

HOME, PROHIBITION AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT

TAMIL NADU PRISON DEPARTMENT

POLICY NOTE 2008-2009

DEMAND NO.24

I. Introduction

Prisons are one of the important agencies in the administration of criminal justice system. The twin objectives of the prison department are reformation and rehabilitation of the prisoners on their release to mainstream them with the society and control recidivism. With this in view, a number of job oriented vocational courses, yoga and meditation classes are conducted to help prisoners to cope up with individual needs, social obligations and family responsibilities, so as to enable them to lead a decent life, after their release from the prison. Under the scheme of modernization of prisons, substantial investments have been made by the Government to improve the infrastructure facilities and security requirements of the prisons and living conditions of prisoners.

II. Prisons

2. There are 134 prisons under the control of prison department of which 9 are central prisons, 3 are special prisons for women, 4 are district jails, 100 are sub jails for men and 9 are sub jails for women, 3 are special sub jails for men and 3 are special sub jails for women apart from a borstal school, an open air prison and a farm jail. The prison department is headed by a senior IPS officer in the rank of Additional Director General of Police. He is assisted by one Deputy Inspector General of Prisons at head quarters and four Deputy Inspectors General of Prisons one each at Chennai, Coimbatore, Trichy and Madurai ranges. The Superintendents of Prisons control the administration of central prisons and sub jails under their jurisdiction and the women prisons are entirely managed by the female prison staff. The cadre strength of staff of prison department is 4883. The total authorized accommodation of all prisons is 20321.

III. Probation branch

3. The probation wing of prison department consists of 96 probation officers and 12 Regional Probation Officers headed by a Chief Probation Superintendent. The probation officers make enquiries for court regarding the behaviour pattern of the offenders and their living conditions. They also supervise the offenders released on probation and attend to their rehabilitation. Their main function is to secure the first offenders on probation subject to certain conditions instead of committing them in prisons. Government have also ordered the probation officers to make visits to police lockups in order to ensure that there is no violation of human rights.

IV. Modernization of prison administration

4. A number of schemes under modernization of prison administration funded by Government of India and the State Government in the ratio of 75:25 have been implemented for improving security arrangements and infrastructure facilities in prisons. The main thrust is given to provision of modern technologies like communication equipments, closed circuit televisions with recording system, cell phone de-activators, live wire fencing, lighting arrangements, bomb detection equipments, metal detectors, night vision binoculars, watch towers, deep search metal detector, small arms stimulator etc. Modern training has been provided to prison personnel to take care of the safety and security of the prisoners and the staff. High security enclosures have been built in five central prisons at Tiruchirappalli, Salem, Coimbatore, Vellore and Puzhal.

V. Human resources development

Warders training

5. The Grade II warders are recruited by the Tamil Nadu uniformed services recruitment board and given training in drill, discipline, management and correctional methods for six months at Warders' Training Centre, Vellore. Emphasis is given on the need to be aware of the human rights of prisoners. They are also taught handling of modern weapons and also given hands on training of these weapons. Besides, periodical refresher courses are given to grade I warders and chief head warders.

6. The Warders' Training Centre at Vellore functions with a capacity to train hundred and eleven male and 25 female grade II warders. The warders are also sent to various training courses in the police commando school in Chennai for training in unarmed combat, bomb detection and disposal etc.

Regional institute of correctional administration, Vellore (RICA)

7. This institution has been imparting training to the prison officers belonging to four southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu in the field of correctional aspects and prison management, since 1979. The expenditure of this institution is equally shared by the four participating southern states.

National level training

8. Officers of prison department are also deputed for national level courses in human rights, prison management etc. which are conducted by the Bureau of Police Research and Development, New Delhi and National Human Rights Commission, New Delhi and National Institute of Forensic Science, New Delhi, National Institute of Social Defence, New Delhi and National Crime Records Bureau, New Delhi.

Other training

9. Executive staff and ministerial staff of prison department are deputed for various short-term and long term course/training, being conducted by the regional institute of correctional administration, Vellore and the Anna institute of management, Chennai which includes the computer training in various software, office administration and stress management etc.

Recruitment

10. The Tamil Nadu uniformed services recruitment board is the agency for the selection of male and female grade II warders to this department.

