



First detainees to arrive in Guantanamo in January 2002
Hooded, handcuffed, shackled, gagged – but no charge or trial for years.

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SHUT DOWN GUANTANAMO

FIVE YEARS TOO MANY ABUSING HUMAN RIGHTS

Today is the fifth anniversary of the arrival of the first inmates at the infamous Guantanamo prison where they were to be denied their human rights by the Bush administration of the USA.

Without being charged with any offence they were imprisoned in despicable cages. There were no trials as there were no charges. Instead, they were kept in these inhuman conditions indefinitely and therefore without hope. They were pressured by their captors, in order to give “information” that would suit the purposes of the corrupt Bush administration. In these early years they were deprived of sleep, interrogated often throughout the night, and, according to the USA's own FBI, tortured.

Over the five years since the detention camp opened, there have been credible reports of innumerable suicide attempts, three suicide deaths (in 2006) several mass hunger strikes, mass forced feeding of hunger strikers, beatings, deprivation of sleep, sexual humiliation, noise torture . . . and endless ongoing interrogations.

Guantanamo by all accounts is a beautiful bay where one interpreter said she found sunshine, night time-barbecues (for US military personnel) and beaches that call to you for a midnight swim. And friendly soldiers. - That's on the leeward side of the bay - On the windward side is the Detention Centre with its seven different Camps.

And Washington lawyer, Tom Wilmer, says:

“This whole place is evil -- and the face of evil often appears friendly.”

Guantanamo Prison

In camps 3 and 2 of Camp Delta prisoners wear orange uniforms. Cells are 6 ft. 8 in. by 8 ft., with a squat-style toilet, a metal sink and a sleeping berth affixed to green steel-mesh walls.

GlobalSecurity.Org say: "Detainees are allowed to exercise for about 30 minutes, three times a week, in a small exercise area. They are not allowed to exercise with others. They are also not allowed to have a roll of toilet paper. They have to ask a guard to give them an appropriate size piece when they need it. Detainees at Camp 2 are given some comfort items that are not allowed at Camp 3. Examples of these items include anti-dandruff shampoo and soft plastic pens - which have been bent so that they cannot be used as weapons "

There is a system within Camp Delta whereby prisoners are deprived in the worst camp of "privileges" (mostly basic needs) which are granted only when prisoners give "information". So in the worst camp, Camp 3, no shampoo or soft, bent plastic pens (bestowed at Camp2), no soap, toothpaste, stubby toothbrush, empty paper cup, (bestowed at Camp1), no roll of toilet paper, fan, or board games (bestowed in Camp 4),. Only in the maximum security Camp 5 is there air-conditioning. But Camp 5 is not a privilege, but the opposite. Most of the prisoners from this camp took part in last year's hunger strike.

The Oldest Prisoner

"At 80, Haji Nusrat -- detainee No. 1009 -- is Guantanamo Bay's oldest prisoner. A stroke 15 years ago left him partly paralyzed. He cannot stand up without assistance and hobbles to the bathroom behind a walker. **Despite his paralysis, his swollen legs and feet are tightly cuffed and shackled to the floor.** He says that his shoes are too tight and that he needs new ones. He has asked for medical attention for the inflammation in his legs, but has not been taken to a hospital.

"They wait until you are almost dead," he says.

He has a long white beard and grayish-brown eyes that drift from Peter's face to mine as we explain his legal issues to him.

As I interpret, I feel a lump growing in my throat. Suddenly, I can't speak. Peter and Nusrat pause as the tears flood down my face and drip onto my shawl.

The old man looks at me. "You are a daughter to me," he says. "Think of me as a father." I nod, aligning and realigning pistachio shells on the table as I interpret.

As the meeting ends and we collect our things to go, the old man opens his arms to me and I embrace him. For several moments, he prays for me as Peter watches: "Insha'allah, God willing, you will find a home that makes you happy. Insha'allah, you will be a mother one day. . . . "

He lets me go and asks me to say *dawa*, prayers, for him. "Of course," I promise. "Every day."

(Washington Post April 30, 2006, by Mahvish Khan a Pashtun US lawyers' interpreter and US citizen)