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| **PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA****NATIONAL ASSEMBLY** |

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 392**

**DATE OF QUESTION: 19 MARCH 2021**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 07 APRIL 2021**

**Mr M.N Nxumalo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

(1) Whether, in light of the fact that inmates at Mangaung in Bloemfontein and Leeuwkop maximum-security prisons have called on the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services (JICS) to exercise stronger oversight over warders, who have been accused of acting with impunity in their maltreatment of prisoners, as incarcerated persons should not be completely stripped of their rights and their safety must be of paramount concern while serving their sentences, his department has been actively involved in addressing concerns of prisoners and the JICS during the pandemic; if not, why not; if so, what are the details of the steps taken by his department in this regard besides the granting of early parole for non-violent offenders as was the case late last year;

(2) Whether his department has been in communication with the Department of Health and those responsible for the vaccine roll-out regarding the vaccination of prisoners as overcrowding is the state of affairs across the Republic, which poses a serious health risk for both staff of the Correctional Services and inmates; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW398E**

**REPLY**

1. The Department is not aware of officials who have been accused of acting with impunity in their maltreatment of inmates at Mangaung as well at Leeuwkop Correctional Centres. The offenders at Mangaung have access to JICS officials or platform to raise complaints and requests, including cases of assaults by officials. Departmental officials are employed to manage compliance with the Contract between Department of Correctional Services (DCS) and G4S Company.

The allegations in respect to Leeuwkop Maximum, this may have arisen from an incident where the DCS National Task Team conducted a search operation on
01 December 2020. All complaints emanating from this search operation were handled by the Head of Centre and the Independent Correctional Centre Visitor (ICCV) in line with the Complaints and Request Procedure of the DCS. The affected offenders were referred for medical examination and the South African Police Service (SAPS) were called for those who chose to lay criminal charges. The matter was also investigated by JICS.

(2) Yes, the Department has been in communication with the Department of Health and offenders are prioritised under phase 02 as Communicated by the President.

The following are other activities regarding vaccination rollout in Correctional Facilities:

* Training of DCS nurses that commenced from the 15 - 27 Jan 2021 by the National Department of Health was conducted;
* Vaccination fridges for the storage of vaccines and carriers for vaccine from the Pharmacy to the vaccine site are in the process of being procured.
* A list of consumable items was finalised and the pharmacy is in the process of procuring items that are not in stock; and
* Emergency medical services are available for management of emergency response.

**END**