

Israel Cuts Water Supplies in West Bank Amid Heat



Ramallah, June 15 (RHC)-- Israel has cut water supplies to major areas in the north of the occupied West Bank amid sweltering heat and the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. Reports on Wednesday pointed to the move by the Israeli water authority Mekorot, which has affected tens of thousands of Palestinians.

They listed the targeted areas as the municipality of Jenin, several villages in the Nablus area, and the city of Salfit and its surrounding villages.

Ayman Rabi, the executive director of the Palestinian Hydrology Group, was quoted as saying on Tuesday that in some areas, people had not received water for more than 40 days.

"People are relying on purchasing water from water trucks or finding it from alternative sources such as springs and other filling points in their vicinity," he said, adding: "Families are having to live on two, three or 10 liters per capita per day."

The United Nations has said an average person would need to consume 7.5 liters of water per day. The Israeli move to cut water supplies comes as summer heat waves have shot the mercury up to 35 degrees Celsius at some places across the occupied territories.

Jenin Mayor Ragheb Al Haj Hassan said that the water had been cut off without prior notice. "Residents suffer badly in this hot weather and at this time of Ramadan."

"Israel and Israel only is responsible for the water cuts as agreements signed with Israel clearly state that Mekorot should provide the northern areas of the West Bank with their needs of water."

In 1967, Israel occupied the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, but withdrew from the enclave and laid siege to it in 2005.

Ever since the occupation, Tel Aviv has been enforcing restrictions on the amount of water supplied to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

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