

THE RIGHTS OBSERVER BY CLDH

Monitoring the Latest Human Rights Violations from the Field

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. A MONTH OF TORTURE IN LEBANON
2. MIGRANT WORKERS YEARNING FOR HOME
3. REFUGEES CONTINUE TO BATTLE INJUSTICE
4. LEBANESE PRISONS: A BREEDING GROUND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
5. THE COST OF LOVE IN LEBANON



01

A MONTH OF TORTURE IN LEBANON

• SYRIAN REFUGEE TORTURED AND KILLED IN DETENTION

30-year-old Syrian refugee Bashar Abdel-Saud died after being detained and allegedly tortured during interrogation. He was arrested at his home in a Palestinian refugee camp, and his parents were called four days later to retrieve his body. State Security promised an internal investigation before the case was transferred to Lebanon's military court. The officers and their supervisor are currently still detained. There is information about 15 other cases that are also being investigated, in which the same office and officers were involved.

A WORD FROM THE TEAM

"Our goal is to break the imposed barriers of injustice and unfairness, defend freedoms and right to life, and put an end to unpunished torture and arbitrary detention".

- Me Hasna Abdel Reda, Head of Legal Department at CLDH

- **NOT SURE WHOM TO ASK FOR HELP**

During one of CLDH's focus group discussions, the majority of victims of torture stated that they were not aware of civil society organizations that provided mental health and psychosocial support, and they did not receive adequate guidance on where to go.

02

MIGRANT WORKERS YEARNING FOR HOME

- **ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY COMPLICATES
MIGRANT WORKERS' RETURN HOME**

Ethiopian migrant workers are now forced to pay the Ethiopian embassy \$50 for a laissez-passer to return to their countries if they do not have a passport. The travel document was previously free, and migrant workers who fail to provide the sum are forced to stay in Lebanon until they do.

- **CONTROLLED BY EMPLOYERS**

According to CLDH's Nassim team, two migrant beneficiaries have not been getting paid by their employers, with the latter also confiscating their passports to control their movement, taking advantage of the judicial strike.

- **TRAPPED IN BETWEEN**

The economic crisis continues to affect migrant workers trying to return home. Even when all their papers are ready, many migrant workers are being forced to renew their exit visas after they expire due to their inability to afford plane tickets, increasing their risk of being detained.



“

“I want to go back to my country so that I can try and find a job somewhere else... anywhere but here.”

*- Migrant Domestic Worker
via L'Orient Le Jour*

”



- **UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE**

The majority of migrant workers do not have phone cards, and they rely on numbers from their home countries to communicate via WhatsApp. This limits their ability to communicate with others, including CLDH's protection team, unless they have access to a stable Internet connection.

CLDH'S NASSIM TEAM PROVIDES REHABILITATION SERVICES TO ALL VICTIMS OF TORTURE AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.



03

REFUGEES CONTINUE TO BATTLE INJUSTICE

- **FORCED TO RETURN HOME**

Some families have claimed that the General Security has arbitrarily deported refugees against their will, potentially subjecting them to torture and cruel treatment. The expelled refugees included former soldiers as well as individuals whose mothers are Lebanese. This action comes as a clear violation of the Convention against Torture, which Lebanon has ratified.

- **DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SAME SERVICE**

CLDH and other legal actors working in the field have noted a violation of the right to equality in the services provided to refugees in Lebanon. Even when refugees apply for the same process, courts and mayors are imposing different fees and required documents depending on where the refugee is residing.





CLDH'S BEKAA TEAM PROVIDES LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO VULNERABLE GROUPS.

- **A TOUGH WINTER AHEAD FOR REFUGEES**

Due to the increase in the price of diesel, refugees have been forced to burn their slippers for warmth. The available wood is thin and insufficient, and refugees without papers have struggled to cross checkpoints to get more supply.

- **LOCKED OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOMS**

Many refugees are not returning to school this academic year due to the absence of transportation services and the lack of guidance regarding the registration process. Moreover, the available schools cannot accommodate the large number of refugees, as the priority is given to Lebanese students. A lot of mothers have also stated that their children cannot receive an education because they are forced to earn an income.

- **GARBAGE PROBLEM CREATES HEALTH ISSUES**

Garbage has continued to pile up around refugee camps after municipalities failed to properly dispose of the waste. People have consequently resorted to burning trash, which has resulted in health and environmental issues, putting into question the Ministry of Environment's role.

- **MARRIAGE REGISTRATION FACILITATED FOR WOMEN**

After previously needing a new civil status record for marriage registration, Syrian women refugees can now use their identity cards or old civil status records. This has allowed couples to get married more easily and legally without the need to get new documents from Syria.



LEBANESE PRISONS: A BREEDING GROUND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

- **NEGLECTED MENTAL HEALTH**

In an ongoing study about mental health among vulnerable groups, CLDH's research team highlighted that prisoners in Roumieh's Blue Building did not have access to the required medication. CLDH's frontliners faced challenges when meeting with some detainees as they were having manic episodes or other symptoms due to their mental instability.

- **A SIGNATURE IN EXCHANGE FOR FREEDOM**

Due to the ongoing judicial strike, judges are not signing release notices. As such, prisoners who have been granted their freedom are forced to stay in prison, exacerbating the problem of overcrowdedness.

- **IMPRISONING GIRLS IN NEED OF PROTECTION**

Two girls who were in a protection center were sent to prison due to their behavior and the lack of available support. The girls were imprisoned instead of being protected and provided with the proper treatment and follow-up.

- **INSUFFICIENT HYGIENE BEHIND BARS**

Prisons continue to face inadequate hygiene conditions, and prisoners in Roumieh have resorted to throwing trash outside the windows as a way to demonstrate against the Government. An officer in Building B stated the prisoners would have to clean it prior to family visits. According to CLDH's info, prison rooms are rarely cleaned unless an international organization or outside entity is coming to film, leading to a rise in infectious diseases.



- **WITHOUT FOOD, WATER, OR FAMILY**

Although prisoners used to receive three meals a day, they now only get two. Bags of bread are thrown on dirty floors after being scanned, and the water remains polluted. There has also been a decrease in family visits as the latter are unable to afford visiting the inmates.



05

THE COST OF LOVE IN LEBANON

- **LGBTQ+ COUPLE FORCED TO FLEE**

A Syrian man who is part of the LGBTQ+ community was forced to flee the country with his Lebanese partner after posts of them were circulated online, culminating in bullying and harassment.

CLDH'S NASSIM TEAM PROVIDES REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES.



PHOTO: HUSSEIN MALLA / AP