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Suwayda24 News Network

As Suwayda: Rijal al-Karama Releases Bedouin Hostages

The Abduction Occurred Following the Attacks of July 25, 2018

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26 Bedouins, women and children, were released by Rijal al-Karama Movement¹ after they were kidnapped by it following July 25, 2018² attacks on As Suwayda for accusations of being involved in helping ISIL militants to infiltrate to As Suwayda eastern countryside.

Al-Bayariq faction, affiliated to Rijal al-Karama Movement, raided houses and tents of the Bedouins in As Suwayda eastern countryside kidnaping 33 of them, men, women and children during Aug. 2018, who confessed their involvement in the attacks of July 25, besides tens others who are accused of collaborating with ISIL in smuggling arms and people. Then it released later those proved to be not involved, according to Salam Azzam, alias, an activist who testified to STJ on Oct. 4, 2018.

Rijal al-Karama handed over 17 women and 9 children in the house of Sheikh Yousef Jarbou', on Sep. 30, 2018, and released 34 men and youths the next day. The Russian Military Police transferred all the released to Kharaba village, in As Suwayda, and then to Daraa eastern countryside.

However, Rijal al-Karama is still detaining some Bedouins accused of involvement with ISIL in addition to a number of the latter's fighters, including a Chechen, who were caught during the confrontations on July 25, 2018, the activist added.

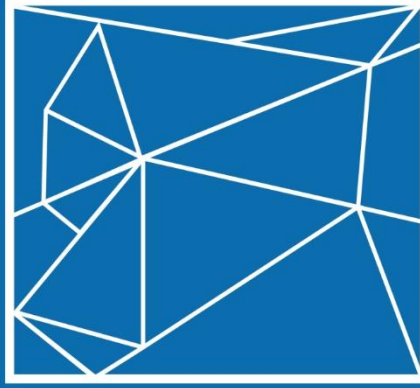
Exploiting the insecurity situation in al-Sweida, Pro-government militias arrested dozens of the Bedouins for ransom or to use them in spreading fake testimonies to defame the province.

For Shadi Sa'eb, the human rights activist, the mutual abductions between the people of As Suwayda and the Bedouins, tense relations between both, undermine stability and local peace and prevailing insecurity throughout the province.

¹ An armed group formed in 2012 in As Suwayda province by Sheikh Waheed Bal'ous, who was assassinated in 2015 by unidentified gunmen. The Movement's fighters are all from As Suwayda.

² "21 Women and Children Kidnapped, Toll Victims of Bloody Attacks Rise in al-Sweida", STJ, July, 30, 2018. <https://stj-sy.com/en/view/650>

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About Syrians for Truth and Justice:

STJ is an independent, nongovernmental organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities.

The initiative strives for SYRIA, where all Syrian citizens (females and males) have dignity, equality, justice and equal human rights.

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