



30 Days Dae Izinsuku

Project of the Community Law Centre

CSPRI '30 Days/Dae/Izinsuku' October 2009

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Request for exchange of prisoners: Following the government's refusal to sign an agreement to exchange prisoners with Mauritius, Patricia Gerber petitioned the High Court in Pretoria, it was reported. According to the report, the government has since 2007 not provided for the exchange of prisoners with Mauritius, nor has it provided any reason for the lack of cooperation. The Department of Foreign Affairs of South Africa was informed that the Mauritian government has no intention of repatriating prisoners. Patricia Gerber said, "I will not stop until an agreement on transfer of prisoners between our two countries is signed. I will do everything in my power to ensure that our sons and daughters return to their country". *Original report in French.* Reported by Jimmy Jean Louis, 2 October 2009, Grioo, at http://www.grioo.com/ar,patricia_gerber_train_e_gouvernement_sud-africain_devant_la_haute_cour_de_pretoria,17703.html

Prisoner fights transfer: Zalisile Sijadu, a prisoner at Mdantsane Prison, alleged to be part of a group that took the Mdantsane Prison authorities to court for not implementing a development skills programme, is asking the High Court to set aside the decision to transfer him to Kirkwood Prison as he says it was taken without prior notification to him and was procedurally unfair, Daily Dispatch reported. According to the report, Sijadu, who was serving a life sentence in Mdantsane Correctional Centre, was transferred to Kirkwood in August 2009, not long after he and five other prisoners launched an application against Mdantsane Prison head, Zekhaya Zimema. The prisoners, who cannot afford a lawyer, are asking the Grahamstown High Court to force Zimema to allow them to establish a skills development and employment creation project they say he blocked. Reported by Adrienne Carlisle, 19 October 2009, Daily Dispatch at <http://www.dispatch.co.za/article.aspx?id=352543>

CONDITION OF DETENTION

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Overcrowded juvenile prisons: According to a Weekend Post report, Parliament's Correctional Services Portfolio Committee said little change has taken place in the juvenile correctional centre at Mossel Bay, Knysna and George prisons. Overcrowding in Garden Route prisons is said to be as high as 192%. Southern Cape prisons spokesman, Johan Pienaar, was reported saying that "Mossel Bay prison, with a capacity of only 330, has more than 600 prisoners compared to 505 in 2007". He added that there are no plans to build new prisons in the area. Reported by Cathy Dippnall 5 October 2009, Weekend Post, at <http://www.weekendpost.co.za/article.aspx?id=480173>

Prisoners trapped in burning court building: A report in BuaNews stated that rescuers had to free 12 prisoners from a burning court building after a fire broke out at the Pretoria Magistrate's Court. Spokesperson for the Department of Community Safety, Console Tleane, confirmed that "Rescuers had to cut the cell bars to evacuate the prisoners. All 12 of them were taken out to safety and received immediate para-medical care on the scene," adding that "All of them suffered from smoke inhalation [...]. They were all transported to the Steve Biko Academic Hospital for further medical care." Two of the fire fighters were also taken to hospital for smoke inhalation, BuaNews reported. Reported by, Professor Ndawonde, 5 October 2009, BuaNews, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910060010.html>

Campaign against H1N1 in overcrowded prisons: The South African Government has launched a campaign against the spread of H1N1 virus in overcrowded prisons in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, IOL reported. Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo said, "We have decided to take these campaigns to prisons because we believe that we have been lucky that there have not been outbreaks of H1N1 in our prisons". It is alleged that up to 84 people in South Africa have died of the H1N1 virus. The Department was also conducting campaigns at taxi ranks and shopping centres. SAPA, 6 October 2009, IOL, at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=nw20091006002502920C513962

Limited facilities cause idleness in prisons: In a report by Times Live, it is alleged that the majority of prisoners spend long hours in cells with limited recreational facilities, limited toilets, and rehabilitation services. In his annual report to Parliament, Judge Van Zyl said part of the problem could be blamed on overcrowded prisons. "At most of these overcrowded facilities, there are few if any appropriate rehabilitation programmes and extremely limited recreational or work opportunities. By far the majority of them spend up to 23 hours per day in cells with limited toilet and ablution facilities and in generally unhygienic conditions," Van Zyl said. Reported by Brendan Boyle, 08 October 2009, Times live, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/news/article142812.ece>

