



# INTERNATIONAL PRISON NEWS DIGEST

## 40<sup>th</sup> Edition – July - August 2017

Welcome to the 40<sup>th</sup> 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 July to 31 August 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

**Kenya:** Prisoners voted for the first time in Kenya's elections. [Capital News, 8 August 2017](#)

**Nigeria:** The Nigerian parliament has said a new bill is underway which proposes community service as an alternative to jail terms for some offences with the aim of decongesting the country's prisons. [News Ghana, 6 July 2017](#)

**South Africa:** Prisoners serving life and long term sentences at Pretoria's Kgosi Mampuru II prison rioted over their unhappiness with how issues around parole are being dealt with. [Times Live, 3 July 2017](#)

## AMERICAS

**Brazil:** Six prisoners died and eight were able to successfully escape during a prison revolt in the Jussara prison, in Goias state, according to Brazilian prison authorities. [Telesur, 27 July 2017](#)

**Canada:** Federal prison guards are failing to comply with rules around videotaping their use of force against prisoners in a majority of cases. [The Globe and Mail, 16 July 2017](#)

**Canada:** Federal prisons recorded a significant drop in the number of prisoners held in solitary confinement. [The Globe and Mail, 7 August 2017](#)

**Canada:** Five kennel-like exercise pens for prisoners in solitary confinement at a maximum-security federal prison have been dismantled. [The Globe and Mail, 14 August 2017](#)

**Guatemala:** A riot at a youth correctional facility in Guatemala City was brought under control after a pitched battle between security forces and prisoners. [News.com.au, 4 July 2017](#)

**Guatemala:** One prisoner died and five were injured in a clash involving some 50 prisoners in Guatemala's Pavon Prison. [The Sun Daily, 6 August 2017](#)

**Guyana:** A prison guard died following a riot that left Camp Street Prisons, in the heart of the capital city, destroyed. [The Daily Herald, 9 July 2017](#)

**Guyana:** Guyana is examining ways of reducing the prison population and creating alternatives to pre-trial detention. [Demerara Waves, 26 July 2017](#)

**Mexico:** Twenty-eight prisoners died after a riot in a state prison in Acapulco. [Mexico News Daily, 6 July 2017](#)

**Mexico:** A new survey reveals that 87.4 percent of prison prisoners say they've paid bribes to guards for things like food, making phone calls or getting a blanket or a mattress. [Star Tribune, 2 August 2017](#)

**Mexico:** A fight in the Mexican prison of Reynosa left at least nine prisoners dead and 11 injured. [Reuters, 11 August 2017](#)

**United States:** Prisoners with mental illnesses in federal prison spend on average more time in solitary confinement, or restrictive housing, than prisoners without documented mental illnesses. [CBS News, 12 July 2017](#)

**United States:** A new study by Washington DC-based think tank, Urban Institute reveals the average number of years prisoners spend in prison has increased by around 37%. [Telesur, 19 July 2017](#)

**United States:** The number of federal prisoners serving mandatory minimum prison sentences dropped 14 percent over the past six years. [The Hill, 25 July 2017](#)

**United States:** The Federal Bureau of Prisons has issued a memo requiring that tampons and pads be provided free of charge to women in all Federal prisons. [Refinery 29, 14 August 2017](#)

**Venezuela:** At least 37 people were killed and 14 law enforcement personnel wounded when armed prisoners resisted authorities' attempt to impose order at a prison in the southern state of Amazonas. [Latin American Herald Times, 17 August 2017](#)

## ASIA

**Cambodia:** The Justice Ministry is studying the feasibility of a pilot program that would help ease the burden on the country's overcrowded prisons by creating alternatives to jail. [Cambodia Daily, 11 August 2017](#)

**Cambodia:** A sub-decree establishing Cambodia's first juvenile prison will be issued by the start of September. [Phnom Penh Post, 18 August 2017](#)

**Hong Kong:** A little over 20 percent of the Hong Kong's prison population are women – a higher proportion than any major nation in the world. [News Deeply, 14 August 2017](#)

**India:** Amnesty International India blames governments for more than two thirds of prisoners in the country being undertrials. [The Wire, 13 July 2017](#)

**India:** The state of Telangana has announced that starting in 2018, it will rent out jail cells to prisoners of other states for Rs. 10,000 a month per prisoner. [NewsBytes, 28 July 2017](#)

**Israel:** The Israeli Public Defender's Office has noted prisoners' inadequate conditions in its annual report. [The Jerusalem Post, 9 July 2017](#)

**Myanmar:** The government has expressed alarm over the high incidence of drug abuse among prisoners in the country. [Myanmar Times, 25 July 2017](#)

**Myanmar:** Three new prisons are expected to be opened at the end of the year to help relieve overcrowding. [Myanmar Times, 22 August 2017](#)

