

Two senior Iraqi officials jailed for corruption

Prime Minister Mustafa Al Kadhimi has made it his mission to tackle dishonest dealings in government



Prime Minister Mustafa Al Kadhimi announced the killing on Twitter. AFP



Mina Aldroubi
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Iraq jailed two senior officials on Sunday as part of the government's anti-corruption drive led by Prime Minister Mustafa Al Kadhimi.

The country is ranked one of the top 20 most corrupt in the world, according to Transparency International, an anti-corruption non-government organisation.

Nearly \$450 billion in public funds has vanished into the pockets of politicians and business representatives since the 2003 US-led invasion.

Baha Abdul Hussein, who as head of electronic payment company Qi Card was responsible for dispensing government salaries and pensions, was found guilty of intentional harm to public funds by the country's Criminal Court.

Abdul Hussein was sentenced to four years in prison, a judiciary source told media outlets.

He had been arrested by authorities last September on his arrival at Baghdad Airport.



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A second official, Ahmed Abdul Jalil, former head of the national pensions authority, was sentenced to six years in jail.

In addition to his jail term, Abdul Hussein was fined 10 million dinars (\$6,800) for paying bribes to Abdel Jalil, the source said.

After taking office last May, Mr Al Kadhimi launched an anti-corruption push, forming a committee to tackle the issue.

Abdul Hussein was the first person to be arrested as a result of its investigations.

Mr Al Kadhimi has made new appointments at the Central Bank of Iraq and the country's integrity and investment commissions to try to stem government corruption.

Iraq

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