Government puts prisoners to work: The Correctional Services Deputy Minister, Hlengiwe Mkhize, has responded to criticism by Judge Deon van Zyl, the Inspecting Judge, who reportedly said in his annual report to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services that thousands of young people were spending up to 23 hours a day locked up in hugely overcrowded cells with nothing to do, "wasting away their lives", Sunday Times reported. In refuting the judge's allegation, Correctional Services Deputy Minister, Hlengiwe Mkhize, said "Gone are the days when offenders will sit and do no work. Offender labour instils conscious discipline by promoting positive attributes required of citizens of any state. We have to, and will do, everything in our power to find more work and more projects for offenders" she added. According to the Sunday Times report, the Department will spend R13.2-billion to secure and care for 112,618 prisoners and 49,477 awaiting-trial detainees. Reported by Nkululeko Ncana, 10 October 2009, Sunday Times, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/sundaytimes/article145748.ece>

Prisoners get antiretrovirals: After the court order that compelled the Department of Correctional Services to provide antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to HIV- positive prisoners, IRIN reported that Frank Ntombela, chairman of the Westville HIV/AIDS Support Group, who was instrumental in taking the Department to court, said that "Prisoners now have access to ARVs, but the support services are still not there," adding that "Good nutrition, which is one of the requirements for people taking these drugs, is unavailable. We get the regular staple food, consisting mainly of rice and soya-bean stew, which is often not good enough." It is alleged that prison authorities do not allow prisoners' families to

provide them with healthier food. IRIN, 10 October 2009, at <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?Reportid=86660>

Prisons at the point of collapse: Overcrowding in South Africa's prisons has reached a point of collapse, IOL reported. According to the report, the country's prisons which were designed for just 114 000 prisoners now accommodate 160 000, with about 500 000 people passing through the prison system each year. The Director of the Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons for Correctional Services, Gideon Morris, blames prison overcrowding on long sentences being given by courts. IOL reported that there has also been a drop in the number of awaiting trial prisoners. Statistics show that in April 2000, there were 64 000 awaiting trial prisoners, but that figure now stands at 40 000. Reported by, Michelle Jones, 11 October 2009, IOL, at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=3102&art_id=nw20091011181719633C886560

Deaths in prison decline: According to the annual report of the Department of Correctional Services, the number of deaths in South African prisons is experiencing a gradual decline. BuaNews reported that total prisoner death dropped to 1,048 from 1,136 in 2007. The report also revealed that the number of natural deaths, fell from 1 689 in 2004, to 982 last year. While, unnatural deaths declined from 80 in 2007, to 66 last year. BuaNews, 12 October 2009, at <http://www.buanews.gov.za/news/09/09101217551001>

Quarantine declared to stop the spread of measles in prison: According to a report in BuaNews, the Department of Correctional Services, in consultation with the Department of Health, has declared a ten-day quarantine at the Johannesburg Medium A Correctional Centre. The decision came as a result of an alleged measles outbreak with over 51 cases already diagnosed. The Minister of Correctional Services, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, visited the correctional centre to observe the rollout of a measles vaccination programme. It is alleged that during the period of the quarantine, nearly 3000 scheduled appearances in over 27 courts, were adversely affected. It is reported that health experts from the Department of Health have been deployed to lead a massive vaccination programme to cover over 6000 awaiting trial prisoners including nearly 400 officials working at Johannesburg Medium A Correctional Centre to prevent the spread of the disease. Reported by Gabi Khumalo, 27 October 2009, BuaNews, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910270184.html>

SENTENSING AND PAROLE

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Minister is sued for wrongful imprisonment: The incorrect spelling of the surname of a young Kleinmond man costed him three-and-a-half years in prison. The man, who is suing the Minister of Safety and Security in the Cape High Court for R1,5-million in damages, was prosecuted and acquitted in August 2008. Angelo Simons, who was 17 years old at the time, was arrested in January 2005 for the murder of a Parow woman, Jeanette Peterson, and the attempted murder of her boyfriend, Brian Greening, at a Pringle Bay beach house, IOL reported. According to the report, the court document used as evidence against Simons, had the name Angelo Saayman, and not Simons and was signed by Angelo Saayman. Reported by Fatima Schoeder, 05 October 2009, IOL, at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=vn20091005124707510C468402

