

Siege Update: Starvation continues in Madaya, threatens other besieged towns

For more information and to speak to eyewitnesses contact henrietta@thesyriacampaign.org

Death of civilians under siege (from of 14 - 26 Jan)

Location	Civilian deaths recorded	Cause of death
Eastern Ghouta	52	Shelling 50 Torture 2
Moadamiyeh	2	Shooting 1 Starvation 1
Zabadani and Madaya	14	Starvation
Deir Ezzor	109	Shelling 104 Execution 4 Torture 1
Daraya	1	Shelling
Yarmouk	2	Torture 1 Medical issues 1
Homs	-	-
Foua and Kefraya	-	-

Casualty data provided by the Violations Documentation Centre

Price of flour and rice in areas under siege

Exchange rate:

1 USD = 400 SYP (Damascus)

1 USD = 355 SYP (Madaya)

1 USD = 393 SYP (Homs)

1 USD = 320 SYP (Daraya-Moadamiyeh)

1 USD = 392 SYP (Eastern Ghouta)

1 USD = 390 SYP (Deir Ezzor)

1 USD = 375 SYP (Yarmouk)

Area	Price of flour	% of Damascus price	Price of rice	% of Damascus price
<i>Damascus [not under siege]</i>	150 SYP	100%	425 SYP	100%
Eastern Ghouta	700 SYP	1,400%	500 SYP	118%
Moadamiyeh	No flour available	N.A	6,000 SYP	1,412%
Zabadani and Madaya	No flour available	N.A	35,500 SYP	8,353%
Deir Ezzor	No flour available	N.A	Information unavailable	N.A
Daraya	No flour available	N.A	6,000 SYP	1,412%
Yarmouk	300 SYP	600%	Information unavailable	N.A
Homs	350-400 SYP	700-800%	Information unavailable	N.A
Foua and Kefraya	Information unavailable	N.A	Information unavailable	N.A

Key updates from besieged areas (14 to 26 January)

Madaya

- 15 civilians have died of starvation since the last UN convoy entered the town on 14 January 2016 (Source: Madaya Local Council)
- Several civilians have been killed by snipers and landmines. This includes a pregnant woman and her 14 year old child. A number of children have been seriously injured in sniper attacks when they were trying to gather firewood (Source: local activist in Madaya)

- Snipers are positioned close to the checkpoints outside the town. Meanwhile landmine were placed around the perimeter of the town by members of Hezbollah or regime forces (Source: local activist in Madaya)
- 200 people have developed chronic stomach pains and convulsions as a result of unsuitable food that was delivered as part of the relief packages. It is understood that the root of the medical conditions is beans and tomato paste, which are very difficult to digest for people who have not had food for several weeks. The food baskets did not contain food items like lentils which could be an alternative for the protein (Source: local activist in Madaya)

Moadamiyeh

- The Assad regime continues in its efforts to capture the southern part of the town; clashes between the FSA and regime forces are ongoing. This comes days after truce negotiations between the Moadamiyeh Negotiations Committee and the Syrian regime failed (source: Moadamiyeh Media Office)
- 8 barrel bombs were dropped on the southern part of the town on Monday the 25th of January (source: Moadamiyeh Media Office)

Daraya

- The regime has separated the towns of Moadamiyeh and Daraya and snipers have taken up positions on the road between the two communities. In the last 48 hours civilians who tried to move between the two were shot at
- Persistent attacks on Daraya by the Syrian regime continue; on average 50 barrel bombs are being dropped daily (Source: local activist in Daraya).
- Local activists predict it is only a matter of time before these two communities reach the point of severe starvation because no medicine and food is making it through the blockade

Eastern Ghouta / Douma

- The Neonatal Nursing Centre in Douma is operating again at very limited capacity, having been forced to close for one month between mid December and mid January
 - Many children had to be sent home when the centre closed and their treatment was not completed
 - The Centre has now managed to reopen due to the assistance of doctors and volunteers
 - It provides the area with vital health-care to newborn babies. During 2015, 1,712 children from all over Eastern Ghouta were treated at the Centre (Source: United Medical Office of Eastern Ghouta)

- Severe disruption to the child immunisation programme and rise of curable diseases in Eastern Ghouta due to lack of vaccinations reaching Eastern Ghouta
 - Because of a lack of children's vaccines in the medical centres of Eastern Ghouta tens of thousands of people are at risk of developing polio, measles and tuberculosis as well as other bacterially-transmitted diseases (Source: United Medical Office of Eastern Ghouta)
 - According to Dr Mohammad Attar (of the United Medical Office of Douma) 45,000 children in Eastern Ghouta need vaccines and medicines. He said: "We appeal to the World Health Organisation and the Syrian Red Crescent to send vaccines and medicines to Ghouta as the children are the ones most affected"
 - The last batch of vaccines to enter Eastern Ghouta was nearly six months ago. That immunisation campaign lasted approximately three weeks and covered only 20% of those who required inoculations (Source: United Medical Office of Eastern Ghouta)

Note: pre 2012 90% of Syrian children were vaccinated according to the WHO [UN Humanitarian update 2016](#)

Fouaa & Kafraya

We are still looking for reliable contacts in Fouaa and Kefraya.

Deir Ezzor

- Long queues and a lack of medical supplies are reported at Al Assad hospital in Deir Ezzor. This is currently the only hospital, providing care for over 180,000 people
- The Red Crescent and Syrian army units have been distributing inedible food to internally displaced people (source: Justice Observatory for Life at Deir Ezzor)
 - Syrian army soldiers of the 137th Brigade, under the observation of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, distributed 1,000 food baskets in the neighbourhoods of Joura and Al Qusoor on the 21st of January
 - The role of the Red Crescent was limited to organising the queue for the beneficiaries
 - The baskets were intended to help internally displaced civilians from the neighbourhoods of Jubailah and Ourfeh
 - Each food basket included: two dishes of cooked rice, two dishes of cooked spaghetti, four packs of salty biscuits, pack of cheese, 150 grams of sugar
 - According to our interviewees the cooked food was no longer edible as it was rotten and had become contaminated
 - Syrian Regime arrested several members of the Red Crescent. Soldiers said they had been receiving complaints from local inhabitants saying workers from the Red Crescent had stolen the aid and they were selling food at vastly inflated prices in order to take advantage of the blockade (source: DZ Graph)
 - According to our sources, soldiers of the regime, together with some members of the Red Crescent, having been selling aid. Food packages had been dropped

by Russian planes, and some of their representatives came to Deir Ezzor to video the distribution. However they found the same aid was now being sold in the streets and this caused great anger in the community (source: Activist Karam Alhamad)

- On Monday 25th January the Russian Air Force dropped more aid in areas under regime control. The aid is believed to be going to the 137th Brigade (source: DZ Graph)

Yarmouk

- Yarmouk Camp continues to be besieged by both Isis and the Syrian regime. Freedom of movement is almost impossible
- Aid access is more readily available in areas where there have been truces yet the aid must still pass through two checkpoints, one belonging to Isis and the other to the regime
- A man was killed by sniper fire while trying to move from Yarmouk to Yalda
- A newborn baby died at an Isis checkpoint after his mother was forbidden from moving from Yarmouk to Yalda
- People cannot move from Yarmouk to Babela so they have been targeted by Isis or al Nusra on both sides of the way between these areas (Source: local activist in Yarmouk)

[ENDS]

For more information and to speak to eyewitnesses contact henrietta@thesyriacampaign.org