

Report in connection with visit of West Bengal Human Rights Commission to Pavlov Hospital and Center of Excellence of mental health, CNMCH, Kolkata on January 20, 2023.

1. On January 20, 2023 Justice Shri Jyotirmay Bhattacharjee, Chairperson, Justice Smt. Madhumati Mitra, Member and Shri Naporajit Mukherjee, IPS (Retd.), Member of W.B.H.R.C. visited Pavlov Hospital, Kolkata. During the visit the Superintendent and Dy. Superintendent along with Medical Officers of the hospital were present. Apart from, Pavlov Hospital staff, Superintendent of CNMCH (since Pavlov Hospital is functioning under over all control of CNMCH), Director, Medical Education, Health and Family Welfare Department, Govt. of West Bengal and host of other senior officials of Health Department were present. The Superintendent gave an over view of the functioning of the hospital. This hospital has 250 sanctioned beds but is overcrowded as the total admitted patients were 641 (male 278 and female 363). Apart from, the indoor patients, hospital runs an OPD in which during 2020 – 21, 83,160 patients and in 2022-23 upto December, 2020 – 22 81,838 patients were treated. The human resources available are as follows :-

Additional Superintendent	01
Faculty	09
MO Psychiatry	08
PGT Student	05
Clinical Psychologist	05
Nursing Personnel	87
Hospital Assistant	04
Office Staff	05
MT (Lab)	01
Pharmacist	05

It was pointed out that the staff of the hospital was inadequate for treating the large number of patients, both outdoor and indoor and needs to be enhanced immediately. Patients were admitted by two modes (a) Court orders under Mental Health Act and (b) by examination of two Psychiatrist of the hospital. The hospital provided indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, services like gardening, block print, work in laundry, chaghar, arts and crafts, dance and music. Arrangements for morning prayers and yoga and regular communication with the relatives are being made for reintegration with the society. On festive occasion arrangements are made so that inmates could enjoy such festivities. A large number of projects have been undertaken which includes restoration of pond in the campus, pisciculture, shifting of aged recovered patients to old age home, engagement of psychiatric shelter workers etc.

2. A small cultural function was organized on this occasion in the ward of the new building by the inmates. The quality of the cultural function was excellent and showed that the inmates were being adequately groomed in music and other cultural activities. No complaints were received by the Commission when they talked to the inmates.

3. Justice Smt. Madhumati Mitra visited the chaghar (canteen) and found that the kitchen was being maintained properly. It was being run by an N.G.O. while the

inmates were not participating in actual kitchen activities. It was pointed out that at present Rs.71/- was earmarked for diet per patient per day which was highly inadequate. The amount is too meager to provide one breakfast, two meals and one tiffin. It is suggested that at least Rs.300/- be earmarked for diet per day per patient which could improve the situation.

4. The Commission visited the automated laundry of Pavlov Hospital and found to be of excellent quality. Automated washing, drying and ironing (pressing) machine were installed in performing such activities. The laundry was handling the entire washing activities of the hospital in a very large scale. This laundry has been out sourced and it was found to be working in a satisfactory manner.

5. A new multi-storied building has been constructed, adjacent to the Superintendent's office which is used as wards of the inmates. The maintenance and cleanliness was satisfactory and pre-cautionary measures in view of psychiatric patient (ceiling fans were fixed in cages) to ensure safety of the inmates were in place.

6. The Commission makes following recommendations for improved functioning of the hospital :-

i. It was pointed out by the Superintendent that on orders from various Courts admissions were being made under provisions of Section 102 of Mental Health

Care Act, 2017. However, the same was not being followed as no medical examination by Psychiatric was being carried out prior to passing such Court orders. Procedure as laid down in Section 101 of the Act was not properly observed in most of the cases. Apart from it, after long treatment the patients were not being taken back by their families which caused lot of problems specially for those admitted on Court's order. Various legal issues have been mopped up in respect of the inmates who were admitted on the directions of the Magistrate. Only law knowing persons can handle these issues properly and assist one authority concerned. The Superintendent pointed out that this was urgent need for posting of a Law Officer. It is recommended that the Health & Family Welfare Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal may take up the matter with Law Department urgently so that such Law Officer be posted to deal with legal / Court related matters.

ii. It was pointed out that some Half-way Homes have been constructed in certain places including Berhampore in which recovered patients are being sent before integration with their families. This would considerably reduce the load of Pavlov Hospital and make way for more admissions. A number of vagrants are being admitted on Court's order under Vagrancy Act which is increasing the load of the hospital. It is suggested that an inter change between Pavlov Hospital and Vagrancy Homes of inmates be made so that inadvertently admitted patients in

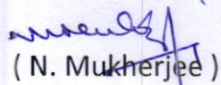
mental hospital be transferred to Vagrancy Homes while mental patients in Vagrancy Homes could be transferred to Pavlov Hospital.

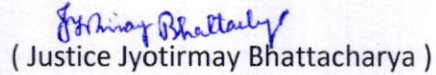
iii. It was pointed out by Justice Smt. Madhumati Mitra that a large number of female patients between age group of 18 – 45 years were admitted in the hospital. Arrangements for looking after their personal hygiene be made by the hospital authorities since this was found to be inadequate. Apart from, periodical medical check up for female inmates is needed to prevent / control mal-nutrition, anemia and various diseases like breast cancer etc.

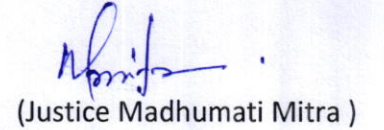
iv. A pond was found situated inside the premises which is adjacent to the wards and office of the Superintendent. This pond has high water level but inadequately fenced. It was pointed out to the Superintendent and local PWD authorities to adequately guard the pond to prevent mishap since most of the inmates were psychiatric patients.

v. A busy Railway line on Sealdah South Section runs adjacent to the hospital and there is high level of sound pollution since all the trains blow whistle recklessly passing near the Pavlov Hospital. Since the mental patients are admitted in the hospital such high level of sound pollution can affect the mental health further. It is recommended that Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal may take up with General Manager, Eastern Railway make this area no horn/no whistle zone in the interest of the patients.

7. Special Secretary & CEO, WBHRC is directed to send an authenticated copy of this report to Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal with a copy to Superintendent, Pavlov Hospital for information and necessary action. Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal is directed to submit action taken report with three months of receipt of this report.


(N. Mukherjee)
Member
2/2/2023


(Justice Jyotirmay Bhattacharya)
Chairman
2/2/2023


(Justice Madhumati Mitra)
Member
2/2/2023