

ZEKE

SPRING 2016 VOL.2/NO.1

\$8.00

THE MAGAZINE OF GLOBAL DOCUMENTARY



FEATURED ARTICLES

LAW & ORDER

Photographs by Jan Banning

FORGOTTEN CAUCASUS

Photographs by Ara Oshagan,
Daro Sulakauri, Jan Zychlinski

CLIMATE CHANGE

Photographs by Jordi Pizarro,
Probal Rashid, Jamey Stillings

LAW & ORDER

Photographs by Jan Banning
Text by Lisa Liberty Becker

Worldwide, 144 out of every 100,000 people are in prison. In the United States, that number jumps to 698 per 100,000. Though prison populations and the conditions of those prisons vary from country to country, the world prison system has many common problems, including prisoner mistreatment, overcrowding, gangs, unsanitary conditions, sexual assault, and rampant communicable diseases. ZEKE featured photographer Jan Banning became interested in criminal justice after finishing a project on bureaucracy; the photos in his book *Bureaucrats* examine the state civil administrations in eight countries. Turning his focus to the judicial pillar of society, he decided to focus on prison systems worldwide. Banning visited prisons in Colombia, France, Uganda, and the United States, discovering visual differences in the overall affect of the prisons. The photographs on the following pages, which also appear in his recently-released book *Law & Order*, reflect the daily realities of police, criminal justice officials, the courts, guards, prisoners, and often-hidden prison conditions. Banning leaves it up to us to continue the debate on prison reform.

Jan Banning was the winner of the Social Documentary Network's 2016 Call for Entries on Visual Stories Exploring Global Themes.



France, October 2013. Central surveillance tower of the Grand Quartier of the Maison d'arrêt de Bois-d'Arcy. The prison, holding people on remand and those sentenced to a maximum of two years, was built as a panopticon in 1980 with a capacity of 500 inmates. It now houses 770 and many maisons d'arrêt suffer overcrowding.



Uganda, March 2013. Archive of the Chief Magistrate's Court at Buganda Road, Kampala: completed cases.

Photograph by Jan Banning



France, March 2012. First President of the Court of Appeal in Douai, Dominique Lottin. The painting is of Louis XV.

The United States leads the way in overall number of prisoners with a staggering 2.2 million, followed by China (1.65 million), the Russian Federation (640,000), Brazil (607,000), and India (418,000).

Researchers at the ICPR, have been collecting data on prison populations by country since 1997. The ICPR's World Prison Brief database now includes such statistics from all but three countries in the entire world (Eritrea, North Korea and Somalia).

According to ICPR Research Fellow Helen Fair, governments use the World Prison Brief to see how they compare to the rest of the world. Take, for example, Kazakhstan, which

PRISON POPULATION RATE Prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants

United States	698
Russia	445
Brazil	301
China	118
India	33

be able to see the context."

Given that the global prison population has risen by 20 percent since 2000 — more than the 18 percent increase in the world population during that same time period — it appears that the system as a whole still seeks to make people convicted of crimes pay for their offenses by locking them in prison. America's prison population rate of 698 is second only to Seychelles, which has a mere 97,000 residents. While the number of US prisoners has declined slightly since 2010, that doesn't detract from the fact that America has imprisoned nearly 2 million people per year since 2000.

"We are a very punitive system and very harsh in our judgments," says Andrew Cohen, commentary editor at The Marshall Project, a nonprofit think tank focused on the American criminal justice system. Cohen, also a legal analyst for *60 Minutes* and *CBS Radio News* and a fellow at New York's Brennan Center for Justice, has reflected on everything from prison reform in Georgia, to mass incarceration, to the heroin epidemic. "Politics also play a part," Cohen adds. "It's easier for politicians to stand up and say, 'We need harsher sentences.'

in 2013 set a goal of getting out of the top 50 in terms of highest prison population rates. "[Kazakhstan] sends us regular updates on their prison population numbers so we can update the World Prison Brief, and they have now succeeded in their goal," says Fair, who helps maintain the World Prison Brief database. The prison population numbers for Kazakhstan keep falling, and the country has gotten itself out of that top 50. "The big international organizations like Amnesty International also use it in their campaign work," Fair says. "We are supplying the factual information that allows other people to apply that and

In the current mass incarceration system, there is little evidence that incarceration actually changes behavior.

It's harder for them to say, "We need to be more lenient with our sentencing."

