
Obama's Not Closing Guantanamo Bay, He's Renovating It

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One would be hard-pressed to conclude that the multi-billion renovations indicate a closure of the facility in the near future.

The elusive promise U.S. President Barack Obama made eight years ago to shut down [Guantanamo Bay](#) remains a far-flung fantasy as the military detention facility will see billions of dollars in renovations, Al Jazeera reported Thursday.

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Although the number of detainees at the controversial prison has dropped from a high of 680 in 2003 to 59 in 2016 – 22 of whom have been cleared for release – one would really need to make a gigantic leap of faith to conclude that the multi-billion renovations indicate a closure of the facility in the near future.

The U.S. military is set to build a US\$8.4 billion medical clinic, as well as a US\$12.4 billion dining facility for troops who work at the prison. It's also seeking more funds to upgrade troops' housing.

Along with plans for the renovations, the fate of the contentious military prison will soon be in the hands of President-elect Donald Trump, who has said he plans to keep it open, adding that he's prepared to "load it up with some bad dudes."

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While [torture methods](#) and indefinite detention without charge or trial have spurred a global condemnation of the prison from activists around the world, even jail commanders who work there are uncertain about its future.

"You know the detainees have questions of whether the transfers are going to stop when the new president takes charge January 20," said the detention center's commander, Navy Rear Adm. Peter Clarke.

"We don't know, they don't know. Their lawyers may speculate, but no one knows," said Clarke.
