



One Who Has Been Long in Confinement: Inspiring the Prisoners' to Read

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Abstract:

This paper explores the journey of prisons towards open air homes through the different enlightening activities in the education, drama, sculpting, painting, training, placement assistance, agriculture, self-help groups, etc. It has been seen that the criminals are of different categories and their confinement tenure and privileges vary from one to other. They are a heterogeneous mix with varying inclinations towards the access to knowledge/learning and books. Some good work has been seen on the part of the government like opening up the doors of Open Schools and Open universities to them. Though there are instances of donating books for them, Efforts of bringing books to their doorstep (or cell step) are happening, but library and information facilities are still to be crystalised in this sector. The LIS professionals and organizations should render all possible assistance to the Directorate of Correctional Homes in its effort to educate and empower the prison population. Serious consideration is to be given to suitable collection development policy formulation, awareness generation for book donations and book club, liaison with public libraries for extending mobile library service, raising volunteers from retired people and other interested persons, preserving and conserving the heritage objects used by the freedom fighters in some of the correctional homes.

Keywords:

Correctional Homes (Prisons), Inmates (Prisoners), India, Reading, Creative Activities, Vocational Trainings, Drama

Terminological Clarification:

The words 'Convict', 'Prisoner', 'Inmate', etc may have been used for the people confined by the state law. 'Jail', 'Prison', 'Correctional Home', etc may have been used for the institution meant for confining the offenders of the law.

Though these words signify a transition in the journey of jails towards open air homes, sometimes these words may have been used interchangeably as in common parlance.

Introduction:

The English poet has created verse about the joy of inhaling deep in the lush green of the countryside after a long cloistered life spent in the hustle and bustles of a city. This paper likewise wishes to open the window of the prisoners' cells to the positive delight of the universe of knowledge as embodied in the books and other reading materials.

The Indian jails have undergone a face lift during the last few decades. From its role of confining criminals behind bars, it is now playing the role of correcting criminals towards a creative path. From taking punitive measures to becoming correctional homes, the journey of Indian jails has made impact upon the availability upon the reading/learning and other creative facilities for the inmates of the jails. The one major objective of the paper is to portray a clear picture of the roadmap of this journey.

India is a country with a sizable BPL (Below Poverty Line) population. It is also a strange mixture of multilingual and multicultural community. Deprivation, poverty, frustration and many other causes can raise the tendency of doing criminal offense. Instead of prolonged confinement without reading/learning privileges, the better way to treat this social evil is to inspire them with a light of learning. This paper offers the glimpses of activities that are going on in India in this regard. It is hoped that through IFLA, this paper will increase visibility of this issue and would be replicated by many other LIS professionals in India and other developing countries.

Design/Methodology/Approach:

This paper wishes to grasp the ground realities of a prisoner's daily life in India. To fulfill this objective, a blended two-way interaction with the topic has been taken. The websites of different concerned organizations/Directorates has been consulted. A survey of Presidency Central Correctional Home is done. A non-participant observation method has also been adopted by the author to see at first hand the reading and other learning facilities available by the inmates of Presidency Central Correctional Home in Kolkata, West Bengal, India. Discussions, extensive interviews, telephonic interviews, email correspondence are also used to gather relevant facts. Some attempts at historical research have also been made to get a flavour of this heritage institution bearing legacies of British Period.

Documentary sources like Directory and 'Metamorphosis Journal' (both are created/published by the Directorate) also has been extensively used. Extensive interviews of the Chief Controller,

Superintendent and Welfare Officer and inmates have been taken by the author. Interview of the Medical Officer, Alipore Central Correctional Home has been carried out.

Data has been presented mostly in the form of tables, charts and images for easy comprehension and better readability.

Literature Review:

In Indiana and California determining the number of new prisons to build is based, in part, on the number of second graders not reading at second-grade level and third grade level respectivelyⁱ.

Several Committeesⁱⁱ work on jail reforms in India. Indian Jails Committee in 1838 reported about the corruption among the lower staff.

The prison under British Raj saw a lot of reading, mostly by the political prisonersⁱⁱⁱ. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote *The Discovery of India* about which Albert Einstein said that it gives an understanding of the glorious intellectual and spiritual tradition of [a] great country. Nehru said that the book was written by him in Ahmadnagar Fort prison during April to September 1944. Some of his colleagues in prison read the manuscript and make a number of valuable suggestions.