VI. Prison discipline

Handling of high security prisoners

11. Following a policy directive from the Government, high security blocks were constructed initially at Coimbatore, Salem and Trichy for confining hardcore prisoners. Later, to deal with the increased population of hardcore prisoners, and for the purpose of segregation and diversion, the high security block concept was enlarged to other prisons also. All fundamentalist and hardcore prisoners are confined in high security enclosures of various prisons, are internally guarded by the prison staff and externally by police. All such prisoners are subjected to proper search daily and periodically by higher authorities. They are segregated from other prisoners as per prison rules.

12. Visitors to these prisons are thoroughly searched by the police and prison authorities before and after interview. Regular anti-sabotage checks are also being carried out to prevent any escape or untoward incidents in prison. Proper lighting, installation of closed circuit television cameras, metal detector and live wire fencing over the walls are installed in all central prisons as a security measure. All prisoners are treated with proper dignity and with respect for all human rights.

VII. Prisoners' welfare

Food and clothing

13. Nutritious food prepared under hygienic conditions is supplied to the prisoners as per the scale prescribed in the Tamil Nadu Prisons Manual. Items like milk, bread, egg etc., are given as medical diet to the sick prisoners on the recommendation of the medical officer. All the non-vegetarian prisoners are supplied with chicken once in a week and vegetarian prisoners are supplied with potato curry, kesari and one banana fruit once in a week. Stainless steel plates and mugs are provided to prisoners. Stainless steel cooking vessels and trolleys are used in prisons to ensure better hygienic conditions. The diet issued to the female prisoners are the same, but the nursing women prisoners are supplied with extra milk. The children accompanying them are supplied with milk, biscuit, banana and baby food. Clothing and bedding are provided to the prisoners as per the norms laid down.

14. Terry cotton shorts, shirts and blanket of larger size are issued to the prisoners. Remand prisoners who do not have adequate clothes, are also provided with sufficient clothing. Basic amenities and sanitation are provided to ensure good living condition in the prisons.

Supply of morning tea

15. The Government have sanctioned supply of morning tea to the prisoners confined in all prisons of the State. This scheme is implemented from July 2007.

Health care

16. Prisoners are provided adequate medical facilities. Health camps are conducted regularly. Prisoners suffering from leprosy are given specialized treatment. Mentally retarded prisoners are adequately treated by admitting them in the Government Institute of Mental Health, Chennai. Smoking in prisons has been banned by the Government as a health care measure. Ambulances have been provided to all central prisons. Clinical laboratories, electro cardiogram, auto-blood analyzer and portable X-ray equipments have been provided in central prisons to carry out diagnostic tests. Tooth powder and toilet soap are also issued to the prisoners for better health care and sanitary napkins are issued to all female prisoners based on needs.

17. Ambulance vans are used to transport the prisoners of central prisons and special prisons for women for medical treatment during emergencies. With a view to attend the need during emergencies for medical treatment of female prisoners who are confined in sub jails and also for their transportation to the courts, Government have sanctioned 11 Maruthi omini vans for 9 female sub jails and 2 female special sub-jails at a total cost of Rs.23.82 lakhs and the same were purchased during the year 2007 and are now in use.

18. Government have sanctioned 6307 fans for the use of prisoners in all prisons except Puzhal prison complex at a total cost of Rs.126.14 lakhs. They are expected to be installed shortly.

Interview and recreation

19. Facilities are provided to the prisoners to interview relatives and friends. The interview application is supplied free of cost and it can be down loaded from the prison website. Newspapers and periodicals are also supplied at Government cost. Books of educative and literary value are kept in prison libraries. Books are also borrowed from the district libraries for the use of the prisoners. Facilities are provided to the prisoners to play indoor and out door games.

Education

20. Distance educational facilities are given to the prisoners at Government cost. Elementary schools are functioning with qualified teachers for adult education. The Indira Gandhi National Open University is conducting the following courses:

1. Certificate course in food and nutrition
2. Bachelor's preparatory programme
3. Certificate course in computers
4. Master of Business Administration
5. Master of Computer Application

21. The Manonmaniam Sundaranar University is offering undergraduate and post graduate courses exclusively for the prisoners in the central prison itself. Under this programme which is the

first of its kind in the country, the courses will adopt the syllabus prescribed under the Open University system. In all, 1230 Convict Prisoners pursued various studies during the year 2007-2008 as detailed below:-

