



Democratic Republic of the Congo - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 9 December 2010

Information on Buluwo prison including: Location; Are political prisoners detained; Do any charities/NGOs supply food/provisions to prisoners; Information relating to prisoners escaping since 1 September 2010 to date; Who is the Chief Prison Officer/Warden/Governor; How long has this person held this position; Is there any record of the Chief Prison Officer/Warden/Governor abandoning his position and leaving the DRC, notably since 1 September 2010 to date; Is there any record of a new Chief Prison Officer/Warden/Governor being appointed since 1 September 2010

In November 2010 *Agence France Presse* reports:

“Thirty-three prisoners escaped at the weekend from a jail in the Democratic Republic of Congo, while four others were shot dead by warders, the prison management said Monday. The detainees broke tables in the dining hall and “used them as ladders to escape on the night of Saturday to Sunday. There were 33 who got away and four who were killed,” Ilunga Dilamuna, the director of the prison at Buluwo, told AFP” (*Agence France Presse* (29 November 2010) *33 prisoners escape in DR Congo*).

This report also notes:

“Bulowo is 120 kilometres (75 miles) northwest of Lubumbashi, the main town in the Katanga mining province. The prison in Buluwo, built in 1956 for about 100 inmates, currently holds 234 detainees” (*ibid*).

It is reported by *Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise TV* in November 2010 that:

“Katanga provincial government pledges to award a sum of 2,000 dollars anyone that will help to recover the prisoners who escaped from the highly protected prison of Buluwo, 120 km from Lubumbashi. Thirty three prisoners including gangs from Kinshasa and those sentenced to death penalty escaped from the prison recently” (*Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise TV* (30 November 2010) *Programme summary of Congolese TV news 1230 gmt 30 Nov 10*, item 11).

A news story by *Journaliste En Danger (JED)* in November 2010 states:

“JED condemns the illegal detention of Lambert Yuma and Chris Lumbu, radio producer and reporter, respectively, with the community broadcaster Radiotélévision Alfajiri in Likasi, Katanga province, southwestern DR Congo. JED affirms the innocence of the two journalists and calls on provincial authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally. Yuma and

Lumbu were arrested on 28 November at the Likasi prosecutor's office and charged with "breaching state security". According to JED sources, Yuma gave an interview to Radio France Internationale (RFI) about a prison break at the Buluwo penitentiary outside of Likasi on the night of 26 November. Lumbu filed a report on the break from outside the prison the next day, on 27 November. The report was never broadcast however, because intelligence officials got hold of the tape and erased it the same day" (*Journaliste En Danger* (29 November 2010) *Two Journalists Detained for Reporting Prison Escape*).

A report issued by the *United States Department of State* in March 2010 reviewing events of the preceding year notes that:

"No action was taken against FARDC soldiers who tortured to death two suspects at Uvira Central Prison in South Kivu in 2007 or against Mobile Intervention Group (GMI) officers for the 2007 killing of an inmate at Buluwo Prison in Katanga" (United States Department of State (11 March 2010) *2009 Human Rights Report: Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Section 1a 'Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life').

A report published in November 2007 by the *UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* states that:

"In Katanga Province, on 15 October 2007, an attempted prison escape at the high security prison in Buluwo – 110 km north of Lubumbashi – resulted in five deaths, three inmates and two policemen, and injury to eleven persons, including prisoners, FARDC soldiers and policemen. Most of the inmates at Buluwo are military prisoners and have been sentenced to death, life in prison, other long prison terms or are political detainees" (UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (28 November 2007) *MONUC Monthly Human Rights Assessment: October 2007*).

Radio Okapi in January 2007 states:

"The UN mission's human rights department visited the Buluwo penitentiary in Katanga Province last weekend, to inquire about the conditions of prisoners. On the occasion, about 15 prisoners claimed they were under illegal detention. (2 min)" (*Radio Okapi* (15 January 2007) *Programme summary of DR Congo's UN-sponsored Radio Okapi news 0700 gmt 15 Jan 07*, item 5).

In April 2006 *Raga FM* reports:

"Some prisoners at the Buluwo state penitentiary in Katanga Province on 4 created a climate of turmoil for failing to be granted an amnesty. The UN Organization Mission in the DRC and a delegation of NGOs were on a visit to the prison the same day" (*Raga FM* (6 April 2006) *Programme summary of Congolese radio station Raga FM news 1100 gmt 6 Apr 06*, item 12).

An *IRIN News* story from October 2005 states:

"Maniema Governor Kolosso Sumahili said the soldiers would be transferred to Buluwo, a prison on a small island in the southeastern province of Katanga" (*IRIN News* (25 October 2005) *DRC: Eight guardsmen sentenced to life for killing aviation official*).

No further information on these issues could be found among sources available to the RDC.

References

Agence France Presse (29 November 2010) *33 prisoners escape in DR Congo*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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BBC Monitoring

BBC News

Eldis

Electronic Immigration Network

European Country of Origin Information Network

Freedom House

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The Guardian

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Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

International Crisis Group

International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims

International Relations and Security Network

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Lexis Nexis

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Online Newspapers

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UNHCR Refworld

World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)