



30 Days Dae Izinsuku

Project of the
Community Law
Centre

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GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION

Department of Correctional Services promises financial turnaround strategy: News24 reported that the Department of Correctional Services received a qualified audit opinion from the Auditor General in its 2011/12 financial statements. The Minister of Correctional Services, in response, reportedly stated that the Department was “implementing a turnaround strategy...to ensure improved financial management...” Reported by News24, 4 October 2012, at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Ndebele-seeks-prisons-turnaround-20121004>

Absence of prosecution of prison officials: Business Day reported that although a significant numbers of deaths in South Africa's prisons have been attributed to prison officials, not one prison official has ever been prosecuted for their involvement in the death of a prisoner. Such information was reportedly presented to parliament by the Civil Society Prison Reform Initiative at public hearings on the Department of Correctional Services 2011/2012 Annual Report. Reported by Business Day, 9 October 2012, at <http://www.businessday.co.za>

Department of Correctional Services appears before parliamentary committee: The Sowetan reported that the Department of Correctional Services was directed to appear before the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services in order to explain “why it was failing to dismiss employees who commit gross offences.” The report noted, however, that 183 officials were dismissed in 2012 in contrast to 88 in 2011. Reported by Denise William, 17 October 2012, at <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2012/10/17/prison-bosses-rapped>

PRISON CONDITIONS

Sexual abuse rife in prisons: PlusNews reported that sexual violence is a problem which the prison system has failed to prevent and that research has consistently indicated the scale of the problem is much greater than officials were prepared to admit. The report noted that the absence of a coherent intervention strategy on the part of the Department of Correctional Services has led to high prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and syphilis. Reported by PlusNews, 4 October 2012, at <http://www.plusnews.org/Report/96461/SOUTH-AFRICA-Dealing-with-sexual-abuse-in-prison>

Prison conditions remain poor: Times Live reported that Independent Prison Visitors have described the conditions of detention in Pollsmoor prison as deplorable. The utensils used by prison facilities are reportedly dirty and sections of the prison are damp and dirty throughout the year. Authorities are reportedly not responding to reports on the state of affairs of the prison despite being made aware of this situation. Reported by Times Live, 24 October 2012, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2012/10/24/pollsmoor-prison-pots->

[filthy-parliament-told](#)

Independent Prison Visitors require legal training: The New Age reported that the Inspecting Judge of Prisons proposed to the Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services that independent prison visitors (IPVs) undergo paralegal training so as to be better enabled to handle complaints from inmates. The report noted that IPVs receive thousands of complaints from inmates and that the nature of such complaints requires legal knowledge if they are to be meaningfully resolved. Reported by Siyabonga Mkhwanazi, 25 October 2012, at http://www.thenewage.co.za/Detail.aspx?news_id=67172&cat_id=1007

REHABILITATION

Compulsory education for prisoners: News24 reported that the Department of Correctional Services will be introducing compulsory adult education courses for prisoners during the course of 2013. Commenting on the objectives of the initiative, the Minister of Correctional Services reportedly stated: "The key to rehabilitation is empowering offenders to have skills to function effectively in society on their release but, equally important, is to ensure that offenders are actively involved in productive activity." Reported by News24, 18 October 2012 at <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Prisoners-to-get-compulsory-education-20121018>

Lack of skills training for prisoners: allAfrica.com published a press release by the Democratic Alliance in which James Selfe, the Democratic Alliance's Shadow Minister of Correctional Services called on the Minister of Correctional Services to establish "a comprehensive plan [regarding] the literacy of prisoners under his Adult Basic Education Training programme." Currently only 10 800 out of 167 819 prisoners are enrolled in some form of education or skills training programme. Reported by allAfrica.com, 20 October 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210200192.html>

Call for communities to take responsibility: Times Live reported that the Minister of Correctional Services has called on communities to "take some responsibility for the rehabilitation of offenders as crime originated within communities." He reportedly stated that the Department intended to embark on "victim-offender dialogues" in an attempt to "keep offenders away from imprisonment by reconstructing family units, community systems and victim support. Reported by Times Live, 28 October 2012, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2012/10/28/communities-must-help-rehabilitate-offenders-ndebele>

