

Beat: Travel

4 killed when rival groups clash at Mexican prison

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USPA News - At least four inmates were killed on Thursday when two rival groups of inmates clashed at a prison in northern Mexico, local authorities said on Friday. Prison outbreaks and prison riots occur frequently in the country which has been engulfed by drug-related crime.

The incident happened at around 5 p.m. local time on Thursday when two rival groups clashed at the Social Rehabilitation Center (Cereso) in the municipality of Cieneguillas in Mexico's northern state of Zacatecas. It began as an argument in the main courtyard but quickly escalated into a fight. The state's Public Security Ministry initially said one inmate was killed, but authorities later raised the death toll after three more inmates died of their injuries. "The fight between inmates at Cereso in Cieneguillas is now under control," said Arturo Nahle García, the state's Attorney General. The official identified the fatalities as Dario Calderon Gonzalez, Diego Abraham Cervantes Carranza, Ricardo Gaytan Lucio and Jose Luis Mtz Pacheco. It was not immediately known what they were imprisoned for, but Nahle García said Calderon Gonzalez had been accused of "crimes against health." Prison outbreaks and prison riots occur frequently in Mexico. Last month, nearly 130 inmates were able to escape from a prison in northern Mexico, near the border with the United States, after inmates dug a 6.5 meter (21 feet) long tunnel that was constructed at the prison's carpentry workshop. The jailbreak last month, after which at least four suspects were later recaptured, was the second largest during the term of outgoing President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa. The largest outbreak occurred in December 2010 when 151 inmates escaped from a penitentiary in Laredo, Tamaulipas. In January of this year, 31 inmates were killed when two groups of inmates clashed at a penitentiary in the municipality of Altamira, which is located at the southern tip of the state of Tamaulipas and on the Gulf of Mexico. Local authorities said the inmates used self-made weapons during the deadly fight. But Thursday's fight is not the first incident at the Social Rehabilitation Center in Cieneguillas. A group of gunmen with suspected links to drug trafficking organizations raided the same facility on May 17, 2009, freeing 53 inmates who were believed to be members of the Gulf Cartel.

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