

Instead of Closing Guantanamo, the U.S. Invests in Expansion



Washington, July 8 (RHC)-- The Pentagon will spend \$240 million to build new infrastructure and repair old buildings at the U.S. Guantanamo Navy Base in Cuba, according to contract documents. None of the improvements and repairs will be done to the detention center inside Guantanamo, but at buildings used by personnel assigned to work on the base.

The \$240 million budget will be split between five construction firms over a period of five years. One of those companies, Munilla Construction Management LLC of Miami, will be paid \$63 million to build a school for the children of military and civilians working at the base, which is located on illegally-occupied Cuban territory.

There are currently two schools for military families at the military base and, according to U.S. officials, the facilities are too small for the 6,000 troops and their families deployed there.

Meanwhile, 779 prisoners have been jailed at Guantanamo since it opened after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Of those, 689 have been released or transferred and nine have died, while 80 are still held, without having been charged or put on trial.

U.S. President Barack Obama promised to close the military prison at the naval base on occupied Cuban soil during his 2008 presidential campaign, but reversed course after taking office in

2009.

Cuba has repeatedly insisted that the U.S. return the occupied territory as part of the normalization of relations between the two countries that began in December 2014.

Presumptive Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump condemned the plan to close down the prison, and promised that if elected in November's general election, he would "load it up with some bad dudes."

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