Minor facing 15-year prison term pleads innocent: The former Zimbabwe youth goalkeeper, who is facing up to 15 years in prison in South Africa for alleged armed robbery, has broken his silence over his arrest in an exclusive interview with The Zimbabwean. It is reported that the minor had been imprisoned in the notorious 'Sun City' prison in Johannesburg. The minor, whose name was not given for ethical reasons, said "I am innocent. I insist that I did not commit any crime but the charges are trumped up against me," he added that "I was walking with a group of friends that evening in Hillbrow. From the blue and to my astonishment a woman pointed me out to the police claiming someone who was wearing a top and a pair of trousers similar to the ones I was wearing had robbed her. I believe it is coincidence that I was wearing the same colours the person who robbed her was putting on. It wasn't me". It emerged

that contrary to the country's laws, he had been tried despite him being a minor. An underage suspect can only be tried in the presence of a guardian. Staff Reporter, 07 October 2009, The Zimbabwean, at <http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/2009100725292/football/accused-minor-opens-up.html>

Alternative to prison: Jody Kollapen, former chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, is reported saying that government should consider community service for those convicted of non-violent, petty crimes, because most people emerge from prison more damaged than before. He said, "It is in our best interests as a society that people are rehabilitated," adding that "Let's send people to prison who deserve to be in prison." Reported by Warda Meyer, 09 October 2009, IOL at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=vn20091009125121564C364733

A call for other alternatives to prison: News24 reported that the growing rate of the world prison population is cause for concern. According to the report, the world prison population stands at 9.8 million. "That will very soon be 10 million, and it says to me that despite all the good work that's being done, we're still going in the wrong direction," deputy president of the International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care Brian Gowans said. The report highlights the fact that prison should not be the only option. It is reported that some Scandinavian countries put first offenders in an open prison, where they sleep at night and are able to go out to work or seek employment during the day. SAPA, 12 October 2009, News24, at http://www.news24.com/Content/SouthAfrica/News/1059/4b2d9afa33f64615ad7caed795abeb72/12-10-2009-10-10/Call_for_alternative_to_jail

Father sends son back to prison: A Pretoria man has been commended by the Department of Correctional Services for sending his son back to prison, The Sowetan reported. Jakobus Bernard Durand, who is serving seven years for housebreaking, allegedly escaped from lawful custody at the Baviaanspoort prison. Spokesperson for the Department, Phumzile Kotane, confirmed that: "Durand escaped from prison, and on arrival at home his father called the prison authorities to alert us that his son was at home. Officials went to fetch him and he is currently in prison. He has been charged with escaping from lawful custody." Reported by Mckeed Kotlolo, 12 October 2009, Sowetan, at <http://www.sowetan.co.za/News/Article.aspx?id=1077572>

14-year old girl demands father's release from prison: A Durban teenager has demanded her father's release from prison after she allegedly said that her father was innocent. It is reported that the prisoner was found guilty in 2005 for allegedly raping his seven-year-old daughter in 2003. The girl is said to have approached the Prisoners and Detainees Law Office for Human Rights to facilitate the release of her father. The girl who is currently in grade five said "I would like to see my father released because he is innocent. He did not rape me. My mother told me to tell the police that my father raped me". SAPA, 16 October 2009, IOL at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=nw20091016160449389C115762

Derby-Lewis says political meddling keeps him in prison: The Cape Times reported that Chris Hani's killer, Clive Derby-Lewis, is still in prison a year after the Parole Board recommended his release. Derby-Lewis claims political meddling by the government is keeping him in prison. Derby-Lewis said he has been unlawfully kept in prison for the past 12 months for political reasons, even though the Parole Board had recommended his release. "Justice is not available to those in South Africa who are deemed to be 'from the wrong political order'," he said. However, his claims were rejected by Correctional Services Minister, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula. The Ministry's spokesperson, Sonwabo Mbananga, said Derby-Lewis had not served the required minimum sentence in order to be eligible for parole. The Cape Times, 16 October 2009, at Full Cape Times report (subscription needed) <http://www.capetimes.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=3235&fRequestedUrl=%2Findex.php%3FfArticleId%3D5204773>

Presidential pardon for Shaik opposed: President Jacob Zuma's former financial adviser, who was imprisoned for fraud and corruption, applied for a presidential pardon in April 2008, the president's office said. According to an IOL report, Schabir Shaik was sentenced to a 15 year prison term in 2005, but was granted parole on medical grounds earlier this year after spending 28 months in prison. President Zuma's office said "The application will be processed like all other applications. The president must consider every application brought before him in terms of his constitutional responsibilities". However, the Democratic Alliance's spokesperson, James Selfe, said to the Mail and Guardian that "Under no circumstance(s) must the president consider this application. He must be open with the South African public and immediately deny that he will grant Mr Shaik's application. Reuters, 19 October 2009, IOL, at

http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=nw20091019221610283C768577

