

QUOTE OF
THE DAY

Winnie Byanyima on r
it is supposed to be normal. W
humiliation."

EDITORIAL

Treat suspects humanely

The way suspects are handled by security personnel is appalling. It seems some security personnel think labelling someone a suspect gives them the leeway to trample on his or her rights.

Police, prisons and military personnel routinely handle suspects in a manner that violates the law.

The law stipulates that security personnel carrying out arrests must identify themselves, state the reason for arresting the suspect, and use reasonable force.

According to the law, suspects must be brought before a competent court within 48 hours of arrest.

Suspects also have the right to legal counsel, medical attention, and access to family.

Cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of suspects is also prohibited by the law.

The issue:

Human Rights

Our view:

We call upon the authorities to ensure the rights of suspects are respected.

Security personnel who violate these rights must be held individually accountable for their actions.

The current state of affairs, where errant security personnel go off scot-free or get a mere slap on their wrists must stop henceforth.

However, security personnel disregard these rules. Some do not identify themselves when carrying out arrests. Suspects are not told the reason why they are being arrested, and unreasonable force is used by security personnel while conducting arrests.

In many cases, what security forces call arrests are akin to abductions. Suspects are routinely seized with unreasonable force by security personnel who have not identified themselves, bundled into unmarked vehicles, and whisked to unknown locations, where they are held incommunicado for prolonged periods.

Many are later produced in court or released bearing signs of torture on their bodies.

Security personnel mistreat suspects with impunity, with male suspects grabbed by their trousers and their genitals squeezed. Suspects are also subjected to beatings during their arrest.

Humiliating suspects seems to be an unwritten procedure, with security personnel publicly insulting suspects, ordering them to take off their shirts and shoes, among other degrading acts.

We call upon the authorities to ensure the rights of suspects are respected. Security personnel who violate these rights must be held individually accountable for their actions.

The current state of affairs, where errant security personnel go off scot-free or get a mere slap on their wrists, must stop henceforth.

No one is above the law. Anyone who violates these rules that are essential for an orderly society must face just punishment.

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