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27th, January, 2023

Today's Topics Covered

1) Over 42% inmates lodged in state jails involved in drug cases, finds study....Read in detail



Topic: Over 42% inmates lodged in state jails involved in drug cases, finds a study

Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains

Punjab PCS Prelims: Current events of Punjab

Punjab PCS Mains:

- Paper IV – General Studies I (History, Geography and Society): Topic: Vulnerable sections of the population – Welfare schemes by the Centre and State of Punjab and their performance; Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for their protection and betterment.

What is the news?

- In a survey conducted in 24 jails across Punjab, no less than 54% of the 660 prisoners who were interviewed claimed to have experienced assault while in the custody of the police.
- At least 12% of all the detainees examined claimed to have experienced violence while being held captive. Inmates in 15 of the 24 prisons claimed to have witnessed instances of smuggling. 12 prisons had detainees who claimed there was corruption.



Who published the report?

- Report published by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) surveying prisons in the state.

Study Involved:

The study included surveys on custodial violence in police and judicial custody, the impact of the NDPS Act, 1985 on the jails throughout the state, as well as prison administration and infrastructure, medical facilities and health, visitation rights and facilities, access to information, and access to legal aid in prisons.

Study Findings shared by “Inside Punjab Prisons” which states that:

The issue of drug smuggling and consumption was observed in 15 out of the 24 functional jails.

Cause for this:

It is plausible that one of the contributing factors to rampant drug smuggling and consumption is the existence of a high number of inmates charged/accused/convicted under the NDPS (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances) Act, 1985,” said the report, which was commissioned by the Punjab State Legal Services Authority (PULSA).

- In Punjab, 75% of the prisons are overcrowded.
- In fact, 18 prisons reported seeing the phenomena in December 2022, up from 10 in 2019. According to the Punjab State Legal Services Authority’s assessment on the state’s prison system, which was created in partnership with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, almost 42.1% of inmates were those who had

been charged or convicted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

- The report also notes that 25% of staff jobs were unfilled and that 10 jails urgently need refurbishment or reconstruction.
- Up to 16 jails lacked sanctioned positions for education workers, while 17 lacked sanctioned positions for welfare employees. Senior officer recruitment did not include women. Only three of the 103 officers were female.
- A formal organisation for overseeing prisoners, the “board of visitors,” was present in only one institution. However, all jails had operating undertrial review committees, which were required to periodically assess detainees’ cases.
- The study also notes that five sub-jails did not conduct medical exams for new inmates at the time of admission. The district legal services authorities acted appropriately after 22 detainees interviewed across 11 jails were allegedly teenagers. In 22 jails, problems with pay were mentioned as well as concerns with corruption, accessibility, and lack of privacy during family visits.
- Across all of the jails, there was a lack of funding for production and factory units. Prisoner women had limited access to medical care, hospitals, recreational facilities, houses of worship, libraries, and period hygiene supplies. There were also complaints of caste-based discrimination.
- The survey also discovered inconsistencies in the allocation of detainees who identified as transgender people and problems with search procedures. There are four of these prisoners, two of whom were housed separately in the women’s section, one in the women’s section, and one in the all-male section. Prisons housing transgender inmates include Borstal Jail in Ludhiana, New District Jail in Nabha, and Central Jail

in Patiala.



[See Here](#)

About “Inside Punjab Prisons”:

- Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, a judge on the Supreme Court, and Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the executive chair of NALSA, presented the report. Justice Rajesh Bindal, the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court, was also present.
- The Punjab State Legal Services Authority executive chairman, Justice Tejinder Singh Dhindsa, and the chief justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Justice Ravi Shanker Jha, have finalised it. Arun Gupta, a District and Sessions Judge who is also a Member Secretary, “had a significant role in the evaluation and finalisation of this report, which was written by Arijeet Ghosh and Sabika Abbas. Madhurima Dhanuka from the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative edited it.

(News Source: The Tribune & hindustantimes)

Punjab PCS Quiz: Check Your Rank

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