Pardon can be challenged in court: In response to the possible pardon of Schabir Shaik, Pierre De Vos is quoted saying that. "It would have to be proved that the pardon was totally irrational or that the decision was taken mala fide. An example would be if the President received money in exchange for the pardon." Political analyst, Susan Booyen, said 'this (Shaik's pardon) will create more questions than it will answer.'" According to the report, President Zuma is advised to be cautious in considering the pardon, as it could damage his reputation. *Original report in Afrikaans.* Reported by Philda Essop, 20 October 2009, Die Burger, at http://www.dieburger.com/Content/SuidAfrika/Nuus/1708/31f3e3ce05a34c9ca04b19a34a4ce99f/20-10-2009-12-04/Shaik_se_rekord_dalk_heeltemal_uitgewis

GOVERNMENT AND CORRUPTION

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Prison tender fraud: The recent appointment of Lizo Gibson Njenje as head of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) by State Security Minister Siyabonga Cwele, is cause for concern. It is reported that Njenje is a director of Bosasa Operations, a Krugersdorp-based facilities management company with various lucrative government contracts. Since 2007, the SIU has been investigating alleged tender-rigging in the Department of Correctional Services by the Bosasa Company and has finalised its report. According to the Mail & Guardian report, the spokesperson for the State Security Minister, Lorna Daniels, defended Njenje's appointment saying, "We do not wish to discuss or pre-empt the outcome of any investigation still under consideration. Correctional Services Minister, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, and acting National Commissioner, Jenny Schreiner, are yet to comment on the outcome of the SIU report which is alleged to have found evidence of fraud. Reported by Adriaan Basson, 9 October 2009, Mail & Guardian, at <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-10-09-spy-boss-haunted-by-tender-probe>

Fraudulent release of prisoners: The Star reported that former Johannesburg High Court official, Gertruida Katerina Jost, now a state witness, has told the Randburg Magistrate's Court how she and Nicole Dawson, Andre Ali and Refilwe Mahuma ran the operation that led to the fraudulent release of prisoners. "Even though Jost said only a judge could say whether a prisoner's appeal was successful or not, she would still falsify a court order and fax it to the prison and the magistrate's court where the matter was heard. The prisoner would then be released". Jost admitted to have assisted the release of 12 prisoners, some of whom are believed to be members of the notorious Eldorado Park gang. Reported by Botho Molosankwe, 20 October 2009, IOL, at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=vn20091020073047109C677995

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Churches gets involved in prison reformation: According to a report in BuaNews, the Deputy Minister of Correctional Services, Hlengiwe Mkhize, has called on churches and faith-based organisations to speak out on prison abuses when visiting correctional services facilities. Speaking at the International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care Africa Regional Conference, Mkhize said "We would benefit more from scrutiny from all our partners, including the church, as they have access to inmates," accentuating the close relationship that prisoners often develop with faith-based organisations. She also urged those organisations to take a strong stand when deaths in correctional centres were reported and when offenders were deprived of rights and privileges, such as parole. BuaNews, 12 October 2009 at

<http://www.buanews.gov.za/news/09/09101216151001>

Prisoner found dead outside prison: A 30-year old man alleged to be a resident of the Mxhaso village in Lusikisiki was found dead at the side of R61 near Boons in the Ngqeleni area, Eastern Cape police said. According to a News24 report, the man who was supposed to be in prison, was found with bullet wounds in his upper body, said Superintendent Mzukisi Fatyela. Fatyela said, "We don't know how he got out because he was supposed to be in prison in Port St Johns, so we are now consulting with prison officials to find out what happened." SAPA, 27 October 2009, News24, at

http://www.news24.com/Content/SouthAfrica/News/1059/a5c5f7effd2546cba2f0d69a57bc0fd7/27-10-2009-10-38/Escaped_prisoner_murdered

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Algeria

10 Algerians in Guantanamo Bay prison yet to be released: According to a report in Algeria Focus, it is alleged that ten Algerians are still in Guantanamo Bay prison after American authorities decided to release seven of the prisoners suspected to have had connections with Al Qaeda. It is reported that there were 78 other prisoners from different nationalities who were released. However, the US Department of Defence did not disclose the names of those released. A commission of executives from the US Presidency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Justice Department, was sent to ensure that the 10 prisoners left in the prison are Algerians. *Original report in French.* Reported by El Khabar, 01 October 2009, Algeria Focus, at <http://www.algerie-focus.com/2009/10/01/washington-relache-sept-algeriens-de-guantanamo/>