Foundation course	:	1086
Master of Business Administration	:	2
Master of Philosophy	:	1
Master of Law	:	1
Master of Arts	:	6
Bachelor of General Law	:	3
Bachelor of Arts	:	81
Bachelor of Commerce	:	3
Bachelor of Science	:	2
Master of Science	:	1
Bachelor of Business Administration	:	15
Bachelor of Computer Application	:	9
Bachelor of Literature	:	2
Certificate course in food and nutrition	:	18

Apart from the above courses, 225 prisoners are permitted to study some special diploma courses as detailed below:

Diploma in Siddhantha	:	1
Diploma in four wheeler mechanism	:	83
Diploma in fashion design and garment making	:	62
Diploma in plumbing technician	:	3
Diploma in refrigerator and air conditioning technician	:	76

A sum of Rs. 1.83 lakhs was incurred for this purpose during the year 2007-2008.

Free legal aid

22. Free legal aid facilities are available to the prisoners. Legal aid cell has been established in all central prisons and special prisons for women by the Tamil Nadu State Legal Services Authority, Chennai.

Grievance redressal

23. Sealed complaint boxes have been installed in prisons to enable the prisoners to ventilate their grievances. The District and Session Judge opens the complaint boxes on the first working day of every month and sends the complaints to the appropriate authorities for action. Session Judges and Chief Judicial Magistrates also make surprise visits to prisons and check food and other facilities to prisoners and enquire into their grievances once a month. During the annual inspection of the Additional Director General of Prisons and range Deputy Inspectors General of Prisons, each and every prisoner is enquired about his grievances and action is taken to redress them if they are genuine.

Official and non-official visitors

24. Official visitors make periodical visits to the prisons to ensure better administration and treatment of the prisoners. The members of Human Rights Commission, Hon'ble judges and other dignitaries also make visits to the prisons to ensure the provision of basic requirements and proper treatment of prisoners.

25. Members of public, who are interested in the welfare of prisoners and have a good background of social work are appointed as non-official visitors by the head of the department. They are allowed to meet the prisoners. They also visit all premises of the prison to satisfy themselves that there is prompt implementation of rules and regulations. The term of the non-official visitors is three years.

Human rights

26. Basic amenities and requirements are provided in all prisons to ensure better living conditions of prisoners. Prison officials are sensitized adequately to be receptive to the basic requirements and genuine grievances of the prisoners.

27. Members of national and State Human Rights Commissions and Hon'ble judges visit the prisons in Tamil Nadu and have commended the administration of jails. At present, 4 district Jails at Pudukkottai, Srivaikundam, Nagercoil and Dindigul are functioning. The construction work in two district jails at Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram is nearing completion. These district jails would ease the pressure on central prisons. Provision of more facilities at district level would also help to avoid unnecessary transit of prisoners.

VIII. Rehabilitation of prisoners

Participation of non Governmental organisations

28. Yoga and meditation classes are organized to improve the physical and mental health of prisoners. Government have permitted voluntary organizations and individuals to conduct yoga and meditation, counselling, lectures on ethics, free medical treatment camps, vocational training etc in prisons.

Prison industries and vocational trades

29. To inculcate work habit to prisoners various trades and industries have been introduced in prisons. Training is imparted in simple trades like brick making, plumbing, sign board writing, electrical wiring, weaving, book binding, tailoring, tags making, wax, shoes, phenyl, tapes, soaps, cumbly, flat file making etc., to enable them to take up self employment after their release. On completion of the training, certificates are issued by the state council for vocational education and training.

30. Prison department has been declared as "Service Department". The prison department manufactures and supplies articles to various Government departments free of cost. The average production of the prison industrial units for the last 4 years works out to about Rs.4 crores per annum.

31. Wage earning schemes for prisoners is in force in all central prisons, borstal school and special prisons for women in this state. They are paid wages at the rate of Rs.60/- for skilled work, Rs.50/- for semi skilled work and Rs.45/- for unskilled work per day. Out of this wages 50% is recovered for upkeep maintenance and 20% for victim compensation fund and the remaining 30% of wages is paid to the prisoners concerned.

IX. Staff welfare

Medals

32. Government have instituted the following medals to be awarded to the prison officers for their brave and commendable performance in the discharge of their duties

(i) Chief Minister's Medal

a) Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Prison Service Medal for Gallantry

It carries an allowance of Rs.100/- per month.

b) Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Prison Service Medal for Outstanding Devotion to Duty

It carries one time lump sum amount as follows:

- Rs. 5000/- - Jailor to Superintendent of Prisons
- Rs.3000/- - Assistant Jailor and Deputy Jailor
- Rs.2000/- - Warders up to Chief Head Warder

c) Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Prison Service Medal for Good Service

It is awarded to Grade I and Grade II Warders only.

