
IRAQ INVESTIGATING CLAIMS OF CIVILIAN ABUSE BY SOLDIERS IN MOSUL

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The Iraqi interior minister has ordered an official investigation into allegations of torture, rape and murder of civilians by special forces liberating the city of Mosul from Isis.

The Interior Minister ordered investigators to conduct a clear and fair inquiry...(and) to take legal measures against those who are negligent if the investigation proves so, a ministry statement said on Wednesday.

The statement comes in response to a powerful photo essay titled Not heroes, but monsters was published by German magazine Der Spiegel last week.

Children of Mosul describe life under Islamic State

Taken by photojournalist Ali Arkady, photographs show men being hung from the ceiling with their arms bent behind them, and the accompanying story talks about rapes, knifings and other human rights violations.

The freelancer was imbedded with the elite Emergency Response Division (ERD). He claims that soldiers invited him to watch and even join in the abuse.

While Mr Arkady initially set out to document the heroism of Iraqi soldiers combating Isis, a darker side of the troops activities gradually became clearer to him.

He waited to leave Iraq with his family for their safety before allowing the images to be published.

In a statement, the ERD accused Der Spiegel of publishing a report based on fabricated and unreal images.

The Spiegel evidence comes on top of investigations from Irin and Human Rights Watch accusing Iraqi troops of detaining and extrajudicially executing Mosul men accused of being affiliated with Isis.

Isis shoots down Iraqi Army Helicopter above Mosul

The ERD is one of several US-backed forces in the large Iraqi coalition that has managed to almost completely push Isis out of the city after several months of bitter fighting.

Individuals or units failing to uphold that standard [of human rights] do a disservice to their sacrifice and must be investigated & held accountable, Brett McGurk, Washington's envoy to the US-led coalition, said on Twitter, alluding to the Spiegel report.

Kaynak/Source: