn all assistance from Northwest Syria, according to administration officials. Tens of millions of dollars will be cut off from previous U.S.-backed efforts to strengthen and stabilize the local society. [12]

## **Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran**

The protests are still ongoing in East Kurdistan, Iran, where the government intensified the repression against the demonstrators in Kazeroun city by using more force, but according to local sources the repression it's not stopping the mobilization.

The executive body of TEV-DEM (Democratic Society Movement) have met with Presidency Office of KRG (Kurdistan Region Government) in Bashur, Iraq. The Co-chair of TEV-DEM, Aldar Khalil, described his meeting with the official of Rojava file in the Presidency Office of Kurdistan Region, Hamid Derbendi, as amiable but without reach any compromises or agreement. [13]

The State Department Spokesperson of U.S., Heather Nauert, expressed that Washington's backing for the call by the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) for an immediate and full investigation of complaints about the vote counting in Iraq's parliamentary elections. [14] For the first time a member the political party Teverga Azadi, close to the Democratic Confederalism ideas, was elected as Iraqi MP. Her name is Yusra Rajab and she was elected in the city of Sulemaniya from the list "New Generation".

A Turkish court rejected an appeal on Monday by the leftist alliance pro-peace opposition for the release of their jailed former leader and presidential candidate of the HDP party, Selahattin Demirtas, a month before snap parliamentary and presidential elections. [15] The other former HDP co-chair, Figen Yüksekdağ, has faced the 5th hearing of the trial the last 17<sup>th</sup> of May in Ankara. The authorities didn't allow in the hearing room the Swedish Ambassador and the international delegation there to observe the trial.

In the northern countryside of Aleppo, about 5 km away from the city, the allies of the Turkish army, that are stationed in Kafr Hamra town targeted Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood in Aleppo with several shells, due to the attack civilian were injured and some property was damage.

According to a Russian – Turkish agreement about 600 persons of the families of ISIS members and citizens who refuse the agreement of the south of Damascus arrive in Idlib province, Syrian Observatory has published last 21<sup>st</sup> of May in their web. [16]

## **Solidarity for Afrin**

Last 18<sup>th</sup> of May, the campaign "SiAmo Afrin" has been send 28 tons of urgent packed food to the Shehba region for the Afrin displaced people. [17]

On 20<sup>th</sup> of May in Stockholm, Sweden, a solidarity day with Afrin women resistance and against the illegal occupation of the Turkish state over the territory has been carry on by the Kurdish community and feminist/ LGTBI movements. Women Kurdish Movement do an act in Mariatorget center, after a demonstration toured the city center and for the end was a popular meal and music.

Also the same 20<sup>th</sup> of May in Oslo, Norway, was another demonstration in support of Afrin people against the Turkish occupation.

The next 26<sup>th</sup> of May several Kurdish platforms have call a Global Action Day for Afrin and against the Turkish state occupation on Syria and Iraq. [18] Many international organizations and individualities have signed the statement. TEV-DEM (Movement for a Democratic Society) Foreign Affairs Committee Spokesman, Saleh Muslim, called on the Kurds to unite, putting emphasis on the importance of participation in demonstrations against Turkey's expansionist mentality. [19]

## Statements and analysis

A dossier made by the Self-Administration of Afrin has been published to get an overview of the situation for Afrin's refugees. A field-study has been conducted. The conditions faced by dozens of representative refugee families have been studied and documented. The information collected included age, family status, their health situation, accounts of how they fled their homes, the conditions they have faced since their arrival in Shehba, the standards of their accommodation and current risks to their health and wellbeing. [20]

Ankara had offered to release a German political prisoner in exchange for Germany upgrading the Turkish Army's older-model Leopard 2A4 tank, which had proven embarrassingly vulnerable in combat. [21] This tank has been used mainly in the Afrin operation "Olive Branch" by the Turkish army against civilian population and infrastructures.

Kurdish People's Assembly as well as of Peace in Kurdistan Campaign and other organisations held a press conference in the Houses of Parliament to condemn the use of the phrase 'Kurdish terrorism' used by PM Theresa May during the Turkish Prime Minister's UK visit last week. Elif Sarican from the Kurdish People's Democratic Assembly said: "(...) Theresa May has once again demonstrated the racist attitude of the government by demonising the hundreds of thousands of Kurds in Britain and labeling us terrorists".

About 100 asylum-seekers are protesting outside a camp in northern Greece to draw attention to overcrowding and poor housing conditions there. The camp contains prefabricated homes for about 750 people, but its population has grown to 1,850 amid increased immigration flows, mostly across Greece's northeastern land border with Turkey. [22]

Mawda, a two-year-old girl found with fatal injuries in Belgium after a police chase on Thursday died from a gunshot wound to the face, prosecutors say. The girl was in a van carrying 30 Kurdish migrants which had been pursued for an hour in southern Belgium. The migrants and refugees in Europe face hard conditions and discrimination through the European institutions and authorities. [23]

The co-chairs of the European Parliament's democracy support and election coordination group, David McAllister and Linda McAvan, said in a press release that "The European Parliament will not observe this electoral process, and consequently will neither comment on the process nor on the results that will be announced afterwards." [24]

## Sources and further information

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