



Point of Contact:

U.S. Southern Command
Public Affairs Office
Col. Scott Malcom, Tel. 305-437-1201/1213
e-mail: scott.malcom@hq.southcom.mil
www.southcom.mil

NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 3, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Detainee Dies of Apparent Natural Causes at Guantanamo

MIAMI -- Joint Task Force-Guantanamo announced today that a detainee died of apparent natural causes late Tuesday evening. The detainee is identified as Awal Gul, a 48-year-old Afghan. He arrived at Guantanamo in October 2002.

Gul was housed in Camp 6, which provides communal living areas for up to 20 detainees. He collapsed in the shower after exercising on an elliptical machine. Other detainees in his cell block then assisted Gul to the guard station for medical attention. The guards immediately alerted medical personnel, who upon arriving at the cell block found him unresponsive. He was immediately transported to the Camp 6 medical bay, and subsequently transferred to the U.S. Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay. After extensive lifesaving measures had been exhausted, the detainee was pronounced dead.

Per standard procedure, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service has initiated an investigation of the incident to determine the cause and manner of the death.

The remains of the deceased detainee are being treated with the utmost respect. A Muslim chaplain is assisting the Joint Task Force to ensure that the remains are handled in a culturally sensitive and religiously appropriate manner. The remains will be autopsied by a pathologist from the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology. Upon completion of the autopsy, the remains will be prepared for repatriation.

Awal Gul was an admitted Taliban recruiter and commander of a military base in Jalalabad. While in Jalalabad, Awal Gul associated with senior members of Hezb-e-Islami Khalis and operated an al-Qaida guesthouse. Gul also admitted to meeting with Usama Bin Laden and providing him with operational assistance on several occasions.

Joint Task Force Guantanamo continues to provide safe, humane, legal, and transparent care and custody of detainees. This mission is being performed professionally by the men and women of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

-END-