

83 New Detention Centers for Illegal Immigrants Planned

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Federal Migration Service has drafted a bill to set up 83 new detention centers for illegal immigrants across the country as Moscow's three holding facilities ran out of space following a week of raids on the city's markets.

The drive to fight illegal migration was triggered by a brawl at the Matveyevsky market on July 27 between the police and the relatives of rape suspect Magomed Magomedov. One police officer was hospitalized with a fractured skull as a result of the fight.

Last Monday police began combing Moscow's markets for illegal immigrants, even though the people who attacked the police officer had Russian citizenship.

The shortage of detention facilities forced Moscow police to open a temporary tented camp for several hundred detained immigrants, most of whom are Vietnamese, although nationals of Egypt, Syria and Afghanistan are also present.

The camp held over 500 people on Sunday afternoon, the police said, but rights activists said buses with more detainees had been arriving all day. Diplomats have also weighed in with their objections to the camp, in which conditions are said to be cramped and dirty.

"Putting 40 people in a 50-meter-tent — these are simply inhumane conditions," the head of the Vietnamese consulate in Russia said.

Questions about the camp's legality have also been raised.

The camp does not have any judicial status and, therefore, violates the current legislation, said Svetlana Gannushkin, the head of Civic Assistance, a foundation specializing in the protection of refugees' rights.

Referring to the need to clarify the legal position of the camp, an Interior Ministry spokesman said the "the legal department is currently working on it" and suggested opening an official inquiry.

There are currently 21 detention centers in Russia for holding illegal immigrants. The Federal Migration Service estimated that the new camps would require 4,661 new employees to operate them. It will take over the running of the detention centers from the Interior Ministry on Jan. 1, 2014.

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