

PRESS RELEASE !

Abuja, Nigeria 2024.

Suleja Jail Break: Government Failure to Publish Details and Pictures of Escapee, Reveals Institutional Lapses.

... CSO Speak Out Africa Initiative (SOAI) calls for immediate release of escapee details to public and daily briefing to track progress.

The recent jailbreak at Suleja Correctional Service, which occurred in April 2024, has brought to light significant institutional lapses within Nigeria's prison system. With a current capacity of 499 inmates, exceeding its built capacity of 250, and the escape of 119 inmates during the recent incident, it is evident that urgent action is required to address these issues.

More so, the failure of the government to publish details of the escapees including their pictures following the Suleja jailbreak days after, is a concerning indication of gross institutional lapses. In light of this, we call on the appropriate authority for urgent release of the escapee details and pictures for the purpose of easy identification by the people as well as daily briefing to track progress and keep the citizens abreast.

While the cause of the recent jail break is attributed to natural engineered by heavy downpour which brought down the dilapidated perimeter fencing of the custodian center, this national casualty is preventable if we had proactively fixed our infrastructure given the humongous funds expended over the years.

In addition to addressing the immediate concerns surrounding the Suleja Prison jailbreak, Speak Out Africa Initiative recommends comprehensive prison reforms for the future. These reforms should focus on:

Infrastructure Improvement: Enhancing prison infrastructure to accommodate inmates within safe and humane conditions, in line with international standards.

Staff Training and Welfare: Providing adequate training and support for prison staff to ensure effective management and supervision of inmates.

Technological Solutions: Implementing technology-based solutions, such as CCTV surveillance and biometric identification systems, to enhance security and monitor inmate movements.

Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs: Prioritizing rehabilitation and reintegration programs to reduce recidivism rates and facilitate the successful transition of inmates back into society.

Community Engagement: Engaging communities in the reintegration process to foster acceptance and support for former inmates.

Emergency Preparedness: Developing robust emergency preparedness plans to mitigate the impact of unforeseen events, such as natural disasters.

Speak Out Africa Initiative (SOAI) demands the immediate release of escapee details to the public and calls for daily briefings to track progress in recapturing the escaped inmates. Transparency is crucial in restoring public trust and confidence in the government's ability to manage custodial centers effectively. It becomes a herculean task for citizens to be asked to identify escaped inmates when adequate 'helpful' information is not given to the same citizens – which makes it counterproductive.

Speak Out Africa Initiative urges the Federal Government of Nigeria to take immediate action to address the root causes of jailbreaks in custodial centers across the country. Failure to do so not only compromises public safety but also undermines the integrity of the criminal justice system.

About Speak Out Africa Initiative

Speak Out Africa Initiative (SOAI) is a leading civil society organization dedicated to promoting good governance, democracy, and human rights across the African continent. Through advocacy, research, and community engagement, we strive to create positive change and empower marginalized communities.
www.speakoutafricaninitiative.org // twitter: Africa_speakout

For media inquiries, please contact: info@speakoutafricaninitiative.org