In Texas, Since 2008 ReadingWithConviction.org^{iv} has shipped over 5,200 books to Texas Prisons for use in libraries and educational programs. In India, industry and organizations have just started performing this facilitating role. Many such examples are included in a later part of this paper.

The National Book Foundation has set up the first book club in Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, Pakistan^v. This is a very prominent Pakistani jail, occupied by many political leaders in the past and currently housing more than 5,000 prisoners, including women and juveniles.

The Prisons and Prisoners: sociological and historical perspectives-

Society, from its inception, is thinking about imposing some sort of moral and social disciplinary structure over its population. Anyone going beyond its usual norms is to be taken into order. In the Sanskrit epic 'Mahabharat', we get the mention of the 'Karagar' (prison) of the king 'Kangsa' where his sister is imprisoned and all her children are being killed to prevent that child to become a ruler by killing and replaced him. 'Slave System' in Babylon (and other places) can be cited as a punitive measure also.

The measures taken may be extreme or trivial as per the prevalent social authority structure and the social code of that time. Losing one's head (or 'Gardan' as it is called in India) or a part of one's body by ancient kings or rulers is one of the extreme measures. Next to it may go the social alienations (debarred to interact with any member of the society) and other forms of social isolations.

Keeping in view all these, the Idea of Confinement in itself a progress if seen in the lights of the time of its arrival. At least, the convicts were given to live, to get justice through a court trial, to get food/shelter/clothing during their stay at the prisons. With the progress of human civilization, many radical thoughts as well as cost and other considerations came in this front. Confinement means huge infrastructural and other costs on the state finance. It also means huge unproductive population. So different solutions were sought, a popular one being EXILE. As for example, convicts were deported from England to America, then after American independence, to

Australia. Some candidates were: a small island (like Falkland), or an exile to a remote place like Siberia or Andaman.

The Birth of Civil Rights Organisations:

Modern day civilization saw many civil societies to intervene between injustice and common masses. The birth of civil rights organizations like the following and more at governmental and non-governmental initiative bear a testimony to this change:

- Amnesty International
- Human Rights Commission
- UNICEF

A Transition from Confinement to Correction came with the idea of utilisation of the prison manpower and by repair of ill motives.

A Brief Glimpse into the History of Indian Prisons:

- 1992: West Bengal Correction Service Act (State Act)
- 2000 (14th April, Paila Baishakh- the first day of Bengali New Year) enactment of the Act and the word 'Correctional Home' was used for the first time
- Terminology changes:
 - Jailor – Chief Controller
 - Deputy Jailor – Controller
 - Sub Jailor- Assistant Controller
 - Prison - Correctional Home
 - Prisoner - Inmates

Prison Scenario in India:

Ministry responsible	Ministry of Home Affairs		
Prison administration	Governments of States (28) and Union Territories (7)		
Prison population total (including pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners)	376,396 at 31.12.2007 (National Crime Records Bureau)		
Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national population)	32 based on an estimated national population of 1,160.9 million at end of 2007 (from United Nations figures)		
Pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners (percentage of prison population)	66.6% (31.12.2007)		
Female prisoners (percentage of prison population)	4.1% (31.12.2007)		
Juveniles / minors / young prisoners incl. definition (percentage of prison population)	0.1% (31.12.2007 - under 18)		
Foreign prisoners (percentage of prison population)	1.3% (31.12.2007)		
Number of establishments / institutions	1,276 (31.12.2007 - comprising 113 central jails, 309 district jails, 769 sub jails, 16 women's jails, 28 open jails, 25 special jails, 10 Borstal schools and 6 other jails)		
Official capacity of prison system	277,304 (31.12.2007)		
Occupancy level (based on official capacity)	135.7% (31.12.2007)		
Recent prison population trend (year, prison population total, prison population rate)	1999	281,380	(28)
	2001	313,635	(30)
	2003	326,519	(30)
	2005	358,368	(32)
	2007	376,396	

Table: Prisons in India (data for 2007)

Prison Scenario in West Bengal, a state in India:

Population: Many of these correctional homes are having a population as large as a big village, like a little more or less than two thousand- as is the case in Alipore or Presidency.

