

April 6, 2020

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## Autonomous Administration in Northeastern Syria Releases Four Activists in Raqqa

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*Jamal al-Mabrouk, Ahmad al-Hashloum, Nizar Issa al-Oklah and Omar al-Khamri were released on April 2, 2020 after spending almost a month in detention*

On April 2, 2020, the Autonomous Administration-affiliated security services in Northeastern Syria released four activists they have lately detained in the province of Raqqa, where they hold reins to power. At the same time, the death of another detainee, held captive at one of the Administration's prisons, was recorded as effected by medical negligence, while the fate of the remaining detainees continues to be unknown to the date this report was prepared, namely on April 4, 2020.

In separate raids, the security services of the Autonomous Administration have arrested:

1. **Jamal al-Mabrouk:** born in 1985, he was arrested on February 12, 2020, in his village Suaidia Kabeerah. Jamal al-Mabrouk is the coordinator of the Furat Program. This is not the first time he is subjected to arrest, as Jamal was arrested by the Autonomous Administration several months ago and was released later on.
2. **Nizar Issa al-Oklah:** born in 1976, he was arrested on February 26, 2020 in the village of Kasra. Nizar is Chairman of the Board of Sunna'a Almostakbal Team/Future Makers Team.
3. **Ahmad Mousa al-Hashloum:** born in 1985, he was arrested on February 29, 2020 in the city of Raqqa. Ahmad is the Chairman of the Board of Enmaa Alkaramah/Growing up the Dignity Organization. This is not the first time he is subjected to arrest, as Ahmad was arrested by the Autonomous Administration several months ago and was released later on.
4. **Omar Khalaf al-khamri:** born 1978, he was arrested on March 3, 2020. Omar is the Chairman of the Board of Ma'an Le Ajl al-Jarniyah/Together for al-Jarniyah Organization, in the area of Qal'at Ja'bar. Omar is suffering from a chronic disease that compels him to take medicines regularly.

Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ had published a former report covering the arrest incidents.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, eight Syrian organizations have made a statement condemning the arrests and demanding the immediate release of the four activists, as well as putting an end to arbitrary arrest.<sup>2</sup>

STJ's field researcher contacted a number of the four detainees' relatives, who highlighted the details of the arrest incidents, stressing that the four activists were arrested without arrest warrants or even knowing the charges they are facing. STJ has also communicated with two other activists in the area, who reported that the reasons to the arrest and the security restrictions imposed on the detained four activists are related to disputes over developmental projects in the province of Raqqa, for the Autonomous Administration is pressuring activists who are assigned executive posts in civil society organizations, seeking to coerce them into implementing the projects through its affiliated companies and entities. STJ, however, failed to communicate with the Autonomous Administration as to investigate into the reasons that triggered it to arrest and detain the four activists in the first place.

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<sup>1</sup> "Raqqa: Three Activists Arrested by the Autonomous Administration for Reasons yet Unknown." STJ, March 3, 2020. Last visited: April 6, 2020. <https://stj-sy.org/en/raqqa-three-activists-arrested-by-the-autonomous-administration-for-reasons-yet-unknown/>.

<sup>2</sup> "Syria: A statement about SRD arresting activists in Raqqa." STJ, March 26, 2020. Last visited: April 6, 2020. <https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-a-statement-about-srd-arresting-activists-in-raqqa/>.

Moreover, STJ has recently documented the death of a civilian detainee in the prisons of the Autonomous Administration as a result of medical negligence, for Fajr al-Ibrahim died on February 28, 2020, in the Ayed Prison in the city of al-Tabqah.

Fatimah, the daughter of the deceased detainee, recounted to STJ's field researcher the intricacies of her father's detention and ensuing death, saying:

**“My father was arrested without charges, while his detention was a means to impose pressure on my brother, who was arrested too. The General Security of the Syrian Democratic Forces/SDF has informed us of the deteriorating health conditions of my father several times, knowing that all the efforts made by the tribes' sheikhs to release my father were to no avail. On February 28, 2020, the General Security told us that my father died due to natural causes, affected by a heart attack.”**

Fatimah al-Ibrahim added that both her father and brother were arrested on March 2, 2019, in a joint raid by the anti-ISIS/Daesh US-led coalition and the SDF's Intelligence Office. Her brother, Ahmad, was arrested for criminal causes. Her father, nonetheless, was arrested to force her brother into confessing the charges he is accused of.

**Fatimah accentuated that her father was arbitrarily detained by the Autonomous Administration for a year without charges or trial, as he was held captive at the Ayed Prison in the city of al-Tabqah. While the family received her father's dead body for burial, Fatimah's brother, Ahmad, continued to be detained.**

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