It carries an allowance as follows:

- Rs.50/- per month for Grade I Warders
- Rs.40/- per month for Grade II Warders

(ii) President's Correctional Service Medal

a) Gallantry Medal

It carries an allowance of Rs.60/- per month.

b) Meritorious Service Medal

Medal only.

c) Distinguished Service Medal

Medal only.

Ex-gratia payment

33. Ex-gratia payment is given to prison personnel or their family members under specified circumstances. The legal heirs of the deceased prison personnel, who die in heroic action are paid the last pay drawn by the deceased person as family pension till his / her normal date of retirement. After that, the eligible family pension is paid.

Grievance redressal

34. Senior officers of the prison department are conducting grievance day meetings as follows:-

1. The Additional Director General of Prisons : Once in a quarter
2. The Range Deputy Inspector General of Prisons : Once in a month
3. The Superintendent of Prisons : Once in a week.

Grievances are heard and disposal given at the earliest.

Extra time remuneration

35. The prison warders staff are paid extra time remuneration at the rate of Rs.150/-per day if they work on the day of their weekly off.

Feeding charges

36. Government have sanctioned the payment of feeding charges to the executive staff employed in security duties in central prisons during emergencies and on the occasions of mass arrest of prisoners, at the rate of Rs.35/- for grade II warders, Rs.40/- for grade I warders and chief head warders and Rs.50/- for others upto deputy jailor in mofussil areas and at Rs.80/- for all in Chennai city.

Night meal allowance

37. The night duty warders working in central prisons and borstal school are provided with the night meals and morning tea. These facilities were not available to the night duty warders working in district jails, special sub jails, sub jails and open air prisons. To eliminate the discrimination among night duty warders in central prisons and night duty warders of district jails, special sub jails, sub jails and open air prisons, Government have sanctioned night meal allowance at the rate of Rs.12/- per day for the night duty warders of all these jails in the state with a total financial implication of Rs.23.30 lakhs per annum. This order is implemented with effect from 1.6.2007. Orders have also been issued enhancing the rate of issue of night meal and morning tea allowance from Rs.9.10 to Rs.12.00 per person per day to the warder staff on night duty in all central prisons, borstal school, Pudukkottai, special prison for women at Vellore, Trichy and Puzhal.

Uniform stitching charges

38. The warders are paid a sum of Rs.200/- per year towards stitching charges for two sets of uniforms.

Washing allowance

39. Grade I and grade II warders working in central prisons, borstal school are sanctioned washing allowance of Rs.100/- per month as sanctioned to the sub jail warders. This order is implemented with effect from 1.6.2007.

X. Video Conferencing System in Prison and Court Complexes

40. As a pioneering measure, Video Conferencing System has been implemented connecting prisons and court complexes. With this system, the remand of prisoners can be extended without their physical production before courts. This has not only prevented untoward incidents, but also reduced the expenditure on police escorts and vehicles by approximately Rs.10 crores per annum. So far 3,17,354 prisoners have been produced before courts through Video Conferencing System for extension of remand period.

41. The existing video conferencing system covers 17 locations spread over all Central Prisons and Special Prisons for Women and 64 Court complexes covering 276 courts. It has been proposed to extend this scheme to 14 prisons (including District Prisons) and 72 courts at a cost of Rs. 894 lakhs. The Government of India has been addressed to provide necessary financial assistance under the scheme of Modernization of prison administration towards implementation of this scheme.

XI. New initiatives

Information technology

42. All the central prisons have been provided with computers. A software "Prisoners Information System", first of its kind in the country, has been developed with the help of National Informatics Centre (NIC). The National Informatics Centre is also developing software, for computerization of prison records. A computer centre has been started in each central prison and special prison for women to provide computer training to the prisoners. The computers available in prisons are provided with broad-band facilities.

43. With a view to have transparency in administration and to enable the public to know the activities of the prison department, a website designed and hosted by National Informatics Centre was launched by the prison department. The following are the website addresses:

www.tn.nic.in/prisons
www.tn.gov.in/prisons

Right to information act

44. Public Information Officers and Assistant Public Information Officers have been appointed in this department. The public sought information in 49 cases in 2007 and they were promptly replied. Information manual have been prepared for the use of the general public in respect of this department and it has been hosted in the website <http://www.tn.gov.in/rti>.

