



30 Days Dae Izinsuku

Project of the
Community
Law Centre

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Greetings

GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION

More resources necessary for oversight body: allAfrica.com reported that the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services visited the offices of the Judicial Inspectorate Services (JICS) in KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and Gauteng during the month of August 2013. The Committee reportedly noted that the offices were not sufficiently or adequately resourced. Reported by allAfrica.com, 2 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308051372.html>

Alleged intimidation of officials: allAfrica.com reported that officials from the Qalabusha Correctional Centre are being investigated by the Department of Correctional Services management for raising their concerns with members of the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services. The officials reportedly complained of poor administration by the Department during a visit by members of the Committee to the prison. Reported by allAfrica.com, 14 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308141405.html>

SENTENCING AND PAROLE

Judge comments on life imprisonment: IOL reported that a full bench of the Pretoria High Court, in upholding an appeal against a sentence of 50 years imprisonment, made a number of points on life sentences. The Court noted that life imprisonment should remain the ultimate sentence a court can impose. Thus, no sentence should be longer than the time effectively served when an offender is sentenced to life. Reported by Zelda Venter, 1 August 2013, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/life-must-be-longest-jail-term-judge-1.1555649#.UfolmdKshWM>

PRISON CONDITIONS

Reduction in prison escapes: allAfrica.com reported that members of the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services, having visited the Harrismith Correctional Centre, commended the Department of Correctional Services in the Free State for having 'cut down' the number of escapes from custody. The Committee also reportedly noted that the Harrismith Correctional Centre was less overcrowded compared to other correctional centres in the country. Reported by Kanyisa Ndyonda, 1 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308020696.html>

Measures to combat tuberculosis: The Wall Street Journal posted a video on its website documenting the measures that Pollsmoor Prison has taken to prevent the transmission of tuberculosis. The judgment of *Dudley Lee v Minister of Correctional Services* prompted such measures, for it found that the government had failed to take the necessary steps to combat the spreading of the disease. Reported by the Wall Street Journal, 7 August 2013, at <http://live.wsj.com/video/tb-is-main-cause-of-death-in-south-african-prisons/44DFF68B-0466-4862-8D36-A0251B1E35C6.html#!44DFF68B-0466-4862-8D36-A0251B1E35C6>

Minister visits female prison: allAfrica.com reported that the Minister of Correctional Services visited female inmates at Kroonstand Correctional Centre on Women's Day, 9 August 2013. The inmates reportedly enjoyed a number of games to celebrate the public holiday and received donations from the public. The report notes that of the 3 505 female inmates currently incarcerated across the country, 980 are remand detainees and 2 525 are sentenced. Reported by allAfrica.com, 10 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308121321.html>

Inmate wins court challenge: The Mercury reported that an inmate at Westville prison won a High Court challenge to have access to his laptop, printer and modem for the purposes of completing his law degree. The Court reportedly stated that the items were to be used for study purposes only. Reported by The Mercury (subscription required), 18 August 2013, at <http://themercury.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/showarticle.aspx?article=0518857b8d0245b7a56f366f3ea8adbc&key=lcQlnI5oV45%2bhCc0iZQBmw%3d%3d&issue=6403201308190000000001001>

Latest figures on overcrowding: eNCA reported that as of August 2013 there are just over 156 000 inmates in correctional centres in South Africa, more than a quarter of whom are remand detainees. The Minister of Correctional Services reportedly stated that the Department was committed to reducing the level of overcrowding by at least two per cent per annum in order to comply with the constitutional requirement to detain inmates under humane conditions. Reported by eNCA, 27 August 2013, at <http://www.enca.com/south-africa/prison-inmate-figure-tops-156000>

Gangsterism in correctional centres: IOL reported that the Minister of Correctional Services

addressed the problem of gangsterism in prisons before the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services. He reportedly stated that the Department was working with intelligence agencies 'in a bid to end prison gangs' reign of terror' as well as to understand more fully the impact of gangs in prisons. Reported by Babalo Ndenze, 27 August 2013, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/prison-gangs-threat-to-national-security-1.1568712>

SOUTH AFRICANS IMPRISONED ABROAD

Imprisonment abroad on the increase: Business Day reported that an estimated 60 per cent of South Africans currently serving prison sentences abroad have been convicted of drug trafficking offences. Many of these are women, and there are reportedly 337 South African women imprisoned abroad for drug smuggling. The report notes that the government has 'yet to supply any compelling reason for its ongoing refusal to sign prisoner transfer agreements.' Reported by Rebecca Davis, 21 August 2013, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2013/08/21/let-south-african-prisoners-abroad-serve-time-at-home>

OTHER

Officials receive identity cards: IOL reported that the Department of Correctional Services has issued staff with secure identity cards. The cards are reportedly secured against identity fraud and thus go a long way towards curtailing security breaches. Reported by IOL, 28 August 2013, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/prison-staff-get-id-smart-cards-1.1569421>

OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

BURUNDI

Prison riots: eNCA reported that riots broke out in two overcrowded prisons resulting in the death of one civilian and one inmate. Sixteen people were reportedly wounded during the riot. The riots reportedly erupted in response to the harsh disciplinary measures metered out against 13 inmates who had protested the decreasing of food rations. Reported by eNCA, 9 August 2013, at <http://www.enca.com/africa/two-killed-inmates-riot-overcrowded-burundi-prisons>

EGYPT

Detainees killed during riot: The Dhaka Tribune reported that 36 detainees were killed during a riot that broke out whilst detainees were being transported to a prison in northern Egypt. The detainees killed were part of a prison truck convoy of some 600 detainees. Detainees in one of the trucks reportedly rioted which resulted in the police officials using force in order to quell the disruption. Reported by Dhaka Tribune, 19 August 2013, at <http://www.dhakatribune.com/africa/2013/aug/19/egypt-36-killed-prison-truck-escape->

[attempt](#)

ETHIOPIA

Journalists harassed and detained: The Guardian published a feature article on the treatment of journalists by the Ethiopian government. It notes the 'heavy hand' the government uses to quell any form of dissent on the part of the media, in particular, its use of anti-terror legislation. The report features the details of a particular case wherein a journalist was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment for having written an article about the Arab Spring and "suggesting something similar could happen in his own country." Reported by Ian Birrell, 4 August 2013, at <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2013/aug/04/africa-media-press-freedom>

THE GAMBIA

Critical report on prison: allAfrica.com reported that President Jammeh was 'shocked upon reading a report on the State Central Prison Mile 2.' The report allegedly describes extremely harsh conditions, poor sanitation as well as notes the fact that there are remand detainees that have been detained for lengthy periods of time awaiting trial. Reported by allAfrica.com, 5 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308051602.html>

MALAWI

Improving pretrial justice: The Maravi Post reported that the University of Malawi, in collaboration with a number of South African organisations, was in the process of delivering specialised training to 100 justice officials, including magistrates and prosecutors. The training programme is aimed at addressing the gap between legislative provisions intended to curb issues like overcrowding and lengthy pretrial detention, and practice. Reported by the Maravi Post, 27 August 2013, at <http://maravipost.com/scope/law-and-order/4426-improving-pre-trial-justice-in-malawi.html>

MOROCCO

Prisoners pardoned: allAfrica.com reported that in celebration of Youth Day, King Mohammed VI granted pardons to 322 prisoners. The prisoners that benefitted included those that had been sentenced to life imprisonment, determinate sentences, and those that had been fined. Reported by allAfrica.com, 20 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308210457.html>

NIGERIA

Prison facilities renovated: PM News reported that the Central Bank of Nigeria financed the renovation of five cells and a library at Akwa prison. The report notes that the conditions at the prison are poor as it has capacity for only 238 prisoners but is compelled to accommodate 400. Reported by PM News, 21 August 2013, at <http://pmnewsnigeria.com/2013/08/21/cbn-staff-bankroll-makeover-of-akwa-prison/>

TANZANIA

Provision of legal aid: IPP Media reported that indigent citizens would be able to access legal assistance once a proposed bill comes into force. The Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs reportedly intends to 'enact a law' that will entitle the country's poor to access legal aid in criminal and civil cases free of charge. The report notes that the proposed statute will provide for the establishment of a regulating body that will set standards for the provision of legal aid. Reported by Aloyce Mpandana, 1 August 2013, at <http://www.ippmedia.com/frontend/index.php?l=57581>

Detainees protest: allAfrica.com reported that more than 300 inmates staged a protest by refusing to disembark from the bus transporting them from the prison to court. The inmates reportedly protested against the unnecessary prolonging of their trials and accused the Regional Police Commander of fabricating the charges against them. Reported by Marc Nkwame, 8 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308080301.html>

TUNISIA

Allegations of torture: allAfrica.com reported that Human Rights Watch have called on Tunisian authorities to open a prompt and thorough investigation into allegations of ill-treatment at Mornaguia prison. The allegations were reportedly made by two suspects who are being detained under the country's counter-terrorism legislation. Although the allegations were made in mid-August 2013, an investigation has not yet been initiated. Reported by allAfrica.com, 29 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308290730.html>

UGANDA

Prison overcrowding: The Daily Monitor reported that Uganda is ninth among the top ten countries with most overcrowded prisons in the world. The report notes that the country's overcrowding is partly due to the inefficient criminal justice system, as almost 90 per cent of inmates are awaiting trial. Reported by Ephraim Kasozi, 8 August 2013, at <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Ugandan+jails+most+crowded+in+East+Africa++new+report/-/688334/1940590/-/43i27xz/-/index.html>

Ramadan donations: allAfrica.com reported that MTN Uganda in partnership with the Union of Muslim Council donated food items to 2000 Muslim inmates at Luzira prison. The donations were reportedly made for the purpose of enabling fasting prisoners to break their fast with more nutritious meals than what the prison is able to offer. Reported by Zura Nakbugo, 6 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308071028.html>

Overcrowding on the increase: allAfrica.com reported that the prison population in northern Uganda has increased dramatically over the last two years. The report notes that the existing prison capacity for northern Uganda is 2 407 but the current population is currently at 6664. The report states that the reasons for the increase include the

unnecessary extension of cases, common land disputes, domestic violence and assault. Reported by Patrick Okino, 30 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308310181.html>

ZAMBIA

Journalist released from custody: allAfrica.com reported that a freelance journalist who was charged and detained in connection with his suspected links with the *Zambian Watchdog*, an online publication that is openly critical of the current government, was released after the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) condemned his detention. The journalist was reportedly chained to his bed during his detention. Reported by allAfrica.com, 5 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308080580.html>

ZIMBABWE

Activist dies in detention: allAfrica.com reported that an opposition party activist died in detention following a two-year period of detention awaiting trial. The detainee, who died as a result of a “short illness”, had reportedly requested to be transferred to a private hospital for better treatment. This request had reportedly been denied. Reported by Tererai Karimakwenda, 12 August 2013, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308122683.html>



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