



(The Syrian Observer)

Protests in Dar'a: The Cradle of Revolution Reignited

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A new round of protests unfolded in Syria's southern governorate of Dar'a, commonly referred to as the cradle of revolution, in mid-November 2019. Hundreds of protestors, including prominent and influential figures from the governorate,¹ assembled in the towns and villages of Sahm, Gelin, Ajami, Tal Shehab, al-Yadudah, al-Muzayrib and Tafas in the western countryside of Dar'a calling for the release of political detainees.² The social movement denounced the regime's firm security grip along with the continuous Iranian presence in the region.³ Demands of dissent were also expressed through writing slogans and drawing graffiti on walls of some public institutions like schools.⁴ According to

¹ "Member of Dar'a's negotiation committee warns the regime: do not restore flames to the stove," Baladi-News, November 2011, <https://www.baladi-news.com/news/details/54005/> /> <meta property=.

² "Demonstrations in Daraa Against Assad's Forces and Iranian Militias," *The Syrian Observer* (blog), November 2019, <https://syrianobserver.com/EN/features/54327/demonstrations-in-daraa-against-assads-forces-and-iranian-militias.html>.

³ "Daraa: Demonstrations and Attacks More than a Year after the 'Settlement,'" Enab Baladi, November 2019, <https://english.enabbaladi.net/archives/2019/11/daraa-demonstrations-and-attacks-more-than-a-year-after-the-settlement/>.

⁴ See no.4 above

local media outlets, the protests witnessed a reemergence of slogans that demand the “fall of al-Assad and fall of traitors”, in resemblance to slogans raised in 2011.⁵

The protests are occurring after more than 16 months of the ‘reconciliations’ that were concluded between the regime and rebel groups in the region. Yet civilian life never returned to the ordinary as violence continued to overshadow Dar’a. Assassination attempts, disappearances and abductions resemble the daily fear that civilians are surrounded with.⁶ And the regime’s response remains limited to widening the campaign of abduction and mobilizing more security personnel in Dar’a.⁷

Some local initiatives strove to address and accommodate the region’s security with the regime.⁸ A member of Dar’a’s negotiations committee denounced the regime’s violations and warned the regime “not to restore flames to the stove.”⁹ However, the regime appears to be indifferent. It remains difficult to anticipate an improvement or an end to the protests in Dar’a as long as the regime continues its incompetence to accommodate the demands of the civilians.

⁵ “Protests in Dar’a demand the fall of al-Assad,” Baladi-News, November 2019, <https://www.baladi-news.com/news/details/54051/> /> <meta property=.

⁶ “Daraa Residents Face Arrest, Disappearance at Local Government Offices,” Syria Direct, September 2019, <https://syriadirect.org/news/daraa-residents-face-arrest-disappearance-at-local-government-offices/>.

⁷ Hozaiifa Halawa, “Military reinforcements for regime forces in Dar’a,” Baladi-News, November 2019, <https://www.baladi-news.com/news/details/54000/> /> <meta property=.

⁸ Morad Abdoljalil, Ahmed Gamal, and Haba’ Shehada, “A year after Reconciliation...Dar’a between the hands of who?,” Enab Baladi, August 4, 2019, <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/318944>.

⁹ See no.1 above

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