

Brazil: 111 Inmates Massacred. 12 Years Later, No One Convicted.

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Even though the infamous Carandiru prison has been partially closed for two years, the memory of the massacre of 111 inmates still continues. The killing happened 12 years ago on October 2nd, 1992, when Antonio Fleury Filho was governor of the state of São Paulo.

Ubiratan Guimarães commanded the operation which tried to put down a rebellion happening in Pavilion 9 of the overcrowded prison, which at that time was jammed with 7,000 prisoners.

According to testimonies, the police were heavily armed, and brutally killed defenseless prisoners, including some who were in no way involved in the rebellion.

Members of various human rights entities staged a protest in the center of São Paulo on the anniversary of the massacre.

They were rallying against the complete inertia of the justice system concerning the case, which has been paralyzed for years without one of the 84 police involved in the killings being convicted.

The case is now tied up in the Justice Tribunal of São Paulo awaiting a decision concerning an appeal made in 1998.

With the trial's delay, the crimes committed during the massacre begin to become void, guaranteeing impunity for the executioners of the prisoners of Carandiru.

"The crimes of bodily assault and harm are already void, and 29 police will not even be judged for crimes which usually carry 20-year prison sentences," commented human rights advocates.

The entities pointed out that the only one who has been tried up to this point, Coronel Guimaraes, continues to walk free despite a prison sentence of 632 years for 102 homicides, a sentence emitted in 2001.

After receiving the sentence, the Coronel immediately appealed the decision and asked for an annulment of the first trial.

If his request is accepted, the sentence of the popular jury will be annulled, and then he will be judged by a special organ of the Tribunal Justice by virtue of the fact that for the past two years he has held a public office, currently a congressman for the state of São Paulo.

In spite of books, films and the demolition of some of the buildings of Carandiru, brutality of the Carandiru type continue.

In 2003, there were 624 accusations of homicides committed by the police.

Between the years 1995 and 2003 São Paulo police have killed 2,810 people.

The majority of the cases have never been investigated. The only cases which are investigated are those in which human rights entities exert strong pressure.

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