Zimbabwe

MDC Senator imprisoned: Roy Bennett, of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), has again been imprisoned. The Zimbabwean reported that Mr. Bennett is being charged with plotting insurgency, banditry and sabotage by allegedly funding the MDC to buy arms in 2005. He is being imprisoned in Mutare Remand Prison where prison conditions are said to be appalling. It is reported that Mutare prison has a capacity of 160 prisoners but was holding at least 300 inmates. Bennett is reported saying that there were prisoners who looked worse than the photographs of prisoners in World War II concentration camps. While he was there, six people prisoners died in one week due to starvation. Their already decomposing bodies were only collected after four or five days. 15 October 2009, The Zimbabwean, at <http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/2009101525573/weekday-top-stories/zim-mdc-senator-roy-bennett-detained-again.html>

DRC

Norwegians on death row appeal: Judicial sources in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) say that the two Norwegians sentenced to death last month have begun an appeal against the sentence. According to a News24 report, "Tjostolv Moland, 28, and 27-year-old Joshua French - both former soldiers - were found guilty on September 8 by a military court for espionage and murdering their driver on May 5". The government is reported to have annulled the death penalty after international criticism against the court's decision. "The Congolese government has adopted a moratorium on the death penalty and capital punishment is no longer applied in the country". AFP, 13 October 2009, News24 reported, at

http://www.news24.com/Content/Africa/News/965/e425e0ff30254aeb4450f022315d76f/13-10-2009-10-38/Spies_appeal_DRC_death_penalty

Insecurity looms at Makala Central prison: A report in Directed say police officers in charge of security at the Makala prison in Kinshasa have complained of poor treatment and the non payment of their allowances. This has

resulted in the extortion of money from the public by the police force, in charge of the security at prisons. Visitors are asked to give money before entering the prison. It is reported that bladed weapons are now common in the prison, which threatens the security of prison, and could lead to escapes. *Original report in French*. Reported by Okapi, 16 October 2009 Directed at <http://www.direct.cd/liveget.php?newsid=1529>

Gambia

Government to uphold death penalty: President Yahya Jammeh is reported to have told state television GRTS in September 2009, that due to rising crime rates the country would start implementing the death penalty again. News24 reported that there are 15 people on death row to be executed. Richard Chenge, the Director of Public Prosecution, is quoted saying that "All those who have been convicted and sentenced to death will be put to death by hanging as soon as possible," adding that "[They] are currently inspecting all the gallows in the state central prison to ensure that the facilities are functioning well for the purpose of execution". SAPA, 15 October 2009, News24, at http://www.news24.com/Content/Africa/News/965/0a1d27ec6a2c4b93b8ab676bb787f872/15-10-2009-07-56/Gambia_to_go_ahead_with_deaths

People on death row soon executed: Every person condemned to death for murder and who has exhausted the appeals process will be executed, 7sur7 reported. "All those who have been convicted and sentenced to death will be executed by hanging as soon as possible," the chief prosecutor of the country, Mr. Richard Chenge, said. *Original report in French*. Reported by Belga, 15 October 2009, 7sur7 of Belgium, at <http://www.7sur7.be/7s7/fr/1505/Monde/article/detail/1016228/2009/10/15/La-Gambie-veut-accelerer-les-executions-des-condamnes-a-mort.dhtml>

Sierra Leone

Bishop calls for abolition of death sentence: According to a report from the Catholic Information Service, the President of the Episcopal Conference in Sierra Leone, Bishop George Biguzzi, has launched an international appeal for the total and universal abolition of the death penalty. Catholic Information Service, 16 October 2009, [allafrica.com](http://allafrica.com/stories/200910161169.html), at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910161169.html>

SCSL transfer prisoners to Rwanda: The Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) has transferred eight prisoners to Rwanda convicted of crimes committed during the civil war that devastated the country from 1991- 2002, Reuters reported. The transfer came as result of the allegation that prison conditions in Sierra Leone do not meet international standards. The prisoners were taken to Mpanga prison, under an agreement signed between the Court and the Government of Rwanda. Reported by David Lewis, 31 October 2009, Reuters, at <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LV126612.htm>

Former rebel sentenced to 52-year prison term: The Special Court for Sierra Leone issued on 26 October 2009, in its final verdict in appeal, a verdict condemning three former rebel leaders to prison terms ranging from 25 to 52 years for "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity", AFP reported. Augustine Gbao, Morris Kallon and Issa Hassan Sesay were sentenced to 25, 40, 52 years imprisonment respectively. It is reported that this was the first time an International Court gave a sentence of 52 years. *Original Report in French*. Reported by AFP, 27 October 2009, Google News, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iYa8IT7dtqEzhpcV7E0IGIs1QhWg>

