



Urban Changes, Land and Prospects for the City of Laghouat's Expansion

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Abstract

This paper is a response to the urbanization and social change's dynamics which characterizes the desert's cities, particularly in Laghouat, Algeria, has been known for more than half a century an accelerated and uncontrolled pace of development in the socio-economic field or in the urban fabric. It is an urban development, aiming at the city's modernization. Several cities around the world have experienced rapid urban growth, coinciding with population growth, as well as the growing needs of the population of urban centers, which have become the engine of urbanization. While the Algerian Saharan space in recent decades has experienced changes in its urban morphologies accompanied by remarkable changes in social relations and practices, expressing a new form of urbanity. The process of urbanization in the Sahara is not recent. Its magnitude is pushing space planners and researchers to launch projects to reclaim these degraded sites and ksour dissipated in the most distant desert. The ksour and all the traditional habitat are beginning to lose their economic importance to become simple groups of residential dwellings. The vast and immense desert has experienced rapid conflicts of modern reappropriation which have affected its organization and its sustainability, values and traditional ways of life. Many of these ksour, medinas and desert towns have disappeared to be replaced by new cities. The new inhabitants from all over the country who have settled there have produced new behaviors and values, in order to create a

new urbanity in the Sahara. As a result of the transformation and change in the characteristics of these desert cities, many of them have disappeared into silence following the appearance of new modern urban fabrics with an economic system and a new form of appropriation, at the detriment of these cities.

✓ **Keyword :** Land-Ksour- Mutations- Laghouat- Planning- Sahara.

1. INTRODUCTION

Distinctive in their configurations, their forms and their functioning, these fabrics under the influence of a national political unification and a progressive homogenization of lifestyles linked to urbanization, and the construction of a new economic system, have suffered

remarkable changes. In economic and political terms, the Sahara has been an area of conflict since the beginnings of the boom in the great caravan trade. The reading and analysis of the Algerian desert space that we try to reveal in an urban continuity in terms of spatial development that has marked this space. This project is based on land, which is anchored in an inevitable historical dimension. In this series of the Algerian Sahara's of the desert space mutations, the ksours today remain among the largest ensembles testifying to the traditional residential heritage. From this brief history, the essential question comes back to knowing how to define these Saharan nuclei named Ksour in the current of mutations. What will their future be? Is it possible to affirm their continuity and rivalry of the new cities in the Algerian Sahara?

“The medina, in Arabic, was the integrated and integral city, a reference social unit, an exclusive habitat, a reference to the consolidation of sedentarism. Space permeable to the surrounding rural cores which nourish it, and to the commercial activities which support it, in spite of the ramparts which enclose it and protect it from the threat of invaders. Within its walls germinates a living social fabric, with its passions of love and war, capable of constructing, throughout history, its own signs of identity and the translation of lifestyles through literary creation and artistic, as well as by the architectural and artisanal expression”. Chaline (1996) in his work on the cities of the Arab world tried to release the specificities of the traditional Arab cities The specificities of the Sahara are pregnant and structuring. The immensity of the space has induced in the Algerian case strong local and regional characteristics in terms of resources as well as forms of settlement. The adaptation of the populations to the different Saharan environments then resulted in the emergence of particular social, economic and therefore spatial functionings.

2. Laghouat's town evolution history

Monograph of the city: Laghouat is located on the border of Djebel Ammour, which belongs to the Saharan Atlas, and is also the gateway to the desert. 190 km from Ghardaïa, 110 km from Djelfa and 787 m above sea level. "The oasis developed in the north of the city until it became several districts and even in the south with several oases or palm groves. This oasis which dominates in the west in the wadis djedie and M'zi and in the east is a wadi Massad, where these two valleys represent the picturesque nature of Laghouat.

The city of Laghouat is a historical heritage of the different administrative divisions. It was at the time of the Ottoman management administratively subordinated to the city, then became a military zone during the colonial era and the general direction of the French army in the desert, where it included two administrations, the first for the owners of the city and the second for the rural ones. After 1975, the city became an official governorate of the governorate of Ghardaïa, after which the city witnessed successive changes, economic or other administrative.

After the discovery of oil in the region and more particularly in the circle of Hassi R'Mel, the area and the urban status of the region changed. On the one hand, the progress is slow and, on the other hand, the city is dominated by an industrial, economic natural resource to attract many workers. After the administrative division of 1985, Laghouat officially became a center separate from the Ghardaïa sector.

