



INTERNATIONAL PRISON NEWS DIGEST

39th Edition – May - June 2017

Welcome to the 39th edition of the International Prison News Digest, our selection of news items from around the world on prison and the use of imprisonment. The Digest is produced bi-monthly and this issue covers the period from 1 May to 30 June 2017.

In this and future editions of the Digest, we are grouping news items regionally, rather than thematically. We aim in the Digest to cover all regions of the world and include new developments in policy and practice, as well as information from official and intergovernmental bodies. By clicking on the hyperlinks, you can access the news articles in their original form.

Content is sourced solely from English language news stories. Readers wishing to notify us of important news items in other languages are welcome to send us articles with a short summary of key content and we will consider them for inclusion in the next edition. Please note that ICPR is not responsible for the accuracy of external content.

Information on global prison systems can be found on [World Prison Brief](#)

AFRICA

Morocco: Prisons in Morocco no longer have the capacity to accommodate the soaring number of prisoners. [Morocco World News, 26 May 2017](#)

Nigeria: The House of Representatives has expressed grave displeasure over the circumstances surrounding the deaths of 900 prisoners across Nigerian prisons. [Business Day, 18 May 2017](#)

Rwanda: Government to extend community service programme to cover convicted petty criminals, in a bid to decongest correctional facilities in the country. [All Africa, 9 June 2017](#)

South Africa: Some progress has been made in reducing overcrowding at Pollsmoor's awaiting trial facility but there is much more to be done. [GroundUp, 2 May 2017](#)

South Africa: Prisons under pressure due to massive increase in the number of people serving sentences of life or more than 20 years. [Eyewitness News, 17 May 2017](#)

Swaziland: A United Nations group is investigating prison conditions in Swaziland amid reports of inhumane conditions. [All Africa, 22 May 2017](#)

Zambia: Zambian prisons do not comply with internationally accepted human rights standards and violate the rights of prisoners. [AA.com, 18 May 2017](#)

AMERICAS

Brazil: A riot at a youth prison in northeastern Brazil has left seven prisoners dead. [Reuters, 3 June 2017](#)

Canada: The number of prisoners in federal prisons who intentionally harm themselves has more than tripled over the past decade. [The Globe and Mail, 22 May 2017](#)

Canada: A Senate committee is touring prisons across the country and in other parts of the world as part of a two-year human rights inquiry. [CBC News, 11 June 2017](#)

Canada: The Liberal government has introduced a bill that would place new restrictions on indefinite solitary confinement in federal prisons. [The Globe and Mail, 19 June 2017](#)

Colombia: The public prosecutor has suspended all pending arrest warrants at its office in the city of Medellin, accusing the national prison authority of failing to curb overcrowding. [Colombia Reports, 15 June 2017](#)

Guyana: The government is tackling overcrowding in prisons by looking for alternatives to pre-trial detention. [Nation News, 11 May 2017](#)

Honduras: Sixty-five people escaped from prison in less than 15 days in Honduras, highlighting the chronic dysfunction of the country's prison system. [Insight Crime, 15 May 2017](#)

Jamaica: A damning report on HIV/AIDS and the treatment of gay and lesbian prisoners in the country's prisons has unearthed some alarming problems. [Caribbean 360, 12 June 2017](#)

Mexico: A large majority of Mexican prisons have still not met the international standards required for American Correctional Association accreditation. [Mexico News Daily, 12 May 2017](#)

Mexico: Organized crime groups control 65 percent of state prisons in Mexico, according to a government report. [Insight Crime, 23 May 2017](#)

Mexico: A gun battle that raged for hours inside a prison in northern Mexico left seven dead and 13 injured. [The Guardian, 7 June 2017](#)

Peru: Peru's Carceles Productivas (Productive Prisons) programme generates US\$30 million a year in sales of products crafted by prisoners. [Andina, 23 May 2017](#)

United States: One in seven US prisoners is serving an actual or *de facto* life term. [Quartz, 3 May 2017](#)

ASIA

Bangladesh: 63 jails have no doctors. [The Daily Star, 15 May 2017](#)

