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OUR FALLEN COLLEAGUES SERIES, A PRODIGY'S LIFE CUT SHORT: NOOR'S STORY

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Our Fallen Colleagues Series, A prodigy's life cut short: Noor's story

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Early on the morning of 2 January, Noor was killed in Deir al-Balah, Gaza. She had been seeking shelter in her sister's home. Noor, her mother, her sister Safa and Hadeel, her sister's children Hisham and Rafeeq, and her brothers Bilal and Bara' all died. Since the outbreak of the war on 7 October, so many families have been destroyed, some wiped off the population registry completely.

A native of Khan Younis, Noor excelled academically from an early age, and had a particular interest in science. She even memorized the Quran and went on to graduate from Al-Azhar University, Gaza in 2017, earning a bachelor's degree in physiotherapy.

Well known for her intelligence and academic prowess, she joined the Nasser Medical Hospital as a physiotherapist, serving there for three years until she joined UNRWA in March 2022. Noor's surviving sister describes her, "She was the holiness of our home, the joy of her siblings."

Ibtisam Saqer, Field Physiotherapist Services Officer, and head of the UNRWA Physiotherapy Division, also paid tribute to her, saying, "She was the quiet staff member who worked calmly. Noor was elegant in her interactions and appearance. She loved her patients, and they reciprocated her love and respect, experiencing her care for them both emotionally and through the results of her therapeutic interventions."

"Everyone who knew Noor respected her for her morality and calm demeanor. The news of her killing was very painful for her colleagues and everyone who knew her. She had many dreams and ambitions, but they were all killed along with her," she added. As of 19 May, 96 medical points and 7 (of 24) UNRWA health centres were operational in the Gaza Strip, with no medical supplies having been received for over a one week due to Rafah and Karem Abu Salem crossing closures and access disruptions. UNRWA continues to adapt to the fluid situation and has set up an additional medical point in Gaza Training College as of 16 May, and salutes the more than 660 healthcare staff who continue to serve in the Agency's health centres that are still operating.

UNRWA honours the service and memory of Noor and the 188 other UNRWA staff members killed in the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip. Their dedication and heroism is a debt we will forever owe.

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