3. The city's urbanization process

Laghouat has witnessed profound changes and developments, from independence to the present day, through several urban extensions, which have affected in one way or another the various oases of the city devoted to agriculture. The time has passed with great interest from the authorities, through projects and programs, construction, which have structured its geostrategic location. The growth, and transformation of the city are also mentioned in the following periods:

The pre-colonial period "1852": As mentioned earlier, the old core of the city is a large ksar surrounded by seven gates on all sides, as shown in the map below.

Le ksar de Laghouat période précoloniale



Le ksar de Laghouat PERIODE COLONIALE (1852 - 1962)



The French Occupation 1852

With the arrival of French colonialism in Algeria and the occupation of most of the national territory, the city fell into the hands of the colonists and France created several European-style residential centers not exceeding two floors, as well as the creation of a hospital and a military barracks, adjacent to the city center and named this area El Gharbiya, this entity was developed by connecting the road network to the different oases by establishing two axes main in the middle of the oases of the north and the oases of the south, and the urban growth then arrived at 254.66 hectares accusing a rate of 7.52% of the total area of the city.

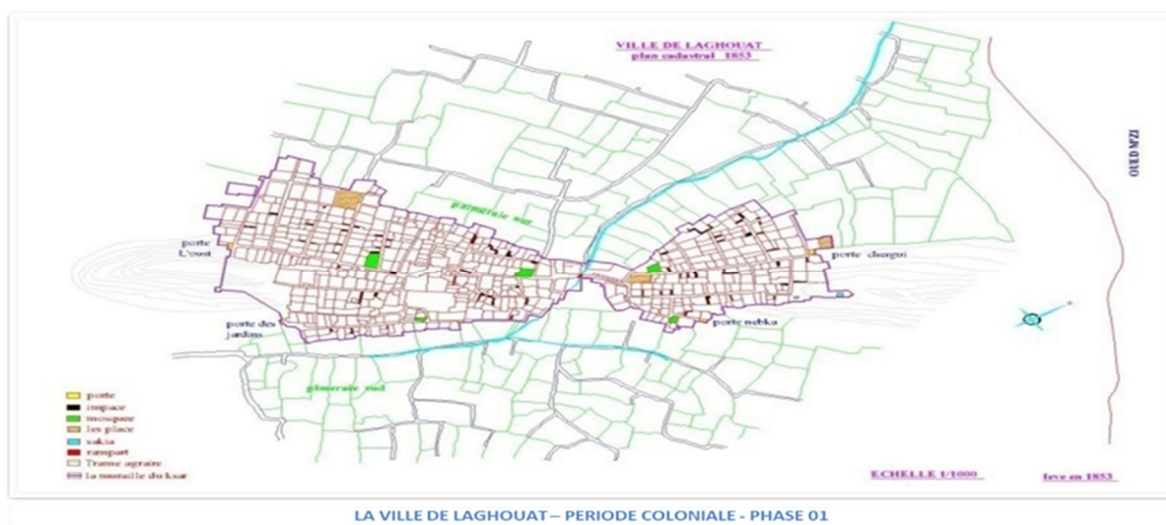


Photo V- 5 Place Randon-Hôtel, places publiques
Source : Archive des photos de Laghouat



Photo V- 4 Place Randon- Poste et Trésor Public.
Source : Archive des photos de Laghouat



Photo V- 8 : L'extension Extra-muros.
Source : Archive des photos de Laghouat

Table N°1 : The municipality population evolution between 1966 - 2018

Evolution de la population de la commune entre 1966 - 2018							
Année	1966	1977	1987	1998	2008	2014	2018
ACLC	27090	58756	66838	107277	146378	168224	198543
LA VILLE	17800	49756	59088	97212	153860	157724	168750

Source : La direction de la planification et de l'aménagement du territoire

Table N°2: The municipality population evolution between 1966- 1977

Répartition	1966	1977	Taux de croissance annuelle globale(TAG)
La commune	37889	59157	4,1 %
La ville	26565	40159	3,8 %
Les agglomérations secondaires	5519	16575	10,5 %
La zone éparse	5805	2426	7,6 %

Source : La direction de la planification et de l'aménagement du territoire



The period 1962-1974:

A phase characterized by the continuous growth of informal housing, in the oases and the completion of individual housing by the population. In addition to the development of new residential neighborhoods in the southern part of the city, including the Sadekkia neighborhood, chetit neighborhood. These neighborhoods were created as a result of the large influx of rural and nomadic populations from various areas adjacent to the city . Due to the region's availability of an industrial zone, which employs many workers from the city and other regions. Expansion in the northern and southern oases where the increase in population extensions was estimated at 333.8 Ha or 10% of the total area.

