

discovered it had become pathetic. Our sources said a number of spot-checks were made to test the

to steal the monies and other resources meant for refugees. Mr Filippo Grandi, the head

ascertain the actual number, a process that we understand kicked off about three days ago.

decision was taken to commence investigations into the alleged scam.

equipment and personnel but expressed commitment to better the situation.

We don't fear hanging, say death row inmates

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KAMPALA. Father Tarcisio Agostoni, a Comboni missionary, in his book titled *May the State Kill?* observes that a prisoner on death row dies many times every day.

"Things like opening a door, noise or comments from anyone are suspiciously thought of; are they entering with the announcement of execution? The results are constant stress and anxiety," says Fr Agostoni.

This is the kind of anxiety that swept through the Condemn Section of Luzira Prison a fortnight ago after President Museveni vowed to hang some death row inmates in a

bid to curb rampant killings in the country.

One of the death row inmates, who preferred anonymity for fear of being victimised, told this newspaper that at first, the President's remarks brought gloom.

"At the time of going to our respective cubicals, the President had not made his remarks of saying he was going to hang some of us. So the news came through in the morning when we were listening to the radio and also watching NBS TV. Suddenly, there was a low mood among us and some of us developed diarrhoea," the inmate said.

But the inmate said the low mood slowly faded away, arguing that many of the condemned inmates

have put their hope and trust in the Lord.

"[Mr] Museveni can kill the body but not our souls. We have always prayed to God and this has given us unshaken hope not to fear the hangman," he said.

Not eligible

Prison statistics show that there are currently 278 convicts on death row. But the death row inmate revealed that at the moment, none of them can be executed since they have not exhausted their appeal processes.

The prisons spokesperson, Mr Frank Baine, confirmed the above revelation, dispelling earlier media reports that 78 death row inmates

had completed their appeal process and were ready for hanging.

"Because of the Susan Kigula landmark judgment, all the files of the death row convicts were returned to court for mitigation process and as I speak now, none is eligible for hanging," Mr Baine said

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Core to the Kigula decision is that should a death convict spend three years without being hanged after completing the appeal process, their death sentence is automatically reduced to life.

by telephone yesterday. Following the Kigula judgment, death sentence is no longer mandatory upon conviction as judges have a discretion on whether to impose a death sentence or not.

The inmate also said Commissioner General of Prisons Johnson Byabashaija had not spoken to them following President Museveni's threat.

He said when he joined the condemned section about five years ago, there were about 500 of them but following the Kigula decision, they have reduced to 150, as the majority have had their death sentences reduced to life.

However, the inmate was worried of his colleagues, whose cases are before the Court of Appeal, saying the President's remarks in support of hanging at the annual judges' conference may influence the judges.