Prison Population as on 01.05.11^{vi}:

Sl. No.	Name of the CH	Condemned		Convict		UTP		Other		Released Prisoners		Children		TOTAL
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	Alipore CCH	3	0	648	0	1188	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	1876
2	Burdwan DCH	0	0	39	9	169	22	0	0	1	1	1	2	244
3	Asansol Spl. CH	0	0	15	5	202	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	234
4	Durgapur DCH	0	0	3	0	117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	120
5	Kalna SCH	0	0	0	0	63	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	65
6	Katwa SCH	0	0	6	0	88	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	94
7	D/Harbour SCH	0	0	2	1	186	11	0	0	0	0	0	2	202
8	Presidency CH	1	0	707	17	1230	7	1	0	35	11	2	1	2012
9	Alipore Women's CH	0	0	0	71	0	131	0	0	0	0	5	5	212
10	Howrah DCH	0	0	9	0	464	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	473
11	Hooghly DCH	0	0	16	0	233	16	0	0	0	0	0	1	266
12	Uluberia SCH	0	0	1	0	144	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	145
13	Serampore SCH	0	0	1	0	134	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	154
14	Arambagh SCH	0	0	0	0	46	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
15	Chandannagar SCH	0	0	0	0	94	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	103
16	Dum Dum CCH	10	0	653	31	1161	41	0	0	128	15	1	1	2041
17	Krishnanagar DCH	0	0	95	3	674	56	0	0	45	14	4	8	899
18	Barrackpore SCH	0	0	2	1	228	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	237
19	Basirhat SCH	0	0	1	0	110	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	111
20	Bongaon SCH	0	0	0	0	143	22	0	0	0	0	2	3	170
21	Ranaghat SCH	0	0	0	0	180	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	193
22	Kalyani SCH	0	0	1	0	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80
23	Berhampore CCH	0	0	835	114	880	34	0	0	80	14	26	31	2014
24	Balurghat DCH	0	0	124	6	327	32	0	1	11	0	8	10	519
25	Suri DCH	0	0	218	7	207	16	0	0	0	0	2	0	450
26	Malda DCH	0	0	187	4	270	15	0	0	12	1	2	2	493
27	Lalgola Open Air CH	0	0	89	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	89
28	Bolpur SCH	0	0	7	1	115	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	129
29	Jangipur SCH	0	0	6	0	151	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	166

30	Kandi SCH	0	0	1	0	77	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	82
31	Lalbag SCH	0	0	2	0	199	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	216
32	Rampurhat SCH	0	0	12	0	29	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	43
33	Midnapore CCH	0	0	710	10	365	22	0	0	0	0	1	1	1109
34	Purulia DCH	0	0	28	0	292	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	320
35	Bankura DCH	0	0	11	0	279	26	0	0	0	0	1	1	318
36	Purulia Women's CH	0	0	0	9	0	51	0	0	0	0	1	1	62
37	Ghatal SCH	0	0	2	0	30	12	0	0	0	0	0	1	45
38	Contai SCH	0	0	1	0	178	21	0	0	0	0	1	0	201
39	Tamluk SCH	0	0	6	0	117	17	0	0	0	0	2	0	142
40	Jhargram SCH	0	0	3	1	163	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	171
41	Bishnupur SCH	0	0	4	0	103	8	0	0	0	0	4	1	120
42	Haldia SCH	0	0	7	0	134	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	148
43	Jalpaiguri CCH	0	0	335	16	557	43	0	0	43	1	6	3	1004
44	Coochbehar DCH	0	0	138	13	231	13	0	0	39	19	15	19	487
45	Raigunj DCH	0	0	86	4	89	17	0	0	18	3	4	5	226
46	Darjeeling DCH	0	0	5	0	60	7	0	0	1	0	0	0	73
47	Siliguri Spl. CH	0	0	45	5	204	10	0	0	10	1	0	0	275
48	Alipurduar Spl. CH	0	0	111	1	299	29	0	0	9	1	4	3	457
49	Kalimpong SCH	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
50	Kurseong SCH	0	0	0	0	21	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
51	Dinhata SCH	0	0	0	0	39	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	41
52	Mekhlignj SCH	0	0	0	0	23	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
53	Mathabhanga SCH	0	0	0	0	45	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	52
54	Tufangunj SCH	0	0	0	1	30	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	36
55	Islampore SCH	0	0	2	0	135	1	0	2	11	0	0	0	151
TOTAL		14	0	5174	330	12598	808	1	3	480	81	92	103	19684

Long Term under Trial Prisoners:

Some of these inmates come and go within a short interval but some are here to stay a long period. There are 452 inmates who are there for more than 5 years. This long term part of the population should be ensured all opportunities of education and other amenities.

Status of Long Term under Trial Prisoners as On 01.03.11:

