

# **HOME DEPARTMENT**

## **TAMIL NADU PRISON DEPARTMENT**

### **DEMAND NO. 24**

### **PRISONS**

### **(POLICY NOTE 2006-2007)**

## **I. Introduction**

Prisons are an integral and important part of the criminal justice system in the State. In accordance with progressive and reformatory penal policies, the primary function of Prison Department is not only to confine prisoners, but also to reform, rehabilitate and reintegrate them with the society after their release and control recidivism. With this in view, a number of job oriented vocational courses, yoga and meditation classes are conducted to help prisoners cope with individual needs, social obligations, and family responsibilities so as to facilitate a decent life for them 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, security requirements, and living conditions of prisoners.

## **II. The Hierarchy of the Department**

### **1. Institutions**

The Institutions under the control of the Prison Department are 8 Central Prisons, 2 Special Prisons for Women, 103 Men and 10 Women Sub Jails, 4 Special Sub Jails for men and 3 Special Sub Jails for Women, one Open Air Prison, one Farm Jail, and one Borstal School. In total, there are 133 prisons. The 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 Prison (Headquarters) at headquarters and four Deputy Inspectors General of Prisons, one each for Chennai, Coimbatore, Trichy and Madurai Ranges. The Superintendents of Prisons control the administration of Central Prisons and Sub Jails under their jurisdiction. The cadre strength of Prison Department is 4,861. The total authorized accommodation of all Prisons is 18,152.

### **2. Women Prisons**

There are 2 Special Prisons for Women, one at Trichy and another at Vellore, 10 Sub Jails, and 3 Special Sub Jails meant for confining women prisoners, which are entirely managed by the female prison staff.

### **3. Open Air Prison**

An Open Air Prison with a capacity to accommodate 100 prisoners is functioning at Singanallur, Coimbatore District. Training is imparted to prisoners in modern methods of agriculture in this Open Air Prison. One Farm Jail with a capacity of 10 prisoners is functioning at Salem.

#### **4. Borstal School, Pudukkottai**

Adolescent prisoners in the age group of 16-21 years are kept in this school. They are given Borstal treatment with emphasis on education and vocational training, which would be helpful to them after their release.

#### **5. Probation Branch**

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 supervise and monitor the offenders released on probation and assist them in their rehabilitation. They are actively involved in releasing 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.

### **III. Modernization of Prison Administration**

A number of schemes under Modernization of Prison Administration funded by the Government of India and contribution from State Government have been implemented for improving prison facilities and security. The main thrust is given on provision of modern technology like communication equipment, closed circuit televisions with recording system, cell phone de-activators, live wire fencing, lighting arrangements, bomb detection equipments, modern weapons, metal detectors, night vision binoculars, watch towers, deep search metal detector, small arms stimulator, etc. Modern training has been provided to prison personnel to enhance the safety and security of the prisons and staff. High Security enclosures have been built in three Central Prisons at Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Coimbatore and extended to Central Prison, Vellore.

### **IV. Human Resources Development**

#### **1. Warders' Training**

The Grade II Warders recruited by the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board are given training in drill, discipline, management and correctional methods for six months at Warders' Training Centre, Vellore. Emphasis is given on human rights of prisoners. They are also taught the handling of modern weapons and also hands on training on these weapons. Besides, periodical refresher courses are given to Grade I Warders and Chief Head Warders.

The Warders' Training Centre at Vellore functions with a capacity to train 111 male Grade II Warders and 25 female Grade II Warders. Besides these regular training centres, temporary warders training centres are also functioning at central prisons at Trichy and Coimbatore. The warders are also sent to various training courses in the Police Commando School in Chennai in unarmed combat, bomb detection and disposal etc.

#### **2. Regional Institute of Correctional Administration, Vellore (RICA)**

This Institution has been imparting training to the prison officers of 4 Southern States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, & 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.

### **3. National Level Training**

Officers 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, National Human Rights Commission, New Delhi, National Institute of Forensic Science, New Delhi, and National Institute of Social Defence, New Delhi.

### **4. Recruitment**

Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board is the agency for the selection of male Grade II Warders and female Grade II Warders. The Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board furnished the approved list of 530 male Grade II Warders and 113 candidates from the waiting list. After Police verification, medical examination, etc., 418 of them were appointed in the Prison Department during June 2006 and their training commenced on 14.6.2006. They will complete that training on 13.12.2006.

## **V. Prison Discipline**

### **Handling of High Security Prisoners**

Following a policy directive from the Government, high security blocks were constructed at Coimbatore, Salem, and Trichy for confining hardcore prisoners. Later, to deal with increased numbers of hardcore prisoners, and for the purpose of segregation and diversion, the High Security block concept was extended to other prisons also. All fundamentalist and hardcore prisoners are now confined in high security enclosures of various prisons and are internally guarded by the prison staff and externally by the 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.

