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MDOC CONDUCTS SIXTH SHAKEDOWN THIS MONTH

JACKSON – Cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, unauthorized footwear, and a stockpile of canteen items were found when Mississippi Department of Corrections officers searched Carroll-Montgomery County Regional Correctional Facility Wednesday as part of Operation Zero Tolerance.

The Vaiden facility is the sixth to be searched since Corrections Commissioner Pelicia Hall instituted the statewide contraband crackdown earlier this month.

Hall, whom the Senate confirmed on Tuesday to head the prison system, said all facilities will be subject to an unannounced shakedown.

“I am determined to see that we eliminate as much contraband as possible for the safety of staff and inmates,” Hall said. “We recognize that inmates alone are not responsible for the illegal items, that staff, visitors, and vendors bring in contraband. During my confirmation hearing, for example, I told how one smuggled cell phone could go for \$3,000. But my administration is focused on not only pointing out our challenges but also finding ways to address them.”

K-9 units from both Central Mississippi Correctional Facility and Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman were used to secure the regional facility based in Carroll County so officers from both Institutions and Community Corrections could conduct the search.

Other contraband items at Carroll-Montgomery include cell phone accessories, scales, tattoo kits, tobacco, cigarettes and cigarette lighters, two shanks, and various nuisance contraband, such as necklaces, belts, and medication.

Prison officials suspect that inmates caught with large quantities of canteen are likely engaging in extortion. Inmates caught with contraband face disciplinary action.

Hall has extended the renewed security effort to inmates posting on Facebook and the search of visitors and vendors upon entrance to prison grounds.

The Carroll-Montgomery County facility is one of 15 regional jails in the state prison system. On today, its inmate population was 264; the maximum count is 280.

The five other shakedowns have occurred at Wilkinson County Correctional Facility, East Mississippi Correctional Facility, Marshall County Correctional Facility, Yazoo County Regional Correctional Facility, and Holmes-Humphreys County Regional Correctional Facility.

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