

Rifai inaugurates Mashtal Feisal wells



Prime Minister Samir Rifai is briefed on the Mashtal Feisal water wells in Jerash on Friday (Photo by Anwar Qtaifan)

JERASH (JT) - Prime Minister Samir Rifai on Friday attended the inauguration of the Mashtal Feisal water wells project in Jerash, which aims to alleviate water woes in the northern governorate.

The Mashtal Feisal wells will contribute to solving the acute water shortage recently witnessed in Jerash by supplying the northern region with an additional 320 cubic metres of water per hour, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Rifai visited the northern governorate last Monday and tasked the Ministry of Water and Irrigation as well as concerned bodies to expedite the implementation of the project and pledged to follow up personally on the water pumping process.

During yesterday's visit, the premier underlined the need to find permanent solutions to water cuts witnessed in Jerash by improving the water networks, Petra reported.

Also on Friday, Rifai listened to a briefing by Minister of Water and Irrigation Mohammad Najjar on the significance of the Mashtal Feisal project as a "partial" solution.

During the briefing, Najjar noted that the ministry will float tenders after Eid Al Fitr to enhance and replace the water networks in Jerash at a cost of JD6 million, according to Petra.

The Water Authority of Jordan has coordinated with the health ministry to conduct necessary laboratory tests to ensure that the water pumped from Mashtal Feisal is safe for human consumption, he stressed. The northern governorates, particularly Jerash, are the most water-deprived areas in Jordan due to limited water resources.

Recurring power cuts over the past month due to record high temperatures caused water pumps to shut down, disrupting the water distribution programme and leaving hundreds of households without water for weeks.

There are around 250,000 water subscribers in the northern governorates, according to ministry figures, which indicate that water per capita in Jerash stands at 75 litres per day, well below the national average of 130 litres per day.

Faced with an “unprecedented water shortage” in the northern governorates, last month the ministry launched a call centre to receive water-related complaints.

The ministry also authorised directors of water departments across the country to address water problems locally without having to refer first to the minister or the secretary general.

In addition, water officials coordinated with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources to direct electricity companies to avoid cutting electricity to areas where the ministry operates water pumping stations.