

Visit of Baruipur Central Correctional Home by a team of West Bengal human Rights Commission on 27th December, 2023.

1. Justice Shri Jyotirmay Bhattacharya, Hon'ble Chairperson, Justice Smt. Madhumati Mitra, Hon'ble Member and Shri Pratul Kumar Bose, Joint Secretary visited Baruipur Central Correctional Home on 27th December, 2023. Visit commenced from 12 noon to 1.30 P.M.

2. At the outset, the Correctional Home authorities informed the Commission that Baruipur Central Correctional Home is being used for male inmates and started to function since 19th February, 2019. Entire establishment of Central Correctional Home of Alipore Central Correctional Home was shifted to Baruipur Central Correctional Home so far as male inmates are concerned.

3. During the course of visit, the Correctional Home authorities informed the Commission that the sanctioned population strength of inmates is 1689 and on the date of visit of the Commission the population of inmates was 1325. All types of inmates including UTPs, convicts, including life convicts and convicts for death sentence are being detained in this Correctional Home. The Correctional Home authorities supplied a data in this regard wherefrom it appears that out of present inmates of 1325, 1070 were under trial prisoners. Remaining inmates are convicted persons. Out of them 2 (two) inmates are convicts of death sentence.

4. During the course of interaction, the Correctional Home authorities informed the Commission that the inmates of the Correctional Home are

getting both indoor and outdoor treatments during their ailments. From our interaction with Correctional Home authorities it came out that there are shortage of Medical Officers, Pharmacist and nurse to look after the inmates. It appears that the sanctioned strength of Medical Officer of the Correctional Home is 3 (three) and the said three posts are lying vacant. Two Medical Officers on contractual whole time basis are rendering medical treatment to the inmates. There is one post of Psychologist. That post is also lying vacant. There are two post of Pharmacist. Both are vacant. Sanctioned strength of male nurse is 4 (four) out of which there are 2 (two) male nurses. There is one sanctioned post for Radiographer Grade-I and at present that post is also vacant. There are 3 (three) sanctioned posts for Radiographer Grade-II out of which 2 (two) posts are lying vacant. The Correctional Home has only one old ambulance. It appears to the Commission that more than 1000 inmates are staying in the Correctional Home at a time. The present medical staff is not at all sufficient to render medical assistance and aid if more than 10 or 15 persons become ill at a time. The vacant posts of Medical Officers, male nurse, Pharmacist etc. are required to be filled up immediately. During the course of discussion it became transpires that in case of emergency the inmates are required to be shifted to various Government hospitals for providing urgent medical treatment. As such, the requirement of an ordinary ambulance in good condition and one advanced ICU ambulance cannot be denied to extend all sorts of medical assistance to them by taking them to proper medical center / hospital or doctor in case of emergency the inmates may get proper medical facilities. The Commission was informed by the Correctional Home authorities that there is no shortage of medicine inside the Correctional Home. From the Correctional Home authorities it came out that history sheet especially sheet is being managed for each inmate starting from the point of entry into the Correctional Home.

5. The Commission during the inspection met Welfare Officer of the Correctional Home. Commission has been informed with the help of NGOs various welfare activities have been undertaken by the Correctional Home authorities for the inmates. Such welfare activities include acting, singing, dancing, physical exercise, sewing etc. During visit the Commission observed literacy class for inmates was being taken by NGO.

6. Attention of the Commission was drawn by the Correctional Home authorities towards Vodafone Telephone booth which is being used by the inmates on payment basis. In this connection, the Commission is of the view that all kinds of pre-caution must be taken by the Correctional Home authorities concerned so that the phone facility available to the inmates should not be misused in any way. Correctional Home authorities must ensure that only outgoing calls can be made from the telephone booth facilities. No calls to numbers not notified / supplied by the inmates at the time of entry are permitted by the system itself. All the calls are required to be recorded and available to the authorities for review upto a period of 15 days.

7. The Commission visited the kitchen of the inmates. LPG is being used as fuel for cooking purpose of the inmates. Roti maker, rice steamer are found in the kitchen. The Commission was informed by the Correctional Home authorities that the inmates were being served food as per the chart. During the visit of the Commission none of the inmates ventilated grievance regarding quality and quantity of the food supplied to them. The Commission is informed that the convicts are being paid for rendering service and the same are being deposited in their names.