Cameroon

Prisoners killed during escape: According to an IOL report, two prisoners were killed and two others wounded while attempting to escape from the Bafoussam prison in the Western Province of Cameroon. The prison governor, Daniel Njeng, said "four prisoners escaped on 9 October 2009, breaking through the roof," of the prison and. Two of them were shot dead about 50 metres from the prison. According to the report, the Bafoussam prison, built to house 600 prisoners is currently accommodating 1,200, prisoners in a structure described as "obsolete". IOL, 13 October 2009, at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=86&art_id=nw20091013192511378C489088

Guinea Bissau

A country without a prison: IRIN reported that Guinea Bissau has no prisons and the Bijagos Islands, a drug-trafficking hub off the capital Bissau, has no judiciary police and no communications or surveillance equipment. Mario Coutinho, an inspector of the Portuguese judiciary police involved in police training in the former Portuguese colony said "There are no police and no surveillance of boats at all." The Justice Minister, Mamadou Saliu Djalo Pires, is reported to have revealed that the country's only prison was destroyed during the 1998-99 civil war. The Minister added that when criminals are put in one of the country's few detention centres, getting them before a court is rare. Cases are delayed, which means many suspects are set free when they reach the pre-trial detention limit of one year. IRIN, 16 October 2009, [allafrica.com](http://allafrica.com/stories/200910161108.html), at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910161108.html>

Kenya

Prison officer gets ICPA award: Mrs. Grace Anyango Odhiambo, is reported to have won the Outstanding Correctional Service Employee global award, Nations reported. The International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA), based in Canada, awarded Mrs. Odhiambo the prize in recognition of the significant work undertaken in reforming the Lang'ata prison. Mrs. Odhiambo, the officer-in-charge of the prison, said "The [prisoners] deserve humane conditions as well, despite the past offences they have committed". "Her numerous projects at the prison are described in her masters thesis entitled "The long-term effects on the incarceration of women offenders on the nuclear family". The thesis centred on providing favourable conditions for prisoners, to reduce their stress levels.' Reported by, Joy Wanja, 11 October 2009, Nations, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910120443.html>

Implicative affidavit facilitates a prisoner's release: A report in the Nairobi Star revealed that an alleged implicative affidavit of the Mungiki leader, Maina Njenga, containing the names of high-ranking collaborators, is likely to have prompted Attorney General Amos Wako to withdraw the murder charges brought against him by the police. Justice Joseph Serگون, released the prisoner when he said "I have accepted the AG's directions and therefore set them free forthwith lawfully unless arrested for any other charge". Njenga, is reported had been in imprisoned for five years for murder. The leader of a disbanded sect, came out of prison heading to church declaring that he is a changed man. "I wish to confirm to you that I am a reformed person now. I do not wish to go back to that horrible life in prison," Njenga said. Nairobi Star, 24 October 2009, [allAfrica.com](http://allafrica.com/stories/200910261747.html), at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910261747.html>

Uganda

Government to fund prison agriculture initiative: It is reported that the Ugandan government plans to use the prison service as a major food provider in that country following the success of the agricultural arm of the Uganda Prisons Service. The 3rd Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs, Kirunda Kivejinja, expressed government's commitment to fund the agricultural arm of the Uganda Prison Service to enable it produce food for prisoners and to generate income. Ultimate Media, 4 October 2009, at <http://www.ugpulse.com/articles/daily/news.asp?about=Government+to+promote+Prison%92s+agriculture&ID=12524>

Three on death row for murder: Janet Mureeba, an accountant at Luzira Prisons, Ismail Aliga and Kassim Byaruhanga, have been sentenced to death by Justice Augustine Kania, of the High Court in Kampala. According to a New Vision report, the prosecution alleged that Ismail Aliga, and Kassim Byaruhanga, conspired with Janet Mureeba, to killed her co-wife, Norah Namara at her home in Ntinda, a Kampala suburb. At appeal, justices Alice Mpagi Bahigeine, Steven Engwau and Christine Kitimbo, upheld the conviction and sentence on 23 March 2001. On a further appeal to the Supreme Court, the learned justices, Arthur Oder, John Tsekooko, Alfred Karokora, Joseph Mulenga and George Kanyeihamba, also upheld the verdict of the lower courts. Janet Mureeba, Ismail Aliga, and Kassim Byaruhanga, who have lost their final appeal, await death by hanging at the Luzira Prison condemned section. Reported by, Anne Mugisa, 16 October 2009, New Vision, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910191103.html>

