

THE RIGHTS OBSERVER^{BY CLDH}

Monitoring the Latest Human Rights Violations from the Field

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. REFUGEES' RIGHTS: TOWARDS FURTHER DETERIORATION
2. UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION: THE ROAD TO FURTHER TRAGEDIES
3. HEALTHCARE IN CRISIS: NEGLECT AND DESPERATION
4. CORRUPTION AND INJUSTICE: THE REALITY OF PRISON INMATES
5. DEPRAVED JUSTICE: DENIAL OF FAIR TRIAL



01

REFUGEES' RIGHTS: TOWARDS FURTHER DETERIORATION

• UNAFFORDABILITY OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS FOR REFUGEES

In addition to their daily struggles, refugees continue to encounter obstacles when attempting to renew their papers. CLDH's front liners have received information that some mayors in Beqaa Valley are allegedly denying refugees residence renewals, residential statements, and birth certificates without providing clear reasons. Furthermore, they are demanding payments in exchange for these documents, even though refugees are unable to afford such fees.

A WORD FROM THE TEAM

"Our goal is to apply the human rights agenda to people's everyday lives and one of the most essential areas for achieving this is the workplace. Our battle for a fair treatment and respect in the workplace while understanding and challenging power structures are essential in building a foundation of justice for all."

- Rouba El Helou, Board Member at CLDH

- **HEAVY RAINS LEAD TO SEVERE DAMAGE IN REFUGEE CAMPS**

Refugee camps in Beqaa have been heavily affected by ongoing heavy rains, resulting in floods that have caused severe damage and destruction. According to reports from CLDH frontliners, some Syrian refugees have been forced out of their tents and left without adequate shelter, navigating challenging living conditions and facing safety concerns. Moreover, many students in the camps are unable to attend school due to the unfavorable weather. These conditions highlight the violation of refugees' right to adequate housing and education.

- **RACIAL DISPARITIES CONTRIBUTING TO INCREASED HOME RENTS**

A Palestinian-Syrian family who receives services from CLDH has allegedly experienced racial discrimination in Beirut after their landlord increased their monthly rent solely due to their identity. This unjust increase has resulted in an unbearable cost of living that the family is unable to afford.

02

UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION: THE ROAD TO FURTHER TRAGEDIES

- **AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION**

According to CLDH's legal team, a boat departed from Tripoli around two months ago, carrying around 85 individuals, predominantly Syrian refugees. However, since then, there have been no updates on their location or condition. Recently, several deceased bodies were discovered in the sea, but there is no confirmation whether these bodies are related to the aforementioned passengers or if they are part of a separate incident.



HEALTHCARE IN CRISIS: NEGLECT AND DESPERATION

• UNREASONABLE MEDICAL EXPENSES

In Beirut, hospital healthcare expenses continue to rise. In addition to the rising costs of surgical operations, there are various expensive fees, even for patients with severe conditions. One of CLDH's beneficiaries reported that he was unable to admit his ailing father for medical care due to the high medical costs, including the doctor's examination fees.

• THE STRUGGLE TO ACCESS AND AFFORD HEALTHCARE

One of CLDH's beneficiaries in Tripoli could not be admitted to any hospital despite his critical condition, which required urgent medical treatment. The CLDH team reached out to both Tripoli and Tannourine Government hospitals and Halba Government center to secure his admission, but to no avail. After several attempts, the Islamic Charity Hospital agreed to admit the beneficiary on the condition of an upfront payment of \$2000. It should be noted that CLDH attempted to contact the Ministry of Public Health several times through the numbers on the Ministry's official website. However, most of the contact lines were unresponsive, and the attempts to contact any representative from the ministry were unsuccessful. Consequently, the Center submitted two complaint letters to the Ministry but did not receive any response.

CORRUPTION AND INJUSTICE: THE REALITY OF PRISON INMATES

• LACK OF WATER SUSTAINABILITY

In Baabda prison, multi-use water stands are non-functional, dispensing only cold water from the faucets. This hampers inmates' ability to maintain basic hygiene, contributing to the rapid spread of diseases. It should be noted that this situation is prompting inmates to cover the costs of filling the water tanks from their personal funds, burdening them with the financial responsibility for repairs needed within the prison.



The State Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

ARTICLE 12 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS



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



• JUDICIAL DILEMMAS

Inmates are experiencing delays and refusals in the processing of their legal files and the implementation of decisions regarding their release. Additionally, they are unable to attend their hearing results due to some judges' failure to process inmates' documents. CLDH's legal team has reported that disagreements among judges during their meetings create substantial obstacles to the prompt resolution of inmates' cases, resulting in protracted delays and negative repercussions. Consequently, documents for inmates that should have been resolved within a week are left in limbo for months.