The period 1975-1984

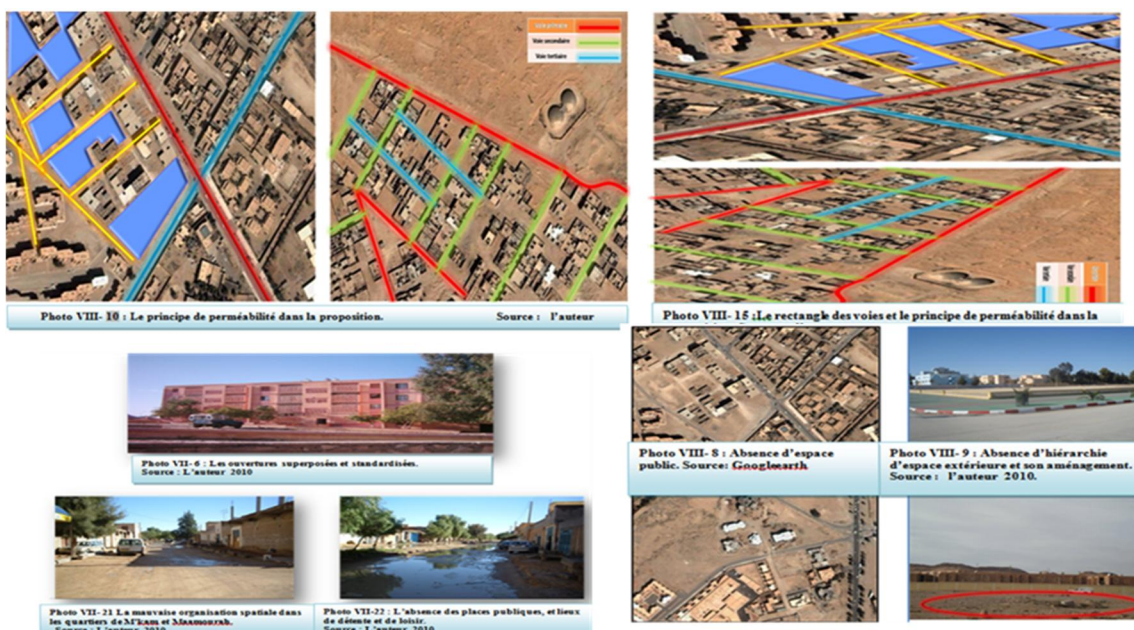
A real urban growth in the Wilayat of Laghouat, where we observe a remarkable evolution in the urban fabric. The trend of expansion towards the west and the southwest of the city is embodied in several important and gigantic projects which are the following: The new urban housing areas ZHUN1 ZHUN 2, as well as various urban areas such as Bouamer, the district of

M'Kam, the district of pines, as well as the construction of a number of schools, mosques and health and administrative structures, have contributed to the formation of the new urban fabric of the city. All these achievements have contributed one way or another to increase the number of displaced people from different regions. Since 1974, the urban area has reached 799.1 hectares, or 23.61%.



Laghouat city current map and the various urban extensions 2018 .

Source : PDAU URBATIA



The period 1985-2010

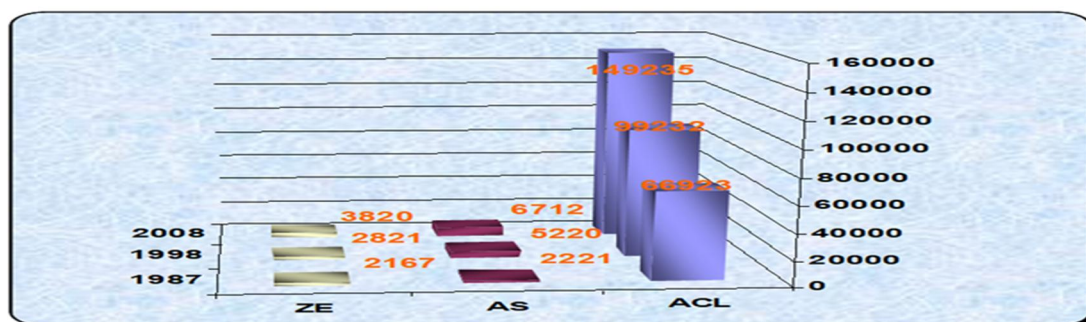
At this stage, the urban fabric of the city has developed considerably, which has led to a real urban sprawl, seeing an immense growth of the city and the reduction of its surface area. The

existence of natural limits, blocks its extension in all directions and orients it towards the municipality of El Khneg and the region of Nasser ben Chohra. And the northern district of the oasis at the foot of Mount Lahmar in the north, the expansion is also at the expense of agricultural land, particularly in the region of Hamda, and Bordj Senoussi.

