

'Hostage slaughterhouses' found in Fallujah

Iraqi general says troops found records of captives

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FALLUJAH, Iraq - An Iraqi general said troops found "hostage slaughterhouses" where foreign captives had been killed in Fallujah, where U.S. forces cornered insurgents after a stunningly swift advance that seized control of 70 percent of the militant stronghold.

The abandoned houses in northern Fallujah had hostages' documents, CDs showing captives being killed, and black clothing worn by militants in videos, Maj. Gen. Abdul Qader Mohammed Jassem Mohan said Wednesday at a military camp near Fallujah.

But it appeared troops did not find any of the at least nine foreigners still in kidnappers' hands — including two Americans. "We have found hostage slaughterhouses in Fallujah that were used by these people," Mohan said. But he said he did not know which hostages' documents were uncovered.

The most notorious abductions in Iraq have been claimed by the al-Qaida-linked group led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

No record of foreigners

Mohan was unsure if the hostage records included the names of any of the at least nine foreigners still in the hands of kidnappers — most notably British aid worker Margaret Hassan, French journalists Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot and two Americans.

"I did not look closely" at the documents, he said.

In the latest hostage drama, gunmen [kidnapped three relatives of Prime Minister Ayad Allawi](#) from their Baghdad home — his cousin, Ghazi Allawi, the cousin's wife and their daughter-in-law, Allawi's spokesman said. A militant group calling itself Ansar al-Jihad claimed in a Web posting to be holding them threatened to behead them in 48 hours unless the Fallujah siege is lifted. The claim's authenticity could not be verified.

Also, al-Jazeera television broadcast a videotape Wednesday with a militant group claiming to have captured 20 Iraqi soldiers in Fallujah. Men wearing Iraqi National Guard uniforms were shown with their backs to the camera.

The station said a masked militant reading a statement on the tape promised not to kill the prisoners shown but threatened to kill others captured in the future.

Al-Zarqawi's grim roll call

More than 170 foreigners have been kidnapped this year, and more than 30 of them have been killed by their captors.

Al-Zarqawi's followers have beheaded three Americans, two Britons, a Japanese and a South Korean, usually releasing grisly videos showing the decapitations. Many others have been freed in exchange for money.

Philippine Foreign Ministry officials said on Tuesday that kidnappers were demanding ransoms totaling about \$20 million for an American and a Filipino abducted last week in Baghdad.

They said the kidnappers of Robert Tarongoy, a 31-year-old accountant, had contacted his employer, Saudi Arabian Trading and Construction Company (SATCO), and demanded money in exchange for the freedom of the hostages.

Tarongoy, an unidentified American, a Nepali and three Iraqis were taken at gunpoint on Nov. 1 from their offices in Baghdad. The Iraqis and the Nepali have been released.

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