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MDOC continues major shakedowns in ongoing efforts to keep out contraband

JACKSON – The Mississippi Department of Corrections is continuing shakedowns in its ongoing efforts to remove contraband items for the safety of staff and individuals in the custody, care, and control of the prison system.

Since March, searches have occurred at a mixture of facilities, including a community work center, technical violation center, state-run prison, and privately operated state prison.

The list of illegal items found includes cash, assorted pills, shanks, cellphones and cellphone-related items, tobacco and tobacco-related items, marijuana, spice, crystal methamphetamine, portable radios, and assorted jewelry.

One of the shakedowns occurred at Marshall County Correctional Facility in Holly Springs on April 9. Some of the seized items are assorted pills, one pint of paint primer, one pint of paint, nine lighters, 10 bottles of tattoo ink, a tattoo gun, 17 homemade shanks, six cellphones, eight portable radios, two bags of meth, and four electronic cigarettes.

“Random large-scale shakedowns are one of the measures among our aggressive steps to limit the flow of contraband in our prison system,” Corrections Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall said. “We recognize that completely getting rid of all the contraband at any one facility is unlikely, but we are not letting up in our efforts because cellphones or shanks in the hands of incarcerated residents are a threat to public safety.”

Commissioner Hall said facilities where large amount of contraband items are found are expected to provide corrective action plans to address the issue. “We do not intend to exempt any facility nor do we plan to provide advanced notice,” she said.

Other major shakedowns occurred at the following locations:

- George County Community Work Center in Lucedale, March 15
- Delta Correctional Facility-Technical Violation Center in Leflore County, March 19
- Harrison County Community Work Center in Gulfport, March 28
- South Mississippi Correctional Institution in Greene County, April 3 (Area II) and April 17 (Area I)

