

caused by the manned barriers and by physical barriers on the access roads. In some cases, the tankers made it to the village after hours or days of delay. In others, they did not make it at all. Before the siege, tankers from Nablus used to come to the village five times a day. On days in the summer of 2002 when there were no special delays, only two tankers made to the village every day. Villagers were thus forced to walk many kilometers by foot to find old wells where some stale water was still left. On September 4, HaMoked contacted the West Bank legal advisor, asking him to regulate the movement of water tankers to Beit Furik and other villages in the area without delay. Five days later the answer came in: "except for a few sporadic incidents," water tankers are allowed through on a daily basis, and HaMoked's grievance is therefore unfounded. But the situation actually got worse: the number of calls

HaMoked was receiving increased, and new grievances were added: truck drivers' keys and IDs were being confiscated. HaMoked contacted the authorities once again, asking to reconsider the matter. The answer provided this time was that after reinvestigating the issue, and following a thorough discussion, it had been decided to remove one of the physical barriers on one of the roads to the village and instead install a gate that would be operated by soldiers. This would allow the tankers to take a shorter route from Nablus. It was further decided to enable the residents themselves, subject to IDF approval, to remove another barrier on the same road, so as to enable tankers to reach other villages in the region as well. HaMoked checked with the head of the village, and found that the changes were indeed implemented, and that since then there have been no problems with the water supply. **(Cases 22417, E164 and others)**

Curfew

During the IDF invasions of the territories of the PA in February, March and April, curfew was imposed on the villages and towns entered by IDF forces. Since these towns in the West Bank were invaded in the end of June and until the end of September, most of them were under curfew for more than 70% of the time. Nablus was hit hardest, as the curfew there was only lifted for a total of 75 hours over a period of 80 days.⁵⁴ In most villages and towns, the curfew was lifted for a few hours a day, at

different hours every time. But even then it was not safe to leave the house, since curfew was sometimes reimposed sooner than expected, and residents who were at the time outside of their homes were liable to be shot by soldiers. Curfew disrupts life wherever it is imposed: going to work, school or the grocery store becomes impossible, and evacuation of pregnant women and sick and injured persons turns into a complex, risky operation. In most cases, curfew is imposed without any

warning and residents have no time to prepare. The impact of curfew on the lives of residents, and the way that HaMoked has dealt with the matter were covered in the previous activity report.⁵⁵

At around 4 PM on December 8, the IDF imposed curfew on three villages near Jericho. The reason provided by the IDF was stone throwing. The villagers, who were in the fields at the time, were beaten up and forced into their homes, and shepherds were not allowed to put their sheep back in the sheds. HaMoked contacted the Coordination Officer in charge, demanding his intervention. The farmers were finally allowed to collect their crops and shepherds to gather their herds. **(Case E630)**

Inability to perform the most basic daily activities under such long periods of curfew has caused residents to violate the curfew and leave their homes to get food, water and medications. Individual curfew violations became massive in the last week of September, when, during the IDF siege on the Muqata (the PA President's headquarters) in Ramallah, people went out on the street in droves to express their protest, in violation of the comprehensive curfew imposed because of the Jewish High Holidays.⁵⁶ Since then, residents of West Bank cities have started violating the curfew so as to allow schools, local government institutions, bakeries and even commerce to operate, albeit irregularly. However, the curfew remains a painful problem: it is imposed as a form of collective punishment after terror attacks and stone throwing, or as a collective preventive measure, when the

IDF claims it has information about planned terror attacks or during Jewish holidays. As of the date of this report, towns and villages in the West Bank continue to suffer long curfews.⁵⁷

There are cases in which the population is not even informed when the curfew is to be imposed and when it is lifted. Anyone leaving home during curfew is risking their life, since soldiers sometimes use live ammunition or tear gas. The penalty for being caught outside during curfew is confiscation of IDs and car keys, which in most cases are not returned. Without an ID, people cannot leave their house even after the curfew is lifted, as anyone caught without an ID is arrested.

On October 12 the area of Alfahas – between Kiryat Arba and Hebron – was under curfew. In the morning, around 15 taxi drivers from Hebron were apprehended by soldiers, who took away their IDs and car keys, and left. HaMoked contacted both the Civil Administration and the DCO in Hebron, but both refused to intervene in a case that involved curfew violation. Two days later, the car owners towed their cars away. Although HaMoked gave the IDF the registration numbers of the jeeps that the soldiers who had taken the keys and IDs were driving, the authorities never recovered these items. **(Case E434)**

54 **Haaretz**, September 9, 2002, p. A6.

55 HaMoked, **Semi-Annual Report: January-June 2002**, pp. 23-24.

56 **Haaretz**, September 23, 2002, p. B4.

57 Updated statistics of curfew hours can be found on the website of the Red Crescent, www.palestinercs.org