



AS IT IS

After 50 Years, Officials Aim to Remove an Israeli Man from His Beach Home

July 20, 2023

For more than 50 years, Nissim Kahlon has lived in an unusual way on the Mediterranean coast in Israel.

He started by setting up a tent on the **beach** in Herzliya, not far from the city of Tel Aviv.

Over time, he started making a cave in the stone **cliffs**.

Little by little, he made a living space. He started to make stairs and windows. He built up the stone walls with glass and colorful **tiles** he found while walking in the city.

Now, his home is a **tourist attraction**. People come to the beach just to see what he has made.

But officials in Israel want the 77-year-old to leave.

The Environmental Protection Ministry said Kahlon's cave home is illegal. The ministry says the cave home makes the traditional homes above his unsafe. They worry the cave damaged the structure of the cliff.

Officials sent Kahlon a letter telling him to leave, known as an **eviction** notice.

"Instead of **encouraging** me, they're **denigrating** me," Kahlon said.

He said his home is safe. It even has electricity, a telephone and a toilet.

He said his home is an example of living without waste. Everything he cuts out of the stone he uses. "There's no waste here, that's the **logic**," he said.

The last time the government told him to leave was in 1974. He received a document that said his home would be torn down. But it never happened. He did not hear of any government concerns for almost 50 years.

The removal order has been suspended while Kahlon appeals the decision. Kahlon plans to say the government knew about him for many years. He said the city approved his presence when it connected his home to electric power.

He said he wants to die in the home he built for himself.

“I am ready for them to bury me here,” he said.

The government said Kahlon’s home makes the cliff unsteady. Officials are worried about the homes at the top of the cliff. But the government is concerned about more than that.

An old weapons production center is only about 400 meters north of Kahlon’s home. The production center closed 30 years ago after an accidental explosion killed two workers, damaged hundreds of buildings and broke windows far away. The government worries there are still some explosive devices nearby. In June, an explosion blew a large hole in the sand not far from Kahlon’s cave.

The Ministry of Defense said there are not supposed to be any explosives in the area. However, no government or private organization has cleaned the area and checked it for explosives since the weapons center closed in the 1990s.

Some say the Israeli government is using its concerns about unexploded weapons and the cliff wall to push Kahlon out of his home. The local leaders in Herzliya said they have a new place for Kahlon to live. But Kahlon said he wants to stay. His friends are raising money for his appeal.

After speaking to the Associated Press, he picked up some tools and started working on his home.

“I’m doing something to feel something,” he said. “I can’t sit around all day.”

I’m Dan Friedell.

Dan Friedell adapted this story for Learning English based on a report by the Associated Press.

Words in This Story

beach -n. an area covered with sand that is by a body of water

cliff -n. a very steep surface of rock, earth or ice

tile -n. a flat piece of clay or stone used to cover floors or walls

tourist attraction -n. a place designed to interest visitors to an area

eviction -n. to be officially removed from a building or land

encourage -v. to cause someone to what to do something

denigrate -v. to make someone seem less important; to criticize, attack or insult

logic -n. a way of thinking; a reason

We want to hear from you. Do you think the man will be able to stay in his cave home?

Here is how our comment system works:

- 1. Write your comment in the box.*
- 2. Under the box, you can see four images for social media accounts. They are for Disqus, Facebook, Twitter and Google.*
- 3. Click on one image and a box appears. Enter the login for your social media account. Or you may create one on the Disqus system. It is the blue circle with "D" on it. It is free.*

Each time you return to comment on the Learning English site, you can use your account and see your comments and replies to them. Our comment policy is [here](#).