Baz Dreisinger visited disparate countries to tell a story of prisons in her new book *Incarceration Nations*. Dreisinger, who teaches at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York (CUNY), intersperses reflections on prison conditions in the United States with what she saw first-hand in countries such as Uganda, Singapore, and Norway. "In all countries, I found that prisons were ... echoes of the society that created them," she writes in her book. This can be seen everywhere from the stainless-steel bar-laden institutional correctional facilities in the United States to the exemplary Halden in Norway, a prison with zero bars, a rock climbing wall, and private rooms with bathrooms and flat screen televisions.

In the current mass incarceration system, there is little evidence that incarceration actually changes behavior. According to a 2014 Bureau

of Justice Statistics report, over 75 percent of prisoners released in 30 US states in 2005 were arrested for a new crime within five years. Data like this is not perfect, since it does not separate violent and nonviolent crimes, nor does it mention the number of people who were actually convicted of those crimes. However, it does get government officials and other policymakers thinking about humane treatment of prisoners and alternatives to prison. "Harsh punishments and prison terms aren't going to solve anything," says ZEKE featured photographer Jan Banning. "You are going to have a few people who are so dangerous for society that you probably have to lock them up forever. Other than that, I think we need to focus more on the correction aspect, improving the situation and living conditions in prisons."

When it comes to improving the system, organizations such as Penal Reform International and the American Coalition for Criminal Justice Reform are trying to change the tide, as are individuals. Dreisinger also created P2CP, the Prison-to-College Pipeline, which brings college courses to prisoners in New York State. "I'm very



United States, November 2012. Inmates of Rogers State Prison near Reidsville, Georgia are performing unpaid work for Georgia Correctional Industries which manufactures items such as food, garments, office furniture, road signs, etc., which are sold to government agencies. Rogers medium security facility opened in 1983 and it houses some 1,500 inmates.

interested in the value of education, and the prison system is sorely lacking in rehabilitative programs," she says. This program, now in its fifth year, also guarantees participants a spot in the CUNY system upon release. Dreisinger adds that when she was researching *Incarceration Nations*, she was

There is a financial cost to locking up a lot of people, but there's also a wider social cost, the effects on society, on families.

—Helen Fair,
Institute for Criminal Policy Research

surprised to find like minds. "There's a global coalition of people who really see that the system is broken in a number of ways."

With prison costs in the United States alone at \$80 billion per year, and overcrowding problems around the world, it is clear that the current system is not sustainable in terms of finances or ethics. "There is a financial cost to locking up a lot of people, but there's also a wider social cost, the effects on society, on families," says ICPR's Fair. "Those are the

kinds of things we will be looking at, to see where progress is made over the next five years or so. We want to see how countries will go about doing that, to see if there really is a way to make changes."

On March 30 of this year, President Obama commuted the sentences of 61 drug offenders in federal prisons, one-third of them serving life sentences. The Foreign Prison Improvement Act of 2013, which would hold governments around the world accountable for maintaining humane prison conditions, was introduced by Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy but died in Congress. Although each country has its own areas for improvement, there may be hope yet for a less punitive and more rehabilitative system overall.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Institute for Criminal Policy Research
www.icpr.org.uk

