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US Plans Afghan Jail for Some Guantanamo Terror Suspects: Report

Agence France Presse
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LONDON, Jan 5 (AFP) - The United States is planning to build a high-security prison in Afghanistan to house terror suspects, including some from the Guantanamo Bay naval base in Cuba, a British newspaper said Thursday.

The Financial Times business daily said the United States had selected the run-down Pol-e-Charki jail near the Afghan capital Kabul, dating from the 1980s Soviet occupation.

Some of the base's prison facilities have been recently refurbished by a European Union-financed criminal justice reform programme, the FT said.

The newspaper said that according to Western diplomats, the United Nations and the European Union have been resisting American plans to turn the complex into a secure jail for Afghan terror suspects.

The transfer of prisoners to Afghanistan is designed to take the heat off the US government over the Guantanamo Bay camp, the FT said.

Guantanamo holds about 500 detainees, most of whom were captured in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001.

Since its opening in January 2002, the naval base has been the focus of international controversy sparked by indefinite detentions of suspects without charges, as well as charges of torture and poor treatment of detainees.

The broadsheet said the United States Army Corps of Engineers in Afghanistan last month issued a public notice for the renovation and construction of a cell block at the prison.