Visitors to these prisons are thoroughly searched by the Police and Prison authorities before and after interviews. Regular anti-sabotage checks are also being carried out to prevent any escape or untoward incidents in the prisons. Proper lighting, installation of closed circuit television cameras, metal detectors, and livewire fencing over the walls are installed in all Central Prisons as a security measure. All prisoners are treated with proper human dignity with respect for all human rights.

## **VI. Prisoners' Welfare**

### **1. Food and clothing**

Nutritious food prepared under hygienic conditions is supplied to the prisoners as per the scale prescribed in chapter XXII of Tamil Nadu Prisons Manual Volume II. Items like milk, bread, egg etc., are given to the prisoners as medical diet to the sick prisoners on the recommendation of the concerned Medical Officer. Stainless steel plates and mugs are provided to prisoners besides using stainless steel cooking vessels and trolleys in prisons to ensure better health and hygienic conditions. Clothing and bedding are provided to prisoners as per the norms laid down.

Terry cotton shorts, shirts and blanket of larger size are issued to prisoners. Remand prisoners who do not have adequate clothes are also provided with sufficient clothing, free of cost.

## **2. Health care**

Prisoners are provided adequate medical facilities. Health camps are also conducted regularly. Prisoners suffering from leprosy are given specialised treatment. Mentally retarded prisoners are also adequately treated by admitting them in the Government Mental Health Institute, 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.

## **3. Interview and Recreation**

Interview facilities are provided to prisoners to meet relatives and friends. The interview application is supplied free of cost and it can be downloaded from the Prison website. Newspapers and periodicals are also supplied at Government cost. Books of educative and literary value are kept in Prison libraries and books are also borrowed from District libraries for the use of prisoners. Facilities are provided to prisoners to play indoor & outdoor games.

## **4. Education**

Distance educational facilities are available to 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

The Manonmaniam Sundaranar University is offering undergraduate and post graduate courses exclusively for prisoners in the Central Prisons. 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.

## **5. Prisoners' Adalat & Legal Aid**

In order to expedite the disposal of petty cases, Prisoners' Adalats have been established in all Central Prisons and in the Special Prisons for Women. The Magistrates are attending Prisoners' Adalat on turn basis and disposing off cases of Prisoners who plead guilty.

Free Legal Aid facilities are also available to prisoners. Legal Aid Cell has been established in all Central Prisons and Special Prison for Women by the Tamil Nadu State Legal Services Authority, Chennai.

## **6. Grievance redressal**

Sealed complaint boxes have been installed in prisons to enable prisoners to ventilate their grievances. District and Sessions Judge opens the boxes on the first working day of every month and send the complaints to the appropriate authorities for action. Sessions Judges and Chief Judicial Magistrates also make surprise visits to

prisons, check food and facilities to prisoners, and enquire into their grievances once a month.

### **7. Official and Non-official visitors**

Official visitors make periodical visits to prisons to ensure proper administration and treatment of prisoners. The members of Human Rights Commission, Hon'ble Judges and other dignitaries also make visits to prisons to inspect the facilities and treatment of prisoners.

Members of Public who are interested in prison reform and have good background of social work are appointed as non-official visitors by the Additional Director General of Prisons. They are allowed to meet prisoners. They also visit all premises of prisons. The term of non-official visitors is three years.

### **8. Human Rights**

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 basic requirements and genuine grievances of Prisoners.

Members of National and State Human Rights Commissions and Hon'ble Judges have also visited prisons in Tamil Nadu and have commended the administration of Jails. The National Human Rights Commission has often expressed its concern in regard to general overcrowding in prisons. As a remedial measure, the Government considered and approved the creation of District Jails at District Headquarters and the construction of 3 District Jails at Srivaikundam, Nagercoil and Dindigul. The construction of these three District Jails has been completed and they will be commissioned shortly. The two District Jails at Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram have been taken up for construction and the work is in progress. Apart from this, Government have declared Sub Jail, Nanguneri as a Special Sub Jail. Structural modifications have been carried out at a cost of Rs.15 lakhs to accommodate more prisoners and to enable the Sub-Jail to function as a Special Sub Jail.

## **VII. Rehabilitation of Prisoners**

### **1. Participation of Non Governmental Organisation**

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, counseling, lectures on ethics, free medical treatment camps, vocational training, etc., in Prisons.

### **2. Prison Industries & Vocational trades**

To inculcate healthy work habits among prisoners, various training modules in 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 self employment after their release. On completion of the training, certificates are issued by the State Council for Vocational Education and Training.

Prison Department has been declared as a "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.

Wage earning scheme for prisoners is in force in all Central Prisons, Borstal School and Special Prisons for Women in this state. They are paid wages, after all deductions, at the rate of Rs.18/-for skilled work, Rs.15 for semi skilled work and Rs.13.50/- for unskilled work per day.

## **VIII. Staff Welfare**

### **1. Medals**

Government have instituted the following medals to be awarded to the Prison officers for commendable performance.

#### **(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 only for Grade I and Grade II Warders. 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.