Table N° 3: LAGHOUAT municipality population evolution

RGPH	1987	1998	2007	TAG 87-98	TAG 98-07
ACL	66923	99232	149235	3.65	4,17
AS	2221	5220	6712	8.08	2,55
ZE	2167	2821	3820	2.43	3,08
TOT	71311	107273	159767	3.78	4,06

Source: RGPH 1987; 1998+pré recensement RGPH2008 (APC)



The construction of private residences undertaken by the population deteriorates the image of the city through the multitude of architectural expressions and urban configurations in the modes of land occupation. As a result, the competent authorities readjusted the rehabilitation and reconstruction plan, due to its inability to cope with the rapid growth of the urban fabric and the absence of areas for future expansion towards EL'Khneg and the commune of bin Nasser bin Chohra, In order to create areas for expansion, for future urbanization and to address the shortage of land reserves in the city. This is due to the pressure in the city due to the lack of land for building.

The period 2010-2015

At this point, the city continued its expansion in the direction towards El'Khneg, i.e. the Al-Wiam district and the surrounding neighborhoods. The consumption of land by the public and

private sectors has also accentuated the land crisis.

The city's population growth:

The city of Laghouat in particular and the town in general has experienced population growth over different periods. The main concentrations are the urban centers of the municipality, that is to say where the population and commercial activity are concentrated. The city's metropolitan areas are mainly concentrated around the municipality and the new neighborhoods surrounding it.

Tableau N°4 : Évolution des types d'habitat avant et après l'indépendance Dans la ville de Laghouat:

Type d'habitat	Avant 1962	1963 - 1987	1987 - 1995	1998	2008
Immeuble	21	463	1430	5120	1876
Taux %	0,07	1,65	15,08	20,14	26%
Maison individuelle avec jardin et cour	2688	5734	882	1247	1324
Taux %	9,59	20,47	9,30	6,61	17,6%
Maison individuelle sans cour et jardin	1361	2885	1835	677	675
Taux %	4,08	10,30	8,80	3,56	6,33%
Maison traditionnelle avec patio	6264	5415	5850	11670	765
Taux %	22,36	19,33	61,50	56,86	43%
Habitant précaire	1824	1353	484	2754	657
Taux %	6,51	4,83	5,10	14,68	3,66
Total	12158	15850	16949	18865	32567

Source : Tableau récapitulatif de F.A.C.L de Laghouat 2008 plus les données des services statistiques de l'A.P.C

We have tried to analyze the phases of population growth, with an interval of ten years between the phases: In 1966, the population of the city of Laghouat had 17,200 inhabitants, or 63.54% of the total population the commune, then it doubled. In 1977, the population of the city reached 49,646, which was 85.10% of the total population of the municipality, and 88.45% of the total population of the city was recorded in 1987, with a growth rate of 1 %, .To reach 59,067 at the end of 2014, the population of the city of Laghouat reached 168,224 inhabitants in 2015, or 90% of the population of the community located in the city center.



Photo VIII- 8 : Absence d'espace public. Source: Googleearth



Photo VIII- 9 : Absence d'hierarchie d'espace extérieure et son aménagement. Source : l'auteur 2010.



Répartition de la population communale par zone 1995-2008

Tableau N°5

Année	1994		1995		1998		2008	
Zone	Taux	Population	Taux	Population	Tau	Population	Tau	Population
Lotissement Oasis - Nord 3000 lots	8	7345	12	11316	12	12449	12	12640
Oasis Nord - Est 526, Cité ...	12	11017	12	11316	12	12968	12.5	12997
Oasis Nord Ouest	18	16526	17	16031	17	17636	18	17689
Vieux ksar (centre-ville)	6	5509	6	5658	6	6225	6	*6280
Oasis Sud Essadikia, Ksar Bezaim	32	22379	31	29232	31	32161	31	32880
Mkam 600, 482, 250, 252 Logements	16	14689	15	14145	15	15562	15	15675
Bordj Senouci + zone éparse	7	6427	6,5	6129	6,5	6743	7	7345
Total	99	90892	99,5	93827	100	103744	100	104630