Intelligence-cum-vigilance wing

45. An intelligence-cum-vigilance wing consisting of one inspector, two sub inspectors of police, one head constable and one grade II police constable is functioning in the prison department at the head quarters on regular basis.

46. Further, in order to meet out the day to day crisis and to keep a close watch over the activities of the prisoners and prison staff and convey the emergent and important information to the head of the department in time, the intelligence-cum-vigilance wing has been strengthened with one deputy superintendent of police at head quarters for overall supervision and an intelligence wing consisting of a sub inspector of police, a head constable and a police constable has been formed in each of the 9 central prisons.

Perspective plan

47. With a view to maintain prisons with certain minimum standards, Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi have formulated a Perspective Plan on Prison Reforms and Annual Action Plan. Under this plan, they have tentatively allocated a sum of Rs.95.34 crores (which includes 25 % state contribution) for the five year period 2002-2007 for the implementation of schemes on the following four components:-

- a) Construction of new jails
- b] Repairs and renovation to existing prison buildings
- c] Sanitation and water supply
- d] Living accommodation of prison staff.

48. Under this plan, 2 sub jails at Nagercoil and Dindigul have been converted as district jails and 5 more sub jails at Athur, Gopichetipalayam, Nagappatinam, Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram are being converted as district jails. Two prisons for women are under construction at Trichy and Cuddalore. The objective of the perspective plan is to reduce congestion in the prisons by expanding and improving the facilities in the prisons and enhance facilities such as water supply, sanitation and accommodation for staff. All the works sanctioned for the years 2002-2003 and 2003 to 2004 have been completed. The works sanctioned for the years 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 are under various stages of implementation. The scheme has been extended for a further period of two years to complete the work.

XII. Part II schemes

49. Fifteen new schemes to the tune of Rs.91.95 lakhs have been approved under Part II Schemes for the year 2008-2009 including the following important schemes.

SI No.	Description of the scheme	Total cost (Rupees in Lakhs)
1.	Provision of 6 numbers of personal computers, 3 numbers of multifunction device printer, accessories, peripherals to computer, furniture, consumables like floppies, CDs, stationery etc to office of the Deputy Inspector General of Prisons, Coimbatore, Trichy and Madurai Ranges.	3.72
2.	Provision of 2 numbers of 5 KVA UPS to the office of the Additional Director General of Prisons, Chennai.	3.00
3.	Provision of 9 numbers of new EPBAX telephone board with all other related accessories and peripherals to central prisons Vellore, Cuddalore, Trichy, Madurai, Salem and Coimbatore, special prison for women at Vellore and Trichy, district jail Pudukkottai at the	13.50

	rate of Rs.1.50 lakhs per prison.	
4.	Replacement of the existing Tempo Trax vehicle with a new Jeep to central prison, Madurai	5.00
5.	Replacement of the existing ambulance with a new Ambulance to central prison, Madurai	6.80
6.	Provision of 2 numbers of jeeps to district jail Nagercoil and Dindigul.	9.48
7.	Provision of an ambulance to special sub jail, Nanguneri, Poonamallee and Trichy.	14.22
8.	Providing computer training to staff of the prison department.	16.36
9.	Provision of two numbers of staff cars to Superintendent special prison for women, Vellore and Trichy.	9.16
10.	Replacement of the old and worn out staff car to Superintendent, central prison, Vellore	4.00

XIII. Enactment of a comprehensive legislation

50. The prisons and prisoners are governed by the provisions of Prisons Act 1894, Prisoners Act 1900 and Transfer of Prisoners Act 1950. They are all central legislations. The Government is considering a new comprehensive legislation covering all aspects of Prison administration and treatment of prisoners.

XIV. Conclusion

51. The administration of prisons have been accorded utmost priority by the Government and concerted efforts have been taken by the Government to improve the welfare of prisoners, staff, infrastructural facilities, safety and security of prisons, health care and observance of human rights . The requirements of prisoners are looked into at all times. The recommendations of various committees on prison reforms have been implemented. The concept of district jail is being implemented for the first time in this State. Nine sub jails and three special sub jails have been created exclusively for women prisoners. This is a pioneering effort in the country. The department is taking all possible steps to ensure that prisons in Tamil Nadu become correctional institutions in letter and spirit with proper enforcement of human rights of the prisoners.

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