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**POSTS****New city in West Bank welcomes residents after years of delay**

BY: ARAB AMERICA | POSTED ON: SEP 19, 2015



Rawabi – a high-tech planned residential city in the West Bank – has finally begun welcoming residents after years of delays caused by Israel's reluctance to allow water access.

At the beginning of September, keys were handed over to 640 Palestinian families who will be the first wave of residents to the community. It will eventually house some 25,000 residents in 5,000 apartments and townhouses. Some of the families moving in this month have waited more than two years since purchasing their homes due to the lack of water.

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Arab Word of the Day

Arabic:

Me-handiss (m)

English:

Engineer

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“It’s a dream to be part of a new Palestinian city. Rawabi is offering a high-standard of living, it’s architecturally designed and the fact that it’s the first Palestinian city outside of existing traditional cities has attracted us. If you go to downtown Ramallah, the prices are very high and inaccessible,” said Talal Shahwan, who received his keys along with his wife and children, according to The National.

The Israeli government finally relented and allowed the development to move forward with connection to the Israeli water supply back in March.

“We have to beg and negotiate and put pressure on the Israeli government to get water to [Rawabi], and we’re not bringing people from the Moon,” Palestinian-American developer Bashar Masri told The National.

“We’re just moving people from one area of the West Bank to another area, so we’re not affecting the total consumption of water.”

However, the water was just another delay in the construction however. When the project started in 2008, Israel refused to allow an access road to be built to the site. Additionally, the water supply provided to the city will need to increase as the population increases beyond 640 families.

Due to constant hassles with the Israeli government, the project had to be scaled back from its original intention of creating 40,000 homes. Masri cited upwards of \$65 million in losses due to the delays.

“Initially we had a euphoria of buyers. Then when we had the delay problems due to the road and the water, many people were turned off and we had hundreds of cancellations,” he told The National.

“[Sales] picked up again as we resolved the water problem but not to the [level of] euphoria we had before ... We believe by next year we will bring that euphoria back.”

Rawabi is located 9 km north of Ramallah and just 3.5 km north of Birzeit. According to the development’s website, the central area of the city “offers a retail business district with hotels, cinemas and a convention center, all supported by the latest smart technologies and a high-speed fiber-optic network. Rawabi also features education and medical facilities, houses of worship, public green spaces and recreation facilities.”

Source: stepfeed.com

**Arab
AMERICA** Radio



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Recipe of the Day

Ruzz Jaari - Rice and
Lamb

AraBIT

Arab Trivia

Alhazen Known as “Alhazen” by European scientists, Ibn al-Haytham (965-1040) developed Euclidean geometry and was highly regarded for his work in optics.

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