

Alabama

Another stabbing, disturbance at Holman prison; lockup remains on lockdown after weekend riot



A CERT guard walks down a cell block at Holman Correctional Institute in Atmore, Ala., on March 14, 2016. The prison saw its second disturbance in three days on Monday. (Submitted to AL.com)



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on March 14, 2016 at 11:37 AM, updated March 15, 2016 at 8:08 AM

An inmate stabbing happened early this morning at the William C. Holman Correctional Facility, and emergency response teams were sent back to the prison.

Alabama Department of Corrections spokesman Bob Horton confirmed the Corrections Emergency Response Team was returning to the facility, just several days after a riot put the prison on lockdown and left an officer and the warden stabbed.

HOLMAN PRISON RIOT

Horton said the assault happened about 8:30 a.m. in a prison dormitory when an inmate assaulted another inmate with a makeshift weapon. Corrections officers responded and removed the victim from the dorm. His injuries aren't life-threatening.

When officers tried to apprehend the suspect, they were met with resistance, Horton said. "Prisoners became aggressive and barricaded themselves inside the dorm," he said.

By 2:45 p.m., the response teams had regained control of the dorm.

Officers had secured all sections of the prison to prevent the inmates inside the dorm from entering other parts of the facility. About 70 inmates were in the dorm, he said, and no officers or other inmates had been injured.

Horton said the prison is on lockdown and there is no imminent danger to prison staff, corrections officer, or inmates in the secured areas of the facility. Lockdown limits the movement of inmates inside the prison. Officials have also temporarily canceled visitation.

Sources close to the situation tell NorthEscambia.com the incident involving this morning's stabbing did not reach the level of Friday night's disturbance. That publication reports that investigators found 30 cell phones, makeshift knives and other contraband in the subsequent search and probe.

Apparently not all cell phones have been found. One inmate posted multiple videos to Youtube today listing the reasons why the inmates are upset. Other inmates are still posting messages on Facebook, describing tear gas and smoke bombs.

Chaos erupted Friday night at the Atmore prison, which has remained on lockdown ever since. The injuries to the guard and Warden Carter Davenport weren't life-threatening and the situation was under control by about 5 a.m.

The first assault happened about 9:15 p.m. Friday when a correctional officer responded to a fight between two inmates in one of the prison dorms. The officer was stabbed when he tried to detain one of the inmates involved in the fight, Horton said. Sources tell NorthEscambia.com that the officer was stabbed nine times.

When Davenport and other officers entered the dorm to assess the situation, Davenport was also stabbed. He remained at the prison, and was treated on-site for injuries, Horton said.



Warden, guard stabbed in Holman prison riot

The injured corrections officer was taken to a hospital. Both are expected to be OK, and Davenport already has returned to work.

After the assaults, Horton said, inmates gained access to a hallway just outside the housing unit and started a fire. The Alabama Department of Corrections deployed three Corrections Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to the prison, and they detained the inmates and secured the area.

Horton said prison officials estimate 100 inmates were involved in the disturbance. No other areas in the prison were affected, Horton said.

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Multiple law enforcement agencies responded to the scene, including Atmore police, the Escambia County Sheriff's Office and Alabama Law Enforcement Agency. Alabama State Troopers responded for perimeter security, said spokesman Sgt. Steve Jarrett. Witnesses reported seeing multiple ambulances headed toward the prison, but Horton said there were no injuries other than the guard and the warden.

While officials remained tight-lipped overnight, photos and video of the reported uprising quickly surfaced on social media. The images showed fires at the prison, and inmates with their faces covered. Inmates were reporting that the "gates are rolled up" and beds have been overturned.

One man posted this on Facebook: "Attention: We need yall help here at Holman Correction Facility Prison. The police down here beating on and jus treating us any kind way. We down here fighting for are lifes. Please contact the News, Newspaper, Radio station. NCAAP. Help please."

Zannice Houston posted this on her Facebook page: "Please pray for my son in Holman Prison. A riot lord Jesus."

Houston told AL.com that her son, Jamario J.E. Houston, called via collect call Friday and said that prisoners have built a wall, and they are waiting for more authorities to come to the prison. "Yes, right now it's not under control, Lord Jesus," Houston said.

Another woman posted this: "I know its late. But i need help from my family and friends especially from my Sister and Brothers in Christ. I need Prayers to go up for Holman Prison the inmates the guard everyone down there in that facility. No weapon formed against them shall prosper. Thank You!!!!!!"

Horton said Saturday corrections officers and the CERT teams are conducting a complete search of the prison for illegal cell phones and contraband. The inmates responsible for assaulting the officer and Davenport, as well as other inmates involved in the disturbance, have been segregated from the prison's general population.

Horton said this morning ADOC is continuing its investigation into the Friday night disturbance. Five inmates who are suspected of leading the disturbance have been moved to another Level 5 correctional facility.

ADOC investigators will submit findings of the investigation to the Escambia County Grand Jury for prosecution. Criminal charges include illegal use of social media, destruction of state property, and assault. The prison remains locked-down while the investigation is ongoing.

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