**Singapore:** Around 800 prisoners across four prison institutions can now access a suite of mobile applications on shared tablets as part of a six-month trial by the Singapore Prison Service (SPS). [The Straits Times, 3 July 2017](#)

**Thailand:** Thailand is the first country in the world to embrace the United Nations' Nelson Mandela Rules to improve the quality of life of prisoners. [The Nation, 24 July 2017](#)

## EUROPE

**Cyprus:** Three-quarters of the prisoners in the island's only correctional facility participated in its education programme in the past year. [Cyprus Mail, 11 July 2017](#)

**Iceland:** 560 people are waiting to go to prison in Iceland after being convicted of crimes. [Ice News, 15 August 2017](#)

**Ireland:** The Office of the Prison Inspector has strongly criticised the decision to close the country's only semi-open prison and said it conflicted with stated official policy. [Irish Examiner, 28 July 2017](#)

**Ireland:** Innovative new screening programmes have uncovered high levels of hepatitis C among the prison and homeless populations. [The Irish Times, 22 August 2017](#)

**Netherlands:** An increasing number of Dutch prisons are taking part in an experiment in which certain prisoners are given more freedom of movement and responsibility. [NL Times, 12 July 2017](#)

## UNITED KINGDOM

**England and Wales:** The high court has ruled that the "prolonged solitary confinement" of a 16-year-old boy at a west London young offenders' institution was against prison rules and amounted to a breach of his human rights. [The Guardian, 4 July 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** The current state of prisons is "unacceptable", the justice secretary has said, as it emerged more than 200kg (400lb) of drugs and 13,000 mobile phones were found in jails last year. [The Guardian, 9 July 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** The number of prison deaths in England and Wales linked to new psychoactive substances (NPS) is rising exponentially with the running total having increased by 21, according to an official watchdog. [The Guardian, 11 July 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** Prison reform will not succeed unless the violence and prevalence of drugs in jail are addressed and prisoners are unlocked for more of the working day. [HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 18 July 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** The government has won its high court bid to obtain a permanent ban on industrial action by prison officers. [Independent, 19 July 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** Fire safety in prisons has been labelled "a catastrophe waiting to happen" after it was revealed every prison inspection in England and Wales in 2016 resulted in a non-compliance order. [Independent, 28 July 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** The chair of the Parole Board has expressed his frustration at the government's failure to "get a grip" on the issue of prisoners still serving indeterminate sentences under the discredited imprisonment for public protection (IPP) programme. [The Guardian, 14 August 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** Doctors working in prisons have warned that the conditions in which they operate are so unsafe that the services would be closed down had they been outside the prison. [The Guardian, 22 August 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** Prisoners are being banned from seeing their children as a punishment, leaving thousands of youngsters “traumatised” and prisoners more likely to reoffend. [Independent, 22 August 2017](#)

**England and Wales:** An unforeseen summer surge in prisoner numbers in England and Wales is adding to the pressures on a jail system that is already “woefully short of spare capacity” and subject to frequent riots. [The Guardian, 30 August 2017](#)

**Northern Ireland:** Nine in 10 young offenders released from custody in Northern Ireland reoffended, the audit office said. [Belfast Telegraph, 6 July 2017](#)

**Scotland:** The Scottish government is planning to shift funding away from prisons and into crime prevention. [BBC News, 11 July 2017](#)

**Scotland:** The number of prisoners disciplined for taking drugs in jail rose to almost 1,200 last year, according to a new report. [The Herald, 18 July 2017](#)

**Scotland:** Scotland must “urgently” address the issue of its rapidly ageing prison population and stop treating the elderly in the same way as other prisoners, the Chief Inspector of Prisons has warned. [iNews, 26 July 2017](#)

## OCEANIA

**Australia:** Almost no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners have completed year 12, a leading researcher has said, calling for an overhaul of education inside correctional facilities. [The Guardian, 6 July 2017](#)

**Australia:** Australians are spending more on prisons and police than most other developed countries in the world, a new study has found. [ABC.net.au, 8 August 2017](#)

**Australia:** Mental illness and cognitive impairment among the prison population is so high it should be “assumed as the norm” rather than the exception. [The Sydney Morning Herald, 11 August 2017](#)

**New Zealand:** Fifteen prisoners have complained of being sexually assaulted by their cellmates in the past seven years. [RNZ, 25 July 2017](#)

**New Zealand:** Nicotine patches given to prisoners to help them quit smoking have become highly-valued tradable commodities, leading to bullying. [New Zealand Herald, 2 August 2017](#)

**Samoa:** The Minister of Prison and Correction Services, Tialavea Tionisio Hunt has defended the weekend parole programme for prisoners claiming it is “common sense law.” [Samoa Observer, 14 August 2017](#)