

U.S. Prisoners Held in Outdoor Jail Amid Record Heat Wave



Phoenix, June 29 (RHC)-- In the U.S. state of Arizona, prisoners at a notorious open-air jail known as Tent City have remained sleeping under thick canvas tents this week, even as a record-setting heat wave has pushed temperatures to nearly 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Some 380 prisoners are housed at the jail in Phoenix under a so-called work furlough program, employing them in day jobs under supervision. Many of the jobs involve outdoor manual labor. At night, prisoners return to Tent City, where overnight temperatures this week bottomed out around 90 degrees.

Tent City has drawn condemnation from international human rights groups, who say housing prisoners outdoors in the desert is tantamount to torture. Sheriff Paul Penzone promised in April to close Tent City, which has housed as many as 1,700 prisoners at a time -- but has not followed through on his word.

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