Source : Le service des statistiques de la commune(A.P.C)

Housing evolution 2010

The State paid particular attention to the housing sector, where we note that 31,028 housing units were completed for the year 2009. Their number increased, and reached 59,854 units for the year 2010, as planned for the five-year plan 2010-2014, approximately 3,100 housing units in the other municipalities which have experienced strong urbanization, but we nevertheless note that the city of Laghouat was characterized by very great achievements in terms of housing under different formulas. Social housing, promotional, rental-purchase AADL, social participatory housing LSP etc., large residential operations carried out in the city and the demand for housing is increasing and still persists according to various statistics from the departments concerned.



The population distribution by economic activity branch:

Table (03) indicates that the percentage of the labor force in the total population of the city, estimated at 59.06%, represents the gross economic activity rate, which corresponds to the public sector rate due to the importance economy of the region, while the dependency rate was 69.32%. The unemployment rate is very high, at 67.85%, due to the lack of development projects and work in the industrial zone is not available to a large part of the population, although they own it.

Table N°6: The municipality's active population distribution in 2018

La répartition de la population active de la commune en 2018					
Localité	population	Population active totale	Les travailleurs	Population sans emplois	Population inactive
commune	146367	102458	43679	59874	40876
Ville	135876	87654	38189	49671	33743
A S	105614	6832	4305	2517	899
Wilaya	468871	339433	93576	243765	172329

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It can therefore be said that the continuous growth of the population has led to the emergence of several economic constraints, such as the high proportion of unemployment, which reached 67.85%, in addition to the increase in the proportion of children of less than 10 years, which is the most and which must be supported.

The unbridled consumption of the soil: The land of the municipality of Laghouat in general and of the city center in particular intended for different uses such as housing, equipment, agriculture, etc... it is experiencing a marked decrease linked to a uncontrolled diffuse urbanization.

Tableau N° 7 La répartition des différentes activités dans la commune

Utilisation	Surface (Ha)	Pourcentage %
Résidentielle	17456	43, 67 %
Equipement	6675	16,64 %
Activités militaires	42	0,10 %
Industrielles	260	0,65 %
Activités commerciales	235	0,56 %
Activités agricoles	15345	38,38 %
Total	40000	100

Source : La direction de la planification et de l'aménagement du territoire

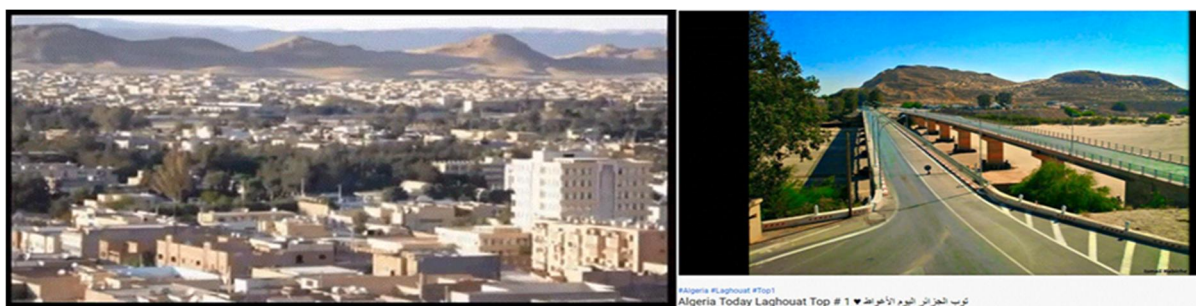
Housing is the main function that consumes a large part of the land reserves. These are the determining foundations, the most important of urban morphology. Due to its importance, the state

has allocated a large part of the housing projects of the city of Laghouat of different types, mainly represented in buildings (social housing, promotional constructions, etc.). In addition to individual dwellings, this type occupies the largest area: 17,456 hectares out of 43.6% of the total uses in the commune, and 82% of these uses are located in the urban agglomeration of the city, which indicates the importance of the city and its density.