Prison overcrowding: Ugandan prisons are reported to be overcrowded to the extent that some are accommodated thrice their capacities. New Vision reported that Uganda Human Rights Commission statistics for 2008 revealed that the population in the central prison has risen by 113 per cent, beyond its normal capacity. The report listed

Nyamushekyera in Bushenyi, Ndorwa in Kabale, Kakika in Mbarara, Ntungamo, Kiruhura, Masaka and Muinaina in Mubende as the most congested prisons. In its recommendations the Commission urged the the government to construct juvenile remand homes and increase funding to the Department, build new prisons, and renovate and expand existing structures. Reported by, Josephine Maseruka, 19 October 2009, New Vision, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910200558.html>

Liberia

Overcrowded prisons: The Washington and Lee School of Law (W&L), in partnership with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the James A.A. Pierre Judicial Institute in Liberia will focus their resources on Liberia's overcrowded prison system. It is reported that magistrates lack adequate staffing and poor recordkeeping plagues their dockets. Law students will work as court clerks to the magistrates, maintaining court records and assisting magistrates to prepare for hearings. "The Liberian prison system is overwhelmed with pre-trial detainees" said W&L's Law Fellow, Rayan Decker. Liberia's infrastructure and legal system, including its prison system, were left in ruin following the fourteen-year civil war between 1989 and 2003. The Rockbridge, 1 October 2009, at http://www.rockbridgeweekly.com/rw_article.php?ndx=15449

Overcrowded prison threaten state security: The Inquiries reported that the Deputy Minister of Justice for Administration and Public Safety, Eva Mappy Morgan, said that overcrowded prisons pose a security risk throughout the country. The Minister revealed that those Liberians that were deported from the United States of America recently and sent to the Grand Gedeh Prison have since been released. According to the Inquiries report, UN Deputy Envoy, Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu, continued to emphasise prison overcrowding saying that over 90% of prisoners in Liberia are awaiting trial detainees. She added that her department has obtained close to one million US Dollars to fund the construction of a "72-bed-room facility in Nimba County and will also allow them to train 50 more correctional officers that would be deployed in Nimba and Montserrado Counties." Reported by Melissa Chea-Annan, 9 October 2009, The Inquiries, at http://theinquirer.com.lr/story.php?record_id=1816&sub=14

Nigeria

Over 400 Nigerians in Turkish prison: A report in Daily Trust said that over 400 Nigerians are serving prison terms in Turkey for drug related offences. The Nigerian Ambassador to Turkey, Ahmed Mallammadori, was quoted saying that "We now have over four hundred Nigerians living in prison. There is no day that a Nigerian is not arrested for drug related offences. 99 percent of the four hundred are arrested because of drug related offences. Some of them are either serving their terms or are on trial". Reported by Idris Ahmed, 07 October 2009, Daily Trust at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910070331.html>

Prison Service recruit medical experts: The Controller-General of Prisons, Olusola Adigun is reported to have announced that that Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS) is set to recruit more medical personnel, as part of its efforts to provide good health care delivery for prisoners of the country's prisons, NEXT reported. According to the report, about 60 medical doctors now handle the department's health and social care service under the NPS. Prison hospitals have been established to minimise escapes. Adigun said: "It is planned that these hospitals will eventually form the nucleus of prison reference hospitals to serve each of the country's six geopolitical zones." 25 October 2009, NEXT, at http://234next.com/csp/cms/sites/Next/Home/5473634-146/Nigerian_Prisons_Service_to_recruit_more.csp

Libya

Libya suspends execution of Nigerians: Libyan authorities are reported to have agreed to stop the execution of Nigerians on death row in that country. The decision by Libya followed a provisional measure issued by the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, ordering the government to suspend the executions. The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), reportedly said that "...over 200 Nigerians are on death row for offences ranging from immigration, murder, drug and armed robbery. The Commission requested from the President of Libya a provisional measure to stay the executions pending the determination of the communication. Happily, the president obliged and for now there is a hold on the execution of the convicted persons." Reported by Francis Iwuchukwu, 7 October 2009, Daily Independence, at

