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## **Five Kuwaitis Leave Guantánamo**

The U.S. military freed five Kuwaitis from the prison at Guantánamo Bay. They were returned to their homeland in time for the end of the Ramadan feast.

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Five Kuwaitis who had been held by the U.S. as enemy combatants arrived home Thursday, the latest transfer from Guantánamo Bay as the Bush administration gears up for its first war-crimes hearing in more than a year.

The five men all arrived in the Persian Gulf emirate under a deal that got them to their native country in time for the end of the Ramadan feast called Eid al Fitr.

Among them was a hunger striker and father of six, Mohammed Daihani, 39, who with great rhetorical flourish -- and a forced-feeding tube up his nose -- spurned an \$11 extra-cheese, vegetarian pizza brought by his attorney to the prison in September.

'The American justice system is like this pizza box,' he told attorney Thomas Wilner, according to a court affidavit. ``It looks very good on the outside, but is empty on the inside. It is nothing but air.'

The other four set free included another longtime hunger striker, Abulaziz al-Shimmari, Adel al-Zamel, Mohammad Abdullah al-Ajmi and Saad al-Azmi, according to the [kuwaitifreedom.org](http://kuwaitifreedom.org) website, which has championed the cause of Kuwaitis at Guantánamo.

The men were among the first to sue the U.S. government as part of *Odah v. Bush*, a case that eventually went to the U.S. Supreme Court.

It was not immediately clear Thursday whether Kuwaiti officials would eventually charge the men with joining a foreign military organization, like an earlier Guantánamo captive.

Defense Department officials disclosed the transfer -- raising to 252 the number of captives who have been released since the detention center opened in January 2002 -- less than two weeks before it reconvenes a Military Commission for Australian captive David Hicks, 30. Hicks is one of only four of the 500 or so enemy combatants charged so far with war crimes. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said Guantánamo holds the "worst of the worst" in the war on terror.

The Defense Department said of the 252 Guantánamo captives who have been released, 179 were set free in their home countries.

The other 73 were initially transferred to law-enforcement custody in Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, United Kingdom, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain and Sweden; many were also subsequently freed.

Still, the transfer did not bring down the number of detainees on hunger strike Thursday. The military said 28 were refusing food, of whom 24 are being fed by tubes. A day earlier, 27 were on hunger strikes, said Army Lt. Col. Jeremy Martin.