

'Hunger strike is Gitmo detainees' only recourse'

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Global Research, March 22, 2013

Press TV

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Law and Justice](#)

Hunger strike is the only recourse Guantanamo detainees have as they have been denied the right to due process and are detained without even being charged, says Abayomi Azikiwe, editor of the Pan-African News Wire in Detroit.

On March 19, the U.S. military admitted that the number of hunger strikers at the Guantanamo Bay prison had risen to 24. However, according to lawyers, over 100 Guantanamo Bay detainees are actually refusing food.

"People there [at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp] have been subjected to torture; they've been subjected to all types of humiliation for a number of years. And, as I mentioned before, there is no process under which they can demonstrate their innocence," said Azikiwe in a phone interview with the U.S. Desk on Wednesday

"Guantanamo is not the only such camp that exists in the world. There are other secret detention facilities that exist in Central Asia, that exist in other parts of the world that are run and managed by the United States," he added.

The notorious prison in eastern Cuba reportedly holds 166 men, most of whom have been imprisoned by the U.S. government for more than a decade without charges.

Despite U.S. President Barack Obama's pledge to shut down the facility at the beginning of his first term, the facility remains open and there is no end in sight to the detainees' captivity.

Guantanamo detainees appear to be in the second month of their hunger strike. Tensions in the prison started last month after new U.S. Army soldiers took over guard duties from a Navy force. Some prisoners complained of aggressive searches, which included confiscations of personal items and sacrilegious handling of the Qur'an.

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