

Pentagon Forced to Release Prisoner Abuse Photos



Washington, February 8 (RHC)-- The U.S. Defense Department has been forced to release a series of photographs showing injuries inflicted on detainees by American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Many of the 198 carefully vetted images that were released are close-ups showing cuts, bruises, swollen joints and relatively small wounds, without providing the men's identity, according to AFP. Moreover, there is little or no context to suggest exactly how the detainees might have been injured or what led to their detention.

In one of the cases, at least one U.S. soldier was sentenced to life in prison as a result of investigations, the Pentagon said, declining to provide more information as to which images were connected to that case, or whether the detainee involved had survived the abuse.

The photos were released as part of an ongoing legal fight between the Pentagon and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which filed a freedom of information lawsuit in 2004 seeking access to some 2,000 photographs, purporting to show detainee mistreatment.

The administration of President Barack Obama first pledged to release the images in 2009, but Congress passed an exemption to the Freedom of Information Act allowing the photos to be kept secret in case they were deemed by the defense secretary as a threat to national security.

However, Pentagon chief Ashton Carter in November declined to re-certify that the released images posed such a risk.

The ACLU pledged to continue seeking the remaining 1,800 or so images, saying the release was long overdue and its 'selective' nature might mislead the public -- finally forcing the Pentagon to release the photos.

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