• SILENT OBSTACLES

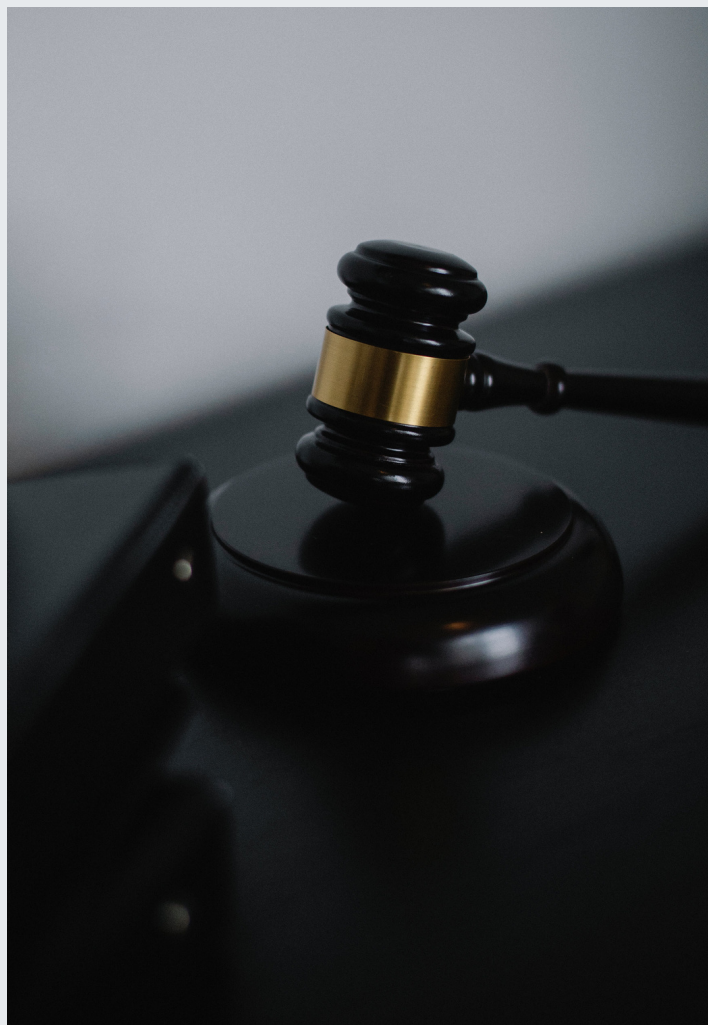
The Daher al Bashek detention center for female juveniles is facing issues of isolation, heightened frustration, and fear as the phone system has remained disabled for months. The minor girls in the center are unable to communicate with their parents or any external contacts. Unfortunately, many families residing in rural and remote areas find it financially challenging to visit their daughters in the center due to the associated costs.

05

DEPRAVED JUSTICE: DENIAL OF FAIR TRIAL

• JUDGE ABSENCE AND ONGOING DELAYS

At Baabda court, an investigating judge ceased attendance for almost five months, not issuing any decisions in the cases presented to his court, including those of minors. Moreover, a criminal judge was appointed as president of two courts, leading to a heavy burden and delays in decision-making, thereby reducing the efficiency of both courts.





- **VIOLATIONS OF TRIAL RIGHTS**

The accusation chamber clerks do not forward case files to the general prosecution for potential initiation in the criminal court unless prompted by the relevant party, constituting a violation of the right to access justice and a fair trial.

- **DISRUPTION IN THE MILITARY COUNCIL**

The Military Council of the Lebanese Army Command failed to arrange new formations of counselors before military court bodies – which typically occur annually – for one month and a half. Consequently, hearings were suspended across all military courts as well as the single military judge in Lebanese regions. This led to a disruption of judicial work and suspension of hearings, causing the detention of individuals without issuing decisions for their release.

- **DISCRIMINATORY LEGAL FEES AGAINST FOREIGNERS**

Judicial assistants levy a financial fee of 100,000 Lebanese pounds for each transaction they undertake, without any legal basis. However, as of early 2024, they have increased the financial fees charged for foreigners in Lebanon. Consequently, foreigners must pay 300,000 Lebanese pounds for their transactions, despite the initial illegality of the fee.

CLDH'S LEGAL AND PROTECTION TEAM PROVIDES LEGAL ASSISTANCE AND CONSULTATIONS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS IN LEBANON.

- **UNDERSTAFFING CHALLENGES**

In Roumieh, there is currently a significant judicial staff shortage. With only one person tasked with managing all aspects of inmate documents and paper processing, lawyers encounter substantial challenges and endure considerable delays in obtaining the inmates' legal files.