

U.S. to expand Iraq prisons

By [Global Research](#)

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The United States decided to expand its major detention centers in Iraq after military officials predicted that the ongoing security crackdown in Baghdad will add hundreds or thousands of prisoners to the 17,000 detainees already in U.S. custody, an army spokesman said.

“Subsequent to the increase in the number of Iraqi prisoners detained by the U.S. occupying forces; the U.S. army based in Iraq intends to expand Camp Bucca and Camp Cropper prisons to incarcerate more Iraqis,” the London-based Asharq Alawsat newspaper reported.

Camp Bucca, the largest U.S. detention center in Iraq, is located in the south of the country and holds about 13,800 Iraqi prisoners, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Clifford Siegfried, a military spokesman, told The Washington Post.

Camp Cropper Centre at Baghdad International Airport holds about 3,300 Iraqi detainees, Siegfried said, adding that the army plans to expand the prison so that it can accommodate as many as 5,000 prisoners.

Gen. David Petraeus, the U.S. commander in Iraq, confirmed the news last week when he said that the effort “to expand the U.S. capacity for detention” in Iraq was one reason 2,200 U.S. Army military police personnel are part of the troop increase in Iraq.

* Prisoners escape from UK-run prison

Meanwhile, the UK army said eleven Iraqi detainees have escaped from a British military prison in southern Iraq.

Ten of them had “swapped” places with visitors over the past week, an army spokesman said.

Their disappearance from the Shuaiba military base, west of the southern city of Basra, was only noticed on Friday, he added.

A security source told the AFP news agency that the detainees had been held without charge for the past two years.

One correspondent described the prisoners’ escape as “a very embarrassing incident” for the army.

“It does not speak of very tight security given that the British Army says these people were considered to pose a threat to the security of Iraq and to the multi-national forces,” he said.

Almost four years after the invasion, the only visible development in Iraq today is the construction of prisons. Several detention centers have been built across the country, where human rights violations are committed on daily basis by occupation forces, although an occupying power is obliged — under the Geneva Conventions — to protect the civilian population and provide them with security.

The number of Iraqi detainees has rocketed since the 2003 invasion. Iraqi officials now put the number as high as “hundreds of thousands” prisoners.

UN Human Rights in Iraq say the majority of Iraqi detainees are innocent civilians arbitrarily arrested during random raids by U.S. occupation forces. There is no law to certify or register prisoners. Families and relatives have no idea where their loved ones are.

Hundreds of Iraqis have simply disappeared after they were taken prisoners. Most of them are often tortured, sexually abused and, in many cases, murdered in gross violations of the Geneva Conventions and international law.

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