### **2. Ex-gratia payment**

Ex-gratia payment is given to prison personnel or their family under specified circumstances. The legal heirs of 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.

### **3. Grievance Day**

Senior officers of the Prisons 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.

### **4. Extra time Remuneration**

The Prison staff are paid extra time remuneration at the rate of Rs.100/-per day.

### **5. Feeding Charges and Night Meals**

Government have sanctioned the payment of feeding charges to the executive staff employed in security duties in Central Prison during emergencies and during 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, Rs.50/- for others up to Deputy Jailor in mofussil areas and Rs.80/- for all in Chennai City. Apart from this, the warders who are on night duty in Central Prisons are provided night meals and morning tea.

### **6. Uniform Stitching charges**

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

### **7. Promotional opportunities**

In order to give promotional opportunities to Grade II warders, 300 Grade II warders will be upgraded as Grade I warders during the year 2006-2007.

## **IX. Introduction of Tele Justice Using Video Conferencing System in Prison and Court Complexes**

As a pioneering measure, Video Conferencing System was implemented at a cost of Rs.861.20 lakhs connecting Prisons and Court complexes. With this system, the remand of prisoners can be extended without their physical production before courts. This

will not only prevent escape of prisoners and other untoward incidents during the transit of prisoners to courts, but will also reduce the expenditure on Police escort and vehicles by approximately Rs.10 crores per annum. As on date, 1,71,853 prisoners have been produced before courts through Video Conferencing System for extension of remand period.

## **X. New Initiatives**

### **1. Information Technology**

All the Central Prisons have been provided with computers. A software, "Prisoners Information System", which is the 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 computerisation of prison records. A computer centre has been started in each Central Prison and Special Prison for Women to provide computer training to prisoners.

With a view to have transparency in administration and to enable the public to know the activities of this 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](http://www.tn.nic.in/prisons)

[www.tn.gov.in/prisons](http://www.tn.gov.in/prisons)

### **2. Right to Information Act**

Information Officers and Assistant Information Officers have been appointed in the department. The Public can seek information which is useful for them from these Information Officers. Preparation of information manual for the use of the general public is also under examination of the Government.

### **3. Intelligence-cum-Vigilance Wing**

An Intelligence–cum–Vigilance wing consisting of one Inspector, 2 Sub Inspectors of Police, one Head Constable, and one Grade II Police Constable is also functioning in this Department to gather intelligence relevant to the Department and the Government.

### **4. Perspective plan**

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.

In the perspective plan for the new jails, 10 Sub Jails are proposed to be upgraded as District Jails and one Special Prison for Women is to be constructed at 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. Government in G.O.Ms.No. 622, Home, Dated: 18.05.2004 and G.O.Ms.No. 914, Home, dated 28.06.2004 have accorded necessary administrative and financial sanction to the tune of Rs.1907 lakhs for the implementation of various works. The Government in G.O.Ms No.511, Home (Prison-IV) Department, dated 21.6.2005 have sanctioned a sum of Rs.994 lakhs for implementation of schemes under Modernization of Prison Administration for the year 2004-2005. The works are nearing completion

The Government in G.O.Ms.No.184, Home Department, dated 8.3.2006 have sanctioned a sum of Rs.1823.10 lakhs for implementation of the schemes under Modernization of Prison Administration for the year 2005-2006. The works have been entrusted to the Tamil Nadu Police Housing corporation Ltd Chennai. The works are under various stages of execution. The works proposed to be taken up for the year 2006-07 are as follows:

Name of Scheme Component	Cost (Rs. in lakhs)
1. Repairs and Renovation to Prison Building	263.24
2. Living accommodation to Prison Staff	1551.00
3. Sanitation and Water Supply	92.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>1906.30</b>

### 5. Puzhal Prison Complex

Keeping in view the severe overcrowding in Central Prison, Chennai and the need for increasing capacity the Government decided to construct a new prison complex at Puzhal near Chennai to house 1250 remand prisoners, 1250 convict prisoners, and 500 women prisoners in a sprawling area of 211.92 acres in a pollution free and healthy environment. The prisoners convicted in Chennai, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur Districts will be lodged in Puzhal Prison. Government in G.O.Ms.No.957, Home, dated: 27.09.2003 have issued orders according financial sanction for a sum of Rs. 77.09 crores for the construction of the new prison complex at Puzhal and works were entrusted to Tamil Nadu Police Housing Corporation Ltd. The construction work is over and the prison complex will become functional shortly.

## XI. Conclusion

The administration of Prisons has been accorded due priority by the Government and concerted efforts have been taken by the Government to improve welfare of prisoners, staff, infrastructural facilities, safety and security of prisons, health care, and observance of human rights . This is being undertaken by careful planning and systematic implementation. The Department is taking all possible steps to ensure that prisons in Tamil Nadu become exemplary correctional institutions in letter and spirit and the prison administration will continue to receive strong and consistent support from the Government to achieve this objective.

**I.PERIASAMY,  
MINISTER FOR REVENUE AND LAW**