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KNR 167

AM-CUBA-EXECUTIONS

HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP SAYS FOUR WERE EXECUTED LAST YEAR IN CUBA

HAVANA, JAN 22, REUTER - A HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP CAMPAIGNING FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY SAID ON FRIDAY THAT, CONTRARY TO GOVERNMENT FIGURES, FOUR PEOPLE WERE EXECUTED IN CUBA LAST YEAR.

THE GROUP SAID THREE CONVICTED MURDERERS WERE EXECUTED IN THE COMBINADO DEL ESTE JAIL, ON THE EASTERN OUTSKIRTS OF HAVANA, AND A FOURTH DEATH SENTENCE WAS CARRIED OUT IN THE CENTRAL CITY OF CAMAGUEY ON A CONVICT JAILED FOR SABOTAGE.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE DID NOT REVEAL THE SOURCE OF ITS INFORMATION, BUT IT IDENTIFIED THOSE IT SAID WERE EXECUTED. THE COMMITTEE ALSO PROVIDED THE DATES OF THE EXECUTIONS AND SAID IT BELIEVED THEY WERE CARRIED OUT BY FIRING SQUADS.

JUSTICE MINISTER JUAN ESCALONA SAID LAST MONTH THERE HAD BEEN NO EXECUTIONS IN 1987, COMPARED WITH FOUR IN 1986.

THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE GROUP ALTHOUGH IT HAS NOW ALLOWED ITS MEMBERS TO OPERATE MORE FREELY.

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