UNSENTENCED PRISONERS

Three prisoners die in explosion: The SABC reported that three inmates were killed and 14 injured when an explosion went off in a vehicle that was transporting the inmates to Johannesburg Central Prison. The Department of Correctional Services is reportedly investigating the possibility that the explosion was coordinated by members of the police and department officials. Reported by SABC, 23 October 2012, at <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/1dc2ac004d2e2400b8f5be0934d0676c/Probe-into-prison-truck-blast-underway-20122310> Also reported at <http://news.iafrica.com/sa/823042.html>

Awaiting trial detainees a major factor in overcrowding: The Beeld reported that one third of prisoners in Gauteng's overcrowded prisons are awaiting trial, and that approximately 50% of them will be acquitted or have their cases dismissed. The report is based on a research report by Robyn Leslie of the Wits Justice Project. Reported by the Beeld, 26 October 2012, at <http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Tronke-vol-want-hulle-kry-nie-borg-20121026>

SENTENCING AND PAROLE

Parolees unable to find work: The Cape Argus reported that many prisoners released on parole are sleeping on the streets as they have been unable to find work to support themselves and have nowhere else to stay. According to Richard Bosman, Executive Director of the city's Department of Safety and Security, it was not clear whether the parolees were or had been properly rehabilitated. Reported by Cape Argus, 8 October 2012, at http://capeargus.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/showarticle.aspx?article=6a1448ae_82044255_9d3d_ed907bd0c48d&key=QtLLjLku5xE5p%2fw34P%2fFmw%3d%3d&issue=62562012100800000000001001 (subscription required)

OTHER

Minister of Correctional Services visits prisons abroad: Sowetan Live reported that the Minister of Correctional Services is visiting prisons in Cuba, Brazil and the United States for the purpose of learning about various “best practice models.” More than 95% of Cuban prisoners would reportedly have learnt at least one skill by the time they are released, and 51% earn an educational qualification. Reported by Sowetan Live, 3 October 2012, at <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2012/10/03/correctional-services-minister-on-trip-to-visit-overseas-jails>

South African National Commissioner elected head of regional organisation: Moneyweb reported that the National Commissioner for Correctional Services was elected as Chairperson of the African Correctional Services Association (ACSA). The election was reportedly held at the ACSA’s four-day biennial conference in Kampala. The conference was attended by senior correctional services officers from more than twenty four African countries. Reported by Moneyweb, 7 October 2012, at <http://www.moneyweb.co.za/moneyweb-south-africa/sa-to-chair-african-prison-association?sn=2009%20Detail>

Annual Report describes the many problems in South African prisons: The Mail and Guardian reported that the 2011/2012 Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services indicates that the Department of Correctional Services owes over R1 billion in damages to prisoners and identified R71 million in wasteful expenditure. Other problems indicated in the Annual Report include unnatural deaths, assaults and a shortage of personnel. Reported by Ilham Rawoot, 15 October 2012, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-10-14-report-shows-sorry-state-of-sa-prisons>

OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

BOTSWANA

Prisons adopt safe circumcision practices: The Monitor reported that the Botswana Prisons Service adopted the Safe Male Circumcision (SMC) programme to reduce the spread of new HIV/AIDS infections. It noted that 133 inmates from Gaborone, Moshupa and Molepolole prisons had been circumcised and that the SMC is reportedly expanding to other parts of the country. Reported by Keobonye Majatsie, 22 October 2012, at <http://www.mmegi.bw/index.php?sid=1&aid=256&dir=2012/October/monday22>

CAMEROON

Prison fails to separate children from adults: Jade Cameroun reported that due to overcrowding in the adult sections, the New-Bell Prison has reportedly placed adult prisoners in the children’s section. Prison management reportedly stated this was a temporary measure, following a fire in the prison. Original report in French. Reported by Théodore Tchopa, 2 October 2012, at <http://www.jadecameroun.com/news.php?detailAct=266>

Plans for new Douala prison following fire: Cameroon Tribune reported on the government’s intention to build a new central prison in Douala, with a capacity of 5000 beds. This announcement was reportedly made following a fire at Douala prison that destroyed two cells and forced the transfer of 68 detainees to the juvenile section of the prison. The new facilities will include farming space and staff accommodation. Original report in French. Reported by Alliance Nyobia, 4 September 2012, at http://www.cameroon-tribune.cm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=70157:nouvelle-prison-urgence-signalee&catid=4:societe&Itemid=3