8. Attention of the Commission was drawn by the Correctional Home authorities that to keep the inmates physically and mentally fit there is arrangement for Yoga and other physical activities of the inmates.
9. It was specific query of the Commission as to whether the Warder/superior staff of the Correctional Home is being sent for refresher training especially regarding target practice with their musket. In reply to that query, the Commission was informed that as no armourer is available in the Correctional Home so the Correctional Home authorities requested to Supdt. of Police for deputing an armourer to inspect the arms and ammunition.
10. During visit the Commission was informed by the Correctional Home authorities that in most of the cases accused/under trial prisoners are being produced before the Court through video conference system. The Commission has visited the video conference system room and different units where from it appears that the Correctional Home authorities has developed a system for production of the under trial prisoners before the Courts through the system. Pre-caution should be taken by the authorities concerned that the interest of the accused should not be prejudiced due to his production before the Court through video conference. Before the accused is being produced before the Court he should be provided sufficient opportunity to understand system and the Court room procedure. Under this system Judge / Magistrate and the accused are sitting there in different places. Sometimes, accused may not be accustomed with the devices or the procedure due to lack of technical knowledge.
11. During the interaction the Commission was also informed that the authorities concerned are providing facilities to the inmate to talk with their relatives through video conferencing system as and when required. The

system is called E-Mulakat. The Commission also visited the room where the relatives of the inmates sit at the Correctional Home to meet them. The meeting room is separated through close windows and there is telephone facility through which the relatives can talk with the inmates. Correctional Home authorities informed the Commission that the inmates are getting legal aid through State Legal Services Authority (SLSA) and District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) in their need. They informed that sometimes the under trial inmates fail to furnish bail bond and with the help of para-legal volunteers and legal aid system the inmates are getting facility to furnish bail bonds.

12. From the data supplied to the Commission it appears that during 2022, 7 (seven) under trial prisoners died. In the year 2023, 6 (six) under trial prisoners died. Commission was informed during its visit that so far as 163 inmates of the Correctional Home availed of the facilities of parole. Concerned Correctional Home authorities also informed that only 4 (four) convicts were got the benefit of pre-mature release. They informed the Commission that at present 63 proposals for pre-mature release are pending.

13. On a specific query of the Commission, the Commission was informed that all the under trials are being produced before the Court on the date fixed by the Courts either physically or through video conferencing system. Having regard to the facilities available in the Correctional Home and to provide an effective care to the inmates during their stay at Correctional Home.

Following the recommendations are made by the Commission :-

- i. The Commission feels it necessary for creation of more post for Medical Officers, male nurse, etc. The vacant posts of Medical Officers, Pharmacist and male nurse are required to be filled up immediately.

- ii. Immediate steps should be taken to acquire one ordinary ambulance in good condition and one CCU ambulance to take the inmate to nearby Govt. hospital or other hospital for providing better treatment.
- iii. Considering the population strength of inmate of the Correctional Home (1689) the Commission is of the view that there should be pathological tests facility in the Correctional Home Hospital Compound. As such the Commission recommends that an analyzer for blood as well as technician and digital X-Ray Machine with technician be provided to the Correctional Home Hospital to meet the basic medical requirements.
- iv. During visit Commission found literacy class of the inmates were being taken by N.G.O. Commission recommends that computer facilities be provided for making the inmates computer literate.
- v. Convicts who have to stay in the Correctional Home for a considerable period may be given vocational training according to their passion. In that event, the Correctional Home authorities may be classify the convicts in different categories and may make arrangement for their training so that on their release they can be properly rehabilitated in the society.
- vi. Proposal for pre-mature release should be considered in accordance with law and there should not be any unnecessary delay in disposing of those proposals as it may create an adverse effect on the convicts who deserve it as per law.

Joint Secretary, West Bengal Human Rights Commission is requested to send authenticated copy of this report to Chief Secretary, Government of West Bengal with copies to Principal Secretary, Department of Correctional Administration, Govt. of West

Bengal, I.G., Correctional Services and Superintendent, Baruipur Central Correctional Home with the request to send Action Taken Report to West Bengal Human Rights Commission within 03 (three) months.

Jyotirmay Bhattacharya
(Justice Jyotirmay Bhattacharya)

Chairperson
01.02.2024

Mdhumati Mitra
(Justice Mdhumati Mitra)

Member 01.02.2024