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200910070777.html>

Government to demolish prison of terror: In an attempt to ameliorate its human rights situation, it is reported that Libya has released 88 prisoners alleged to be linked to Al Qaeda. According to a report in *Dans le monde*, the prisoners were held in the notorious prison of Abou Salim in Tripoli which the government has announced will be demolished. APF reported that 45 members of the Islamic Group of the Libyan Combatants were released. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), at least 1,200 prisoners were killed by law enforcement officers during a shoot-out in Abou Salim prison in 1996. The Gaddafi Foundation, said that the government plans to "compensate the families of martyrs who were killed in clashes", in

1996. *Original report in French*. APF, 15 October 2009, *Dans le Monde*, at

<http://www.orange.mu/kinews/afp/actualites/236416/la-libye-libere-des-islamistes-et-demolit-une-prison-symbole-d-horreur.html>

Rwanda

Prison standards improved: The Ugandan Commissioner General of Prisons, Johnson Byabashaija, has commended Rwanda's prison standards, when he said "I was impressed by the good prison facilities in Rwanda and I liked the way prisoners participate in community services," adding that "Rwanda has more prisoners than [Uganda] but it is amazing [that] their prison services are up to standard. [T]his should serve as a lesson to Uganda". He made the remark while officiating at the advocacy and policy dialogue on the capacity of prisons health services in dealing with the HIV/TB epidemics. According to a report in *The New Times* "Good prison health is good public health" was the theme used to sensitise policy makers of the importance to fight against the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in prisons. Reported by, Frank Kanyesigye, 05 October 2009, allAfrica.com at <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910050715.html>

Senegal

Student dies in prison: A student at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University Cheikh Anta Diop is reported to have died in prison after he allegedly embarked on a hunger strike, Walf Fadjri reported. Modou Sarr had been charge in an assizes court for the crime of arson in forbidding places. He was arrested by police for deliberately setting fire in front of the Swiss Embassy in Dakar. According to the a report in Walf Fadjri, the Minister of justice is quoted saying that , "when a prisoner is on hunger strike, despite the advice of penitentiary adviser and staff of the prison, steps are usually taken which include hospitalisation under conditions of house arrest". In the case of Modou Sarr, all such precautions had been adhered to. The decease family is suing the government for improper administration of justice. *Original report in French*. Reported by Pape Ndiaye, 08 October 2009, Walf Fadjri at

http://www.walf.sn/actualites/suite.php?rub=1&id_art=59244

Equatorial Guinea

The consequences of prison overcrowding: Forty three foreigners imprisoned in Equatorial Guinea, were deported to Cameroon, Mutation reported. One of the prisoners said "We were 160 people in the cell with no place to sleep and no food", adding that "We were in the prison called Centrale, from where we were taken to the port before being depoprted". It is reported that none of them had a passport and that, most of them claim to be Malian. *Original report in French*. Reported by Lazare Kolyang, 02 October 2009, Mutation of Cameroun at

<http://www.camer.be/index1.php?art=7309>

Ghana

Government embarks on decongesting remand prisons: A report in Peace FM said that some state institutions have reached an agreement to decongest prisons. They include the Judiciary, the Police, Prisons Services, Attorney-General's Department and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. The agreement came after a meeting of the stakeholders was held to implement the Justice for All Programme, initiated to decongest remand prisons. There are about 3,869 remand prisoners, amounting to 30% of the total prison population in the country, Peace FM reported. It is alleged that remand prisoners' stay in prison ranges from between 1 to 16 years. The Justice for All Programme constituted an eight-member task force to co-ordinate efforts towards ensuring that the remand

prison population is halved by July 2010. Peace FM, 28 October 2009, at <http://news.peacefmonline.com/social/200910/30119.php>

Côte d'Ivoire

UN Legal team assess prisons: The United Nations News Center has reported that the UN legal team paid a 10-days visit to Côte d'Ivoire to study the West African country's implementation of its national laws and prison administration as well as the judiciary's interaction with other sectors of society. It is reported that the aim was to assess the progress made and the challenges remaining as the international community, continues to contribute to the reorganization of the judicial and prison sectors of the country. UN News Centre, 8 October 2009, at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32473&Cr=ivoire&Cr1>

Sudan

Khartoun uphold death sentence: A report in IOL stated that a court in Khartoun has sentenced the murderer of a UN diplomat to death. The "Religious extremists" were condemned to death for shooting and killing John Granville, 33, who worked for the US Agency for International Development, and his driver, Abdelrahman Abbas Rahama, IOL reported. Judge Sidahmed al-Badri told the court "The sentence is hanging until death". Reuters, 12 October 2009, IOL, at http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=68&art_id=nw20091012111031266C774717

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