Cambodia: Project to build new, privately funded block at Prey Sar prison will enable up to 1,200 prisoners to buy their way out of overcrowded cells into more spacious, rehabilitative accommodation. [Phnom Penh Post, 10 May 2017](#)

Iran: Iran's penitentiary chief reported a 333 per cent increase in prisoner numbers between 1985 and 2017. [Iran Focus, 25 May 2017](#)

Malaysia: The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia has revealed that the right to healthcare in prison is still lacking. [Free Malaysia Today, 30 May 2017](#)

Malaysia: Around 56 percent of prisoners in the country are there because of drug offences. [Astro Awani, 14 June 2017](#)

South Korea: The government plans to trial the use of drones at three prisons, to monitor prisoner activity both inside and outside prisons, according to the Ministry of Justice. [South China Morning Post, 6 June 2017](#)

EUROPE

Germany: The Committee for the Prevention of Torture has praised progress made to improve the treatment of detained persons and detention conditions, but also found striking contrasts between establishments visited in different Länder. [Council of Europe, 1 June 2017](#)

Ireland: Prisoners released from life sentences should be given priority for housing on their release, the chairman of the Parole Board has said. [The Irish Times, 2 May 2017](#)

Ireland: The number of people being committed to prison has plummeted after measures introduced requiring judges to consider community services as an alternative to a jail term. [Independent.ie, 16 May 2017](#)

Netherlands: A judge in The Hague has demanded that the government provide specific requirements that whole-life prisoners should meet to be eligible for a pardon. [Liberties, 5 May 2017](#)

Portugal: The number of prisoners in Portugal's prisons rose by 18.7% between 2010 and 2016. [The Portugal News, 3 June 2017](#)

UNITED KINGDOM

England and Wales: The next government should introduce legislation to "end the shocking rise in self-harm and suicides in prisons", a cross-party group of MPs and peers has reported. [The Guardian, 2 May 2017](#)

England and Wales: Almost half of female prisoners in England and Wales have attempted suicide, figures show. [Independent, 8 May 2017](#)

England and Wales: Prisons are now the largest providers of residential care for frail and elderly men in England and Wales and are increasingly turning into hospices. [The Guardian, 20 June 2017](#)

England and Wales: The number of women in prison in England and Wales is in touching distance of 4,000 for the first time in four-and-a-half years. [Ekklesia, 20 June 2017](#)

England and Wales: The Chief Inspector of Prisons has expressed fury and disappointment after the Government's commitment to prison reform was omitted from the Queen's Speech. [Independent, 21 June 2017](#)

Scotland: Prisoners should receive the same healthcare as the wider community in Scotland within two years, a parliamentary report has said. [Evening Express, 10 May 2017](#)

Scotland: Changes are likely to be required to the prison estate to accommodate the growing number of prisoners with social care needs, a new report has suggested. [BBC News, 15 May 2017](#)

OCEANIA

Australia: The 'skyrocketing' levels of Aboriginal women behind bars is a national crisis being overlooked by all levels of Australian government, according to a new report. [Sky News, 15 May 2017](#)

Australia: The overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice system costs Australia \$7.9bn a year and those costs are projected to increase to \$19.8bn by 2040. [The Guardian, 24 May 2017](#)

Australia: The number of full-time prisoners in Australia has soared by nearly 40% over the past five years, driven by a huge increase in the number of unsentenced prisoners. [The Guardian, 8 June 2017](#)

New Zealand: Corrections has completed a programme to equip all its prisons with secure computer suites that allow prisoners access to online learning tools. Scoop.co.nz, 4 May 2017

New Zealand: The growth of the prison population is "unprecedented" and "unanticipated", according to the budget released by Finance Minister Steven Joyce. Stuff.co.nz, 25 May 2017

New Zealand: The Court of Appeal's unanimous decision that a blanket ban on prisoners' voting is inconsistent with the Bill of Rights has been met with praise. NZ City, 30 May 2017

Papua New Guinea: Seventeen prisoners have been shot dead after a mass breakout at a jail in Papua New Guinea. The Telegraph, 15 May 2017