Three prison guards detained following escape: Camer reported that three prison guards, who were posted at the Douala central prison, have been arrested and detained at the same prison. They are charged with having facilitated the escape of a former mayor whilst he was in hospital. Original report in French. Report by Pana, 9 October 2012, at <http://www.camer.be/index1.php?art=21980&rub=11:1>

Majority of prisoners awaiting trial: Africa Review reported that 14 265 out of the 23 000 inmates in the country are awaiting trial detainees. Cameroon’s seventy-two prisons reportedly have a capacity of 15 250 prisoners. Reported by Africa Review, 15 October 2012, at <http://www.africareview.com/News/Majority> Cameroon prisoners still awaiting trial/-/979180/1533876/-/125ix68z/-/index.html

Prison visit project presents findings: Jade Cameroun reported on some preliminary outcomes from the project ‘Dignity and Detention’ by Avocats sans Frontières and the Bar of Cameroon. Visits were reportedly made to a number of prisons with the aim of establishing findings on the treatment of detainees and conditions of detention. Problems identified included overcrowding, corruption, high numbers of awaiting trial detainees, excessive use of restraints and delays in release of prisoners who have served their sentences in full. Original report in French. Reported by Anne Matho, 17 October 2012, at <http://www.jadecameroun.com/news.php?detailAct=270>

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Prison fight leaves 24 injured: Radio Okapi reported that a fight that broke out in Kisangani Central Prison resulted in the injury of 24 detainees. Twelve detainees with serious head injuries were reportedly transferred to the hospital. Original report in French. Reported by Radio Okapi, 15 October 2012, at <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2012/10/15/kisangani-24-detenus-blesses-dans-une-bagarre-la-prison-centrale/>

Lengthy remand detention: News24 reported that an a senior member of the political opposition in the country claims that he has been detained for three months in police cells on baseless charges of rape without having been taken to court. The report notes that Eugene Diomi Ndongala stated that he was subjected to interrogations which included the use of violence. Reported by News24, 15 October 2012, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/DRC-opposition-MP-says-held-for-months-20121015>

EGYPT

Morsi pardons uprising prisoners: Albawaba News reported that President Morsi pardoned all prisoners arrested during the uprising that toppled former president Hosni Mubarak. He reportedly announced amnesty for acts "committed to support the revolution and achieve its objectives in the period from 25 January 2011 to 30 June 2012, except crimes of murder." Reported by Albawaba News, 9 October 2012, at <http://www.albawaba.com/news/morsi-pardons-uprising-detainees-445519>

ETHIOPIA

Demonstrators attempt to raid prison: IOL reported that four people were killed in eastern Ethiopia when a group of armed demonstrators raided a prison following protests over alleged government interference in Muslim affairs. During the raid three of the demonstrators were reportedly shot dead by the police. Reported by Aaron Maasho, 22 October 2012, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/four-die-in-attack-on-ethiopian-prison-1.1408588#.UIaYP9mDzcs>

GABON

Prisoner dies of infection following repeated incidents of rape: Info-Afrique reported that a 20-year old prisoner detained at the Libreville central prison died of an infection following repeated incidents of rape. It is alleged that the prisoner was offering sex services to other prisoners in exchange for money, but that prisoners also sexually abused him. Original report in French. Report by Fabrice Mikomba, 18 October 2012, at <http://www.info-afrique.com/la-mort-dun-mineur-par-sodomisation-a-la-prison-centrale-defraie-la-chronique-a-libreville/>

GAMBIA

Inhumane prison conditions exposed: Jollof News reported that members of the civil society associations of the Gambia participating in the 25th anniversary and 52nd Session of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights in Yamnassoukou, Cote D'Ivoire, reported on the poor conditions of detention in prisons and the treatment of prisoners. The report noted that prisoners are facing problems such as lack of access to healthcare, high mortality rates, abuse, and detention without trial. Reported by Jollof News, 10 October 2012, at <http://www.jollofnews.com/20121010dr-janneh-exposes-gambias-inhumane-prison-conditions.html>

NGOs take Gambian government to court: The Guardian Nigeria reported that following perceived violations of the fundamental human rights to life and fair hearings in Gambia, a coalition of civil societies in the country has filed an application before the Economic Community of West African States Court on behalf of the 38 death row inmates at the country's Mile 2 Central Prisons. The civil society groups are requesting the ECOWAS Court to "order the Republic of The Gambia to comply with the rights and principles of the African Charter on Human Rights, stop executing death sentences, and stop pronouncing death sentences." Reported by Oghoghho Obayuwana, 16 October 2012, at http://www.nguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=101742:rights-groups-take-the-gambia-to-ecowas-court-over-38-death-row-inmates-&catid=76:world&Itemid=560

Banjul urged to freeze executions: News24 reported that the European Union has urged Gambia to honour a freeze on the death penalty after the country's Supreme Court upheld death sentences against seven officials for treason. Reported by News24, 22 October 2012, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Uphold-freeze-on-executions-Gambia-told-20121022>

IVORY COAST

Report on Maca prison: Jeune Afrique published a lengthy report on Maca prison, in Abidjan. It addresses issues of recent renovations, differential treatment of prisoners, outside businesses run from the prison, and corruption. Original report in French. Report by Malika Grogga-Bada, 3 October 2012, at <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/JA2698p041-043.xml0/>

LIBERIA

Prisoners escape: BBC reported that 60 inmates escaped from a maximum security prison facility in Liberia's south-eastern city of Zwedru. The inmates, who are reportedly "well-armed," have been convicted of armed robbery and various other capital offences. Reported by The BBC, 4 October 2012, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-19828657> Also reported at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/liberia-police-kill-2-escaped-inmates-and-detain-12-others-near-ivory-coast-border/2012/10/09/f029418a-1206-11e2-9a39-1f5a7f6fe945_story.html

Remand detainees placed on "probation": allAfrica.com reported that the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court in Gbarnga, Bong County, has placed nine pre-trial detainees from the Gbarnga Central Prison on probation as part of the Ministry of Justice's "probation program." Most of those released under the program had been in detention for four to 14 months for allegedly committing various crimes, including theft of property, illegal possession drugs, and misapplication of entrusted property. Reported by Jefferson Massah, 10 October 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210100419.html>

LIBYA

Mass prison escape: Al Arabiya News reported that about 120 prisoners escaped from Al-Jadaida prison in Tripoli. Security services were reportedly on "high alert" and some of the escapees have been re-arrested. Reported by Al Arabiya News, 15 October 2012, at <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/15/243937.html>

MALI

Female prison opened in Timbuktu: 27 avril reported that Islamist authorities, who are currently in control of the city of Timbuktu, opened a new female prison on 21 September. They claim they will arrest all women, whether married or not, dressed "indecently". Original report in French. Reported by Papa Sow, 25 September 2012, at <http://www.27avril.com/blog/culture-societe/societe/mali-prison-pour-femmes-a-tombouctou-fierte-des-barbares-islamistes-dansar-dine>.

MOROCCO

Former death row prisoners speak of mental torture: Jeune Afrique reported that during a regional conference of Middle Eastern and North African States on the death penalty in Rabat, several former death row prisoners spoke of the mental anguish they felt while imprisoned in the death row section of prisons. The conference also highlighted that moratoriums on the death penalty should be replaced by an actual legislative prohibition of the death penalty. Original report in French. Report by Jeune Afrique, 21 October 2012, at <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/DEPAFP20121021162426/>

NAMIBIA

Prisoners seek clarity on parole: allAfrica.com reported that twenty-four prisoners serving life sentences have lodged a case with the High Court in Windhoek in a bid to get clarity about their prospects of being released on parole. Reported by Werner Menges, 31 October 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210310515.html>

NIGERIA

Prisoners at risk of execution: Channels TV reported that two prisoners on death row are in imminent danger of being hanged after the governor of Edo State, Adams Oshiomole, signed their death warrants. Amnesty International has reportedly called for an immediate halt to the proceedings. There are approximately 920 people on death row in Nigeria, including women and juvenile offenders. Reported by Channels TV, 19 October 2012, at <http://www.channelstv.com/home/2012/10/19/two-prisoners-at-imminent-risk-of-execution-in-edo-state/>

RWANDA

Amnesty International condemns actions of military intelligence: Times Live reported that Amnesty International has called on Rwanda to end the "unlawful detention of civilians" and investigate allegations of torture against its security services. Amnesty International has reportedly gathered evidence of "unlawful detention, torture and other forms of ill-treatment and enforced disappearances" at the hands of Rwanda's military intelligence. Reported by Times Live, 8 October 2012, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/africa/2012/10/08/amnesty-calls-on-rwanda-to-end-unlawful-detentions>

Prisoners tortured: The Guardian reported that prisoners in Rwanda informed Amnesty International that they were tortured into making false confessions after being detained illegally without charge or trial. The report noted that the prisoners were subjected to electric shocks, severe beatings and sensory deprivation while being held at a military camp in Kigali. Reported by The Guardian, 8 October 2012, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/08/rwandan-civilians-claim-torture>

Rwandan prison services commended: allAfrica.com reported that the President of Prison Fellowship International called on

countries in east Africa to emulate the Rwanda Correctional Services (RCS) with regard to the handling of prisoners. He reportedly explained that “unlike other countries where prisoners are kept behind bars with no productive activities to engage in” the RCS has come up with activities that don't only enable prisoners to contribute towards national development, but also give them capacity and skills to start a new life after serving their sentences. Reported by Susan Babijja, 29 October 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210290003.html>

SOUTH SUDAN

Mobile courts earmarked as solution to lengthy remand detention: Fox News reported that South Sudan plans to introduce mobile courts in order to reduce the significant number of backlogged court cases. The mobile courts are reportedly a response to the criticism that some defendants have languished in prison for many years without trial. Reported by Fox News, 11 October 2012, at <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/10/11/with-prisons-full-south-sudan-to-introduce-mobile-courts-to-clear-backlog-cases/>

SUDAN

31 detainees escape from a Darfur prison: Afriquejet reported that 31 detainees escaped from the Ed Dain prison in Darfur when one prisoner stole the pistol of a police officer escorting them from the court to the prison. In the chaos that followed, 31 detainees managed to escape. Original report in French. Report by Afriquejet, 25 October 2012, at http://www.afriquejet.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=381:evasion-de-d%C3%A9tenu-d-une-prison-du-darfour&catid=68:soudan&Itemid=172

SWAZILAND

Conjugal visits for prisoners: Think Africa Press reported that Swaziland looks set to become the first African country to introduce conjugal visits for prisoners. The report notes that the Commissioner of Correctional Services stated that “only well behaved married inmates will benefit from the conjugal visits.” Reported by Think Africa Press, 12 October 2012, at <http://thinkafricapress.com/swaziland/conjugal-visits-swaziland-takes-lead-africa>

TANZANIA

Pledge to decongest prisons: allAfrica.com reported that the newly appointed Commissioner General of Prisons has pledged to decongest prisons in the country. The report states that the Tanzania's prisons currently accommodate 38000 inmates but were designed to hold only 27552. Reported by Abdulwakil Saiboko, 11 October 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210110249.html>

UGANDA

Conference highlights overcrowding in prisons: allAfrica.com reported that more than 26 heads of prisons from various African countries gathered at the biennial conference organized by the African Correctional Services Association (ACSA) in conjunction with the Uganda Prisons service in Kampala. The report noted that amongst the topics discussed, strategies aimed at reducing congestion in prisons and availing enough food for inmates, were emphasized. Reported by Gashegu Muramira, 4 October 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210040946.html>

Moratorium on death penalty: The Observer reported that the moratorium on the death penalty has overwhelmed the Ugandan prison system. According to the Commissioner of Prisons the matter has left authorities wondering how to cope with the extended stay of prisoners. He was quoted saying “we are appealing to Parliament to consider a parole system; otherwise many of these people will stay with us for the rest of their lives.” Reported by Moses Talemwa, 18 October 2012, at http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21635:few-death-sentences-come-with-challenges-for-prisons&catid=34:news&Itemid=114

ZAMBIA

Media urged to report more on prisons: allAfrica.com reported that the Commissioner of the Prisons Service, Percy Chato, has urged journalists to increase reporting on prison issues in order to assist “society and the government to develop common objectives on the reintegration of offenders back into society.” Reported by Chila Namaiko, 11 October 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210110877.html>

ZIMBABWE

Prime Minister's wife visits prisoners: The Herald reported that the Prime Minister's wife visited Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison to see MDC-T suspects accused of killing a policeman in 2010. The bail applications for the activists have reportedly continuously been turned down in courts. Reported by the Herald, 4 October 2012, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54047:pms-new-wife-causes-stir-at-chikurubi&catid=37:top-stories&Itemid=130

Man sentenced to death: The Herald reported that a man who shot and killed a government employee while trying to steal his vehicle was sentenced to death by Justice Samuel Kudya. Reported by George Maponga, 27 October 2012, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55919:man-to-hang-for-murder-of-chiredzi-cio-boss&catid=37:top-stories&Itemid=130



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