Table N° 8 The municipality housing statue

Localité	population	Nombre de logement occupés	Taux total d'occupation du logement	Taux d'occupation total de logement	Taux réel d'occupation du logement
Commune	146368	36330	23189	4,03	6,31

Source : La direction de la planification et de l'aménagement du territoire



N° 9 The municipality's housing distribution 2018

Localité	Nombre total de logement	Nombre de logement occupés	Nombre de logements vacants	Nombre de logements de professions
Commune	26332	23189	2866	246
Wilaya	74651	63316	10264	1121
Pourcentage	35,23	36,62	27,94	21,94

Source : La direction de la planification et de l'aménagement du territoire

City expansion prospects.

The city of Laghouat is currently experiencing a very important expansion phase for the urban space, where the municipality has planned several development projects as part of a policy of urbanization recovery and its regulation in order to plan prospects for expansion of this city.

With regard to the figures in Table N°10, we note that the population growth projections will double compared to 2017, due to the increase in the number of births and the absence of mortality, improve

the state of health and the new health equipment provided, and the increase in the school population compared to previous years, while housing shows a constant increase.

As for the intended use of land reserves, demand will continue there, whether in the housing, health or education sector, as the table shows. Different figures and doubling in the long term, because the needs of the population multiply, compared to the demand for equipment.

Table N° 10 The active population deviation

Activité	Nombre	Pourcentage
population	136477	3,6
Croissance démographique	22387	3,8
Population scolarisée	46354	91,77
Population active	30065	46,6
Parc logement	22738	T.O.L =6

Source : La direction de la planification et de l'aménagement du territoire

It can therefore be said from the table that the active population is continuously increasing and that by 2027 it will represent 49% of the active population, due to the availability of jobs and the development of all economic and industrial activities, This will therefore somehow eliminate the housing crisis, and the pressure on land.

3. Recommendations

To overcome and remedy this urban change and loss of memory and identity of the city of Laghouat. Limit and guide the excessive consumption of the soil which is a non-renewable resource for reasonable and thoughtful purposes, we propose the following actions:

- Engage in reflection on the formative process of city action plans and programs and research their impact on architectural and urban form for the future.
- Raise the awareness of the services concerned to take charge of these orientations fixed beforehand during the approval of the urban plans for a better control of the modes of urban composition.
- A City Policy that obeys a political approach to urban development, aiming to set up a certain number of objectives for a sustainable city.
- Urban space and its requalification.
- The rehabilitation of the dilapidated urban fabric.
- Solidarity and social cohesion.
- The fight against social evils and the protection of the juvenile layer.

- Exchange and partnership between cities.
- The control of transport and the upgrading of cities and their integration into national and international networks.

4. CONCLUSION

Through this critical study and official documents, it turned out that the urban transformation of the city of Laghouat was rapid and continuous, caused by rapid demographic growth, economic and social, combined with excessive urban sprawl. The social structure of the city of Laghouat has changed with the urbanization of the last two decades. Although the old urban fabric of the city of Laghouat fades over time, due to lack of attention, but the new urban fabric calls for new mutations to integrate the citizen into a new urbanity. Globalization and its direct or indirect impact has led to mutations and changes in the conceptual processes of the various urban plans, this act has largely contributed to a clear disarticulation between urban entities. It is also noted that the phenomenon of urban sprawl spread over the territory of the entire city has contributed to the phenomenon of urban fragmentation. This form of extension has wiped out the ancestral traces of architecture and town planning, giving way to new foreign models.



240 logts lpp Laghouat



Algeria #Laghouat #Top1
Nigeria Today Laghouat Top # 1 ♥ توب الجزائر اليوم الأخرى

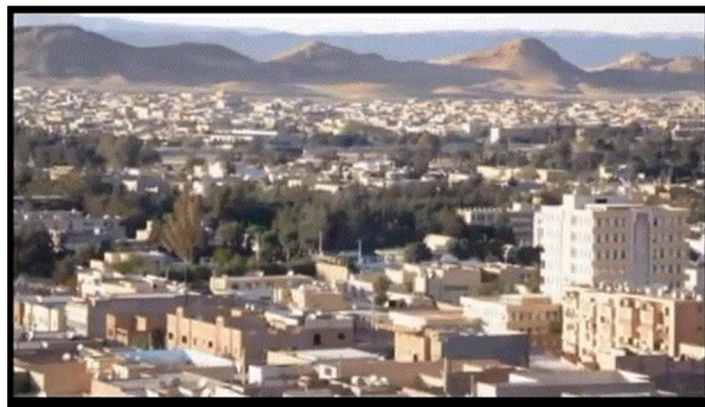
Laghouat Today

Source: Google, 2023



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