Penal Reform International
www.penalreform.org

The Marshall Project
www.themarshallproject.org

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

IS IT WORKING? A LOOK AT GLOBAL INCARCERATION

Text by Lisa Liberty
Becker

Photographs by
Jan Banning

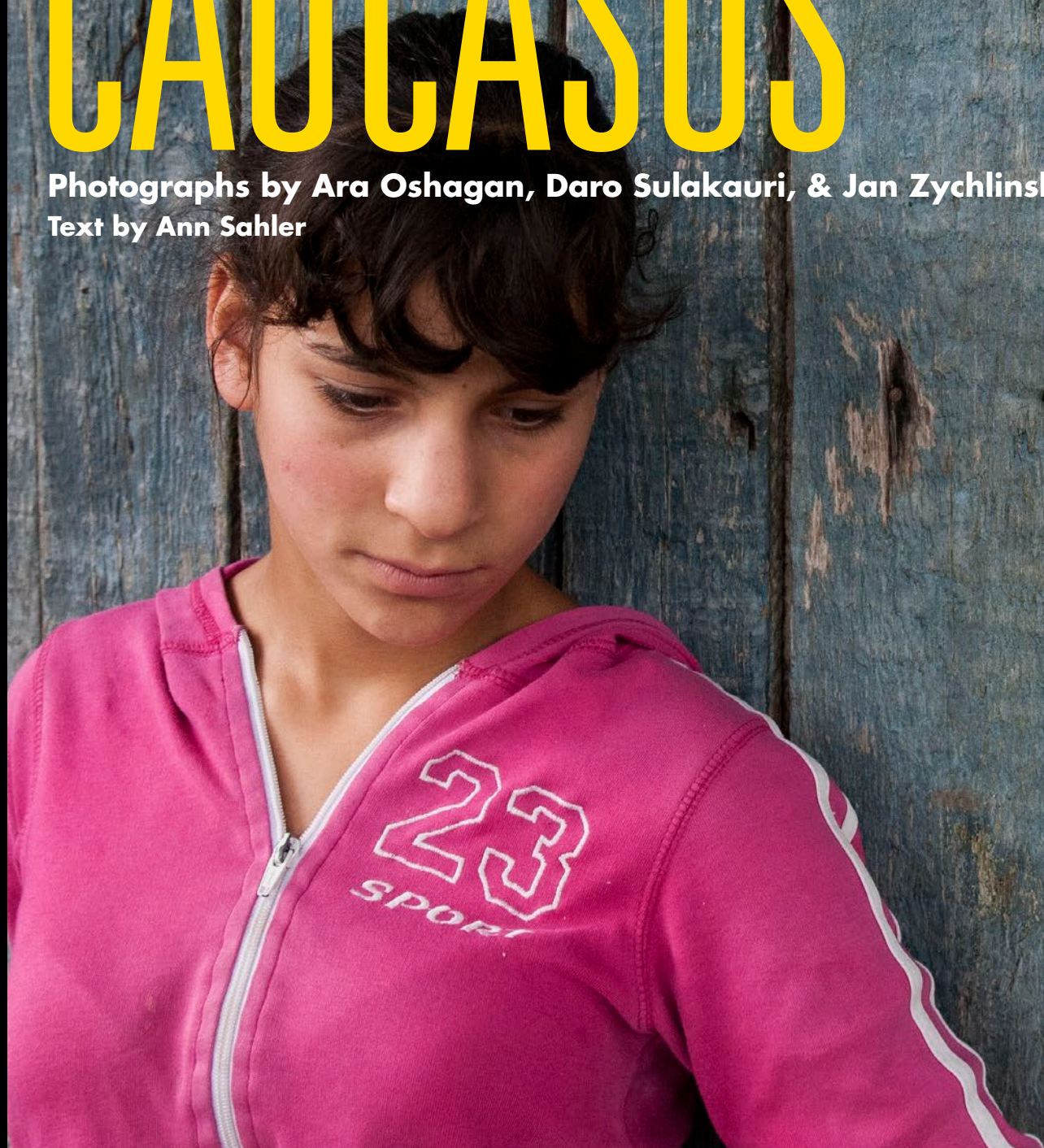
Punishment as a primary response to crime, often the only response, has created a world with over 10.35 million people in prisons.

—World Prison Population List

To be "tough on crime" is more than just an expression; the United States and other countries have enforced such policies for more than two decades. Punishment as a primary response to crime, often the *only* response, has created a world with over 10.35 million people in prisons, according to the latest World Prison Population List report, released in February by the Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck, University of London. While conditions in those prisons vary from country to country, the debate remains: what's the purpose of imprisonment — retribution or rehabilitation?

FORGOTTEN CAUCASUS

Photographs by Ara Oshagan, Daro Sulakauri, & Jan Zychlinski
Text by Ann Sahler



Ara Oshagan, an Armenian photographer born in Lebanon and now living in America, is a child of the Diaspora. He takes the viewer on a personal journey through Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian homeland in which he has never lived. His photo essay, conducted with his father, a famous Armenian writer, explores the ambiguity of belonging and not belonging, the history of Armenia and its people, and Ara's relationship to the country.

The tradition of early marriages in Georgia provides Georgian photographer Daro Sulakauri the backdrop for her powerful images. The custom is illegal, yet Georgia has one of the highest rates in Europe of marriages below the age of 18. These weddings occur predominately in the Kvemo Kartli and Ajara regions among religious and ethnic minorities. Daro's photographs generate a discussion around the issue of early marriages, providing insight to the outsider.

Jan Zychlinski, a photographer based in Switzerland, travelled from September 2014 to February 2015 around the South Caucasus to document the inhumane consequences of armed conflict after the collapse of the Soviet Union more than 20 years ago. He skillfully documents the internally displaced people who left their homes to seek shelter as refugees in camps, collective centers or newly built settlements far removed from the rest of society — many of them still living under these conditions.

Girl with her brothers. "My life is always in a transition" says the girl. After the war with Abkhazia she was left a refugee, living on the border of Georgia, near Abkhazia.

