

# THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN MADAMIYET ELSHAM AND DARAYYA

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On Saturday 26 December 2015, the Syrian Regime forces have closed the only crossing that connects Madamiyet Elsham city with the capital of Damascus, and prevented the civilians from passing through including workers and students. The closure of this crossing happened after a lot of restrictions and pressure on the civilians who were allowed to go back and forth from the town and preventing them from bringing any food items. Madamiyet Elsham town has witnessed intensive clashes on Eastern and Southern fronts along with fierce bombing with explosive barrels and rockets and even toxic gases.

On the same date, the Regime has asked for a delegation from Madamiyet Elsham to meet military officers from the presidential palace. The Syrian Regime has demanded that the Free Syrian Army in the city surrendering its arms or evacuate the city, otherwise, the city will be shelled with explosive barrels and the army will break into Madamiyet Elsham.

Until the moment of this report, the path is still closed and the regime forces built a barrier and spread special forces soldiers after two days from closing the crossing.

The separation process between Darayya & Madamiyet Elsham is now taking place by targeting the road between the two cities with missiles and air strike especially after the regime forces was able to advance on several fronts and the path between the Darayya & Madamiyet Elsham were exposed to the fire of the regime army and his snipers.

Darayya city is being bombarded daily with tens of explosive barrels initiating a lot of martyrs and dozens wounded. On the other hand, shelling the clash sites in Madamiyet pushed many civilians to leave and move toward the city center to escape from the regime shells, which will lead to overpopulation and an increase the number of casualties as a result to any regime shells.

## Madamiyet Elsham:

The city contains a big number of families, with an estimated population around 45,000 including the displaced families from Darayya. The continuation of this city blockade will lead to humanitarian catastrophe with the absence of important food items and medicine. After hours of closing the crossing, all shops were crowded with people and all food items disappeared from the markets. At this time, no food is available and all shops are closed. The Regime used to allow very small amounts of food to the city to make sure that the sellers and people would be unable to store any, on the other hand a big quantity of fruit and vegetables were entered which are hard to keep fresh due to power outages. At present, meat is the only available food in the markets which is sold with very high prices, where 1 kg of beef costs 5,000 SYP and the price of 1 kg of lamb meat costs 6,000 SYP.

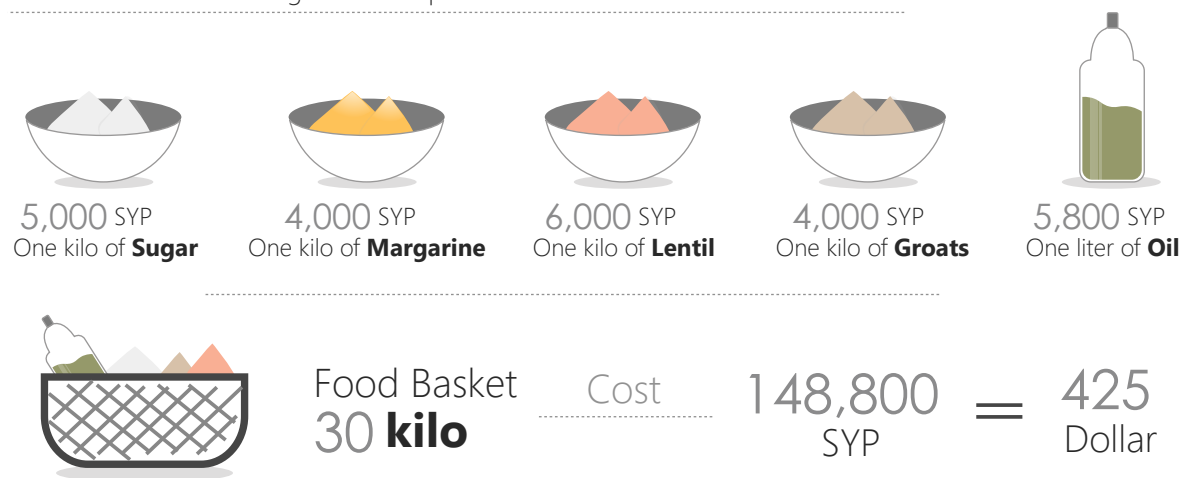
Madamiyet Elsham civilians were buying bread from a car that used to park near local regime militias checkpoint in the Eastern neighborhood and paying 100 SYP per one bag of bread that consists of nine loaves. Overall, 1,500 bread bags were sold every morning in the city. After imposing the siege, no more bread was allowed to be sold, so the residents depend on bread leftover that became crusty and not suitable for eating. Fuel, medicine, vaccinations and water became missing now, because regime was preventing any medicine when the crossing was open and child vaccinations were distributed via city clinic. The absence of fuel has affected the availability of water in the area because the water in the town was connected to the main water network which completely cutoff from Madamiyet Elsham and Darayya. The residents depend on the water from wells and water tanks and they face many difficulties in extracting and transporting water due to lack of fuel. On the other hand, and through the cold wave that hit the region, the Madamiyet Elsham city became completely empty of firewood substance that consider a main element for cooking and heating because the regime controlled all the orchards attached to the Madamiyet Elsham city.

## Darayya:

A big number of the Darayya city residents were displaced as a result to the siege and the poor living conditions for more than three years, and the intensity of the daily bombing with more than ten barrels from regime choppers. Today, 13,000 civilians suffer a bad humanitarian situation as a result to the closed road with the Madamiyet Elsham city and an increase of number of martyrs and wounded civilians who no longer can be taken out to the Madamiyet Elsham city hospitals.

After blockade on the Madamiyet Elsham city, the situation threatens to become a humanitarian disaster and several cases of malnutrition have appeared among the children and the elderly.

Food has recorded the highest rise in prices as a result of the loss in the markets.



The besieged areas inside Darayya & Madamiyet Elsham contain 11,600 families and the total food basket price is \$4,930,000 taking into consideration the loss of most items from market.

