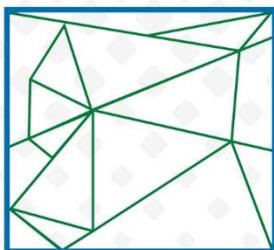


Deir ez-Zor: Individual and Collective Arrests in February 2022



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Deir ez-Zor: Individual and Collective Arrests in February 2022

The security services of the Autonomous Administration carried out five individual arrests and one collective arrest drive in Zghair Jazira village. The individuals remain unaccounted for, while the village's detainees were all subsequently released

In February 2022, Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) documented individual and collective arrest drives in Deir ez-Zor province, all led by security services affiliated with the Autonomous Administration.

Covering individual cases, STJ confirmed that the security services arrested five civilians including a teenager.

As for collective arrests, STJ obtained information that the security services launched a large-scale drive in Zghair Jazira village. The campaign followed a gunfight between the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and “smugglers”, one of whom was killed during the exchanged fire.

Notably, the reported arrests are only the cases that STJ managed to corroborate, recognizing reports from local sources, which indicate larger numbers of arrests in Autonomous Administration-held areas in Deir ez-Zor province.

Individual Arrests

Teenager Hamza Hussein al-Awdeh

On 18 February, a group of the SDF-affiliated Commandos Forces arrested a teenage boy, Hamza Hussein al-Awdeh (14), from his house in al-Shuhail town. The forces did not declare the arrest reasons and held the boy in one of their centers in al-Busayrah town. His fate remains unknown.

To obtain details on the case, STJ reached out to one of the boy’s second-degree relatives, who recounted:

“A group of the Commandos Forces in two vehicles, Van and Kia, parked across from the house. Then, they made their way in and searched every corner of the house. They withheld the family’s cellphones and arrested Hamza without saying why. We have no idea about the charges he is facing; however, we learned that he is being held in al-Busayrah town and that he has not been brought before the court yet.”

Brothers Majed and Maher Obaid al-Mekhlef

On 18 February, a group of the SDF-affiliated Commandos Forces arrested two brothers, Majed and Maher, from their house in al-Shuhail town. The forces did not declare the reasons behind the arrests and held the brothers in one of their centers in al-Busayrah town. Their fate remains unknown.

STJ reached out to a neighbor of the brothers, who witnessed the arrest. He narrated:

“A group of the Commandos Forces in two vehicles, Van and Kia, stopped in front of the house of the detainees. They searched the house and confiscated all the family members’ cellphones. They did not inform anyone of the charges laid against Majed and Maher.”

Saleh al-Muhammad al-Abas

On 18 February, a patrol of the Organized Crime Service arrested Saleh al-Muhammad al-Abas (20) from his house in al-Hisan village. The patrol did not declare the reasons for his arrest and held al-Abas in one of their centers in al-Kasrah town. His fate remains unknown.

A neighbor of the detainee, who witnessed the arrest, told STJ:

“We were sitting in front of our house, when two vehicles, a pickup, and a van, stopped by Saleh’s house. The [patrol’s] personnel had light-green outfits on. They knocked at Saleh’s door. When the door opened, they just arrested him and set off. We did not hear anything about the reason of arrest, or the charges they had against him.”

Tariq Hasan al-Hussein

On 25 January¹, a joint force of the Commandos Forces and the Anti-Terror Unites (HAT) raided the house of Tariq Hasan al-Hussein (25) in al-Jneineh village and arrested him for unknown reasons. The patrol held him in the al-Jazara Prison.

A relative of Tariq narrated the details of the arrest:

“Tariq is married and has two children. On the day of arrest, he was at home, asleep. A force of six pickups, one Inter, and two Shas-Toyotas, mounted with machine guns, cordoned the house. The patrol members had either black or green camo outfits, with masks. A number of these members went into the house and arrested Tariq without declaring the reasons. We inquired into his place of detention and paid money to officials, who promised they will release him. All this was to no use. We recently learned that he is being held in the al-Jazara Prison.”

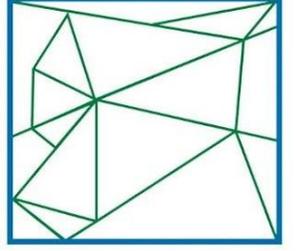
¹ While this arrest took place in January, it was verified by our field researchers in February.

Collective Arrests

Local sources from Zghair Jazira village told STJ that SDF members imposed a 3-days siege on the village on 10 February. They added that the SDF blocked all entrances to the village.

The SDF enforced these measures following gunfights between the SDF and several fuel smugglers in the village. The hostilities killed one of the smugglers, Nasser Feisal al-Jarah.

On the heels of the siege, a joint patrol of the SDF-affiliated Commandos Forces, the Internal Security Forces (Asayish), and the Deir ez-Zor Military Council raided the village and arrested dozens of locals. The detainees were released in batches over several days. The local sources confirmed that none of those arrested were subjected to beating or maltreatment while in detention.



About Us:

Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization monitoring human rights violations in Syria. Founded in 2015, STJ has been based in France since 2019.

STJ is an impartial and independent Syrian human rights organization operating across Syria. Our network of field researchers monitor and report human rights violations occurring on the ground in Syria, while our international team of human rights experts, lawyers, and journalists gather evidence, examine emerging patterns of violations, and analyze how violations break domestic Syrian and international law.

We are committed to documenting violations of human rights committed by all parties in the Syrian conflict and elevating the voices of all Syrians victimized by human rights violations, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, class, and/or gender. Our commitment to human rights monitoring is founded on the idea that professional human rights documentation meeting international standards is the first step to uncovering the truth and achieving justice in Syria.



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