Photograph by Daro Sulakauri

I met some kids in Shushi and one of them, for no reason I could fathom, climbed up a now-defunct electric pole. He alighted at the top almost like a bird about to take flight: to find his future, full of hope. Below and behind him are the dense, time-weighted walls of the Armenian Apostolic church, encapsulating 1,700 years of tradition and faith. And in front, staring into my camera, is the witness—making sure I record this scene where the past and future, the land, sky and hope have all come together.

From *Father Land* by Ara Oshagan



AFTER RANA PLAZA

INNOVATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA PROJECT BY ISMAIL FERDOUS
DOCUMENTING THE HORRIFIC COLLAPSE OF THE RANA
PLAZA COMPLEX IN BANGLADESH AND ITS AFTERMATH

Interview with Caterina Clerici

www.afterranaplaza.com
afterranaplaza@gmail.com
@afterranaplaza
/afterranaplaza
@after_ranaplaza



Mominul Islam and his wife Sharvanu. Mominul thought his wife died in the Rana Plaza collapse, only to find out that she was in critical condition at the Dhaka Medical College hospital.

Since starting out as a photojournalist in 2011, Bangladeshi photographer Ismail Ferdous has become known for using social media to help shed light on social issues worldwide in more immediate, powerful and innovative ways. In 2015, he was named the recipient of the 2015 Getty Images Instagram Grant winner. On February 26, 2016, one of his pictures from the massive earthquake that struck Nepal in April 2015 was among the ten showed by Instagram's CEO and co-founder Kevin Systrom to Pope Francis when the two discussed the power of photography to bring people together.

A few months into documenting the legacy of the Rana Plaza collapse in Dhaka — the world's deadliest industrial accident in recent years — with his "After Rana Plaza" project (supported by the Dutch Embassy), Ismail talked to SDN. He discussed the challenges and rewards of carrying out a long-term project in different formats, and the advantages of publishing on social media versus traditional platforms, in terms of audience engagement and impact.



Mobarak Hossain worked as a volunteer for more than a month after the building collapsed to rescue victims from the rubble and provide relief.

Caterina Clerici: You've been working on your documentary project *After Rana Plaza* for eight months now (at the time of the interview, in December 2015). Tell us how the idea came about and how you got started.

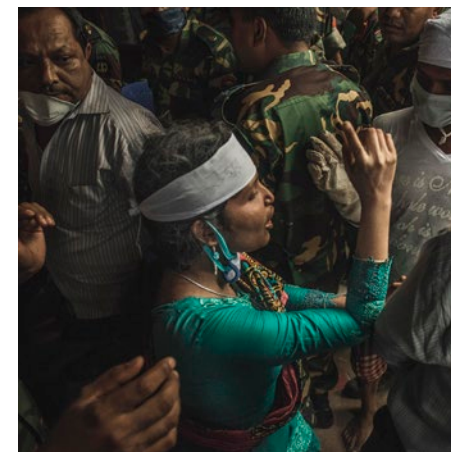
Ismail Ferdous: I started the *After Rana Plaza* project on the second anniversary of the collapse, on April 23, 2015. I had been following the story since the Rana Plaza tragedy happened and had been documenting the garment industry. I had already done some work on the topic of the cost of fashion in a video for the *New York Times*, as well as a documentary and an article for a photo activism website.

More than 2,500 workers were injured in the collapse and more than 1,100 died. I thought it would be interesting to follow-up on their stories. It's easy to forget about events like these after a while, with other news happening everywhere. But I covered the issue right after it happened, so I had a personal attachment to it. Furthermore, I see these people everyday, they are workers in the city I live in. So that's a constant reminder for me of the importance of the project, of why their stories should be told and we should still remember what the tragedy stands for.

CC: How did you choose what format to use for the project and how did you carry it out?

IF: I asked myself what could be an interesting way to tell this story and opted for social media: everyone can access it and you don't have to wait for traditional media to publish the content. Instagram was the preferred choice because it's not only a fun tool, it can also be an educational one. You're able to follow it and to hear the stories of victims directly. Then I also built a stand-alone website for readers who wanted to know more about these stories.

I decided to interview one person a day, in detail, choosing not only victims but also stakeholders in the industry, like fashion designers, producers, et cetera. My aim all along has been to act as a commentator on the issue — not judging, just letting people read and think about it. It's also meant to



Afroza Akhter Eti was rewarded for her work at Rana Plaza and was among the few women who took part in relief work despite the dangers involved.

create a platform for those who want to be involved in the industry, to let them know more about it and make more informed choices.

CC: Why did you decide to integrate video in your work and how has the use of a 'mixed format' (shooting photography and video) made your project more successful on social media?

IF: I was always very fascinated by Instagram as a platform. When they started allowing you to post 15 second videos, I thought it could be a very powerful addition to the project, as I had never seen anyone using short videos like this.

Plus, as photographers we like to say that we are giving voice to the voiceless, so I thought this would be a way to actually accomplish that: you tap on the photo and you can hear the voice of the person I interviewed that day. I didn't want to add subtitles to the videos because it would become a completely different experience, so I just chose to add a short paragraph with the subtitles instead.

CC: Did you ever feel like you were running the risk of losing focus by expanding the project on so many social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter..)?

IF: I never felt that using social media to publish, promote and distribute my project was making me lose focus. I didn't have to wait for someone (traditional media) to publish this project, which is already a good

thing. Moreover, having different platforms makes sense at this moment because you keep your options open: someone doesn't like Facebook and they go to Instagram, or your website, or Vimeo or Twitter. This way it's accessible to everyone and everyone has already seen it, although I still haven't even published it anywhere. I also want to do a book and exhibition on it, but that's still in the works.

CC: How was your work received at home and abroad?

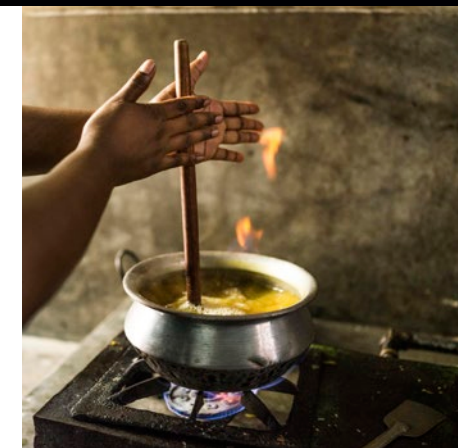
IF: Surprisingly, I had a bigger response internationally than locally — probably that's because Instagram is just not that big in Bangladesh yet and, after all, the issue of garments and fashion is global.

CC: Are there any changes happening thanks to your project? Have you been able to assess its impact?

IF: Every project, every picture has an impact — sometimes it's immediate and more visible while other times it happens more slowly or you are just creating awareness and there are no tangible effects, but I believe all projects have some sort of impact.

By doing *After Rana Plaza*, for instance, I found out that a lot of people didn't even know that the place had collapsed and found out about it through the project. Many people who are working in sustainable fashion have contacted me because they want to use the work to promote social corporate responsibility, and even the International Labour Organization reached out saying they were interested in using the work to raise awareness about the cost of fashion.

Once some guys in Bolivia saw a post on Instagram about a girl who lost her mother in the collapse and asked me how to get in touch with her directly and I redirected them to the Rana Plaza compensation fund. It's great to give people the opportunity to contribute if they feel like doing something to help out the victims and their families after they've read their stories. I really feel good when I get a response like that, on such a personal level. It makes me think that this is actually getting to people, that they're touched by these stories.



Rozina Akhter, 30, was stuck under a beam during the Rana Plaza incident. The beam fell down on her waist and she fainted. After some time, she woke up to notice she could not move. Rozina did not realize then this would be a turning point for her life, as she will have difficulties doing anything with the same ease as she once had before.

CC: What is the most memorable story you've encountered and documented, or the one that struck you the most?

IF: It's hard to say, because all of the stories are extremely touching. I remember once photographing a man who had lost one of his legs in the collapse and was wearing a prosthesis to walk. As soon as he started talking he burst into tears and it seemed like it was still a very heavy story for him. Only after a while he told me that he had lost his girlfriend in the collapse — and it was obviously harder for him to get over that than having lost his leg.

CC: How do you get people to share their stories with you? Is it getting more or less difficult now that you've kept this going for a few months, both for you and for them?

IF: To do a project like this you have to gain their trust — they have to open up — so you have to build a relationship with them. I keep in touch with many of the people I interviewed, they still call me sometimes, just to chat. Most of their stories are very sad and the whole process is very traumatizing, for them but also very draining for me too. So far though, everyone I talked to has been very welcoming to me. Society tends to forget things easily, even a catastrophe like this, so it's always good for them to see that someone else other than them hasn't forgotten.

Ismail Ferdous is a Bangladeshi photographer based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, whose work has been featured in the New York Times, New York Times Magazine, MSNBC, National Geographic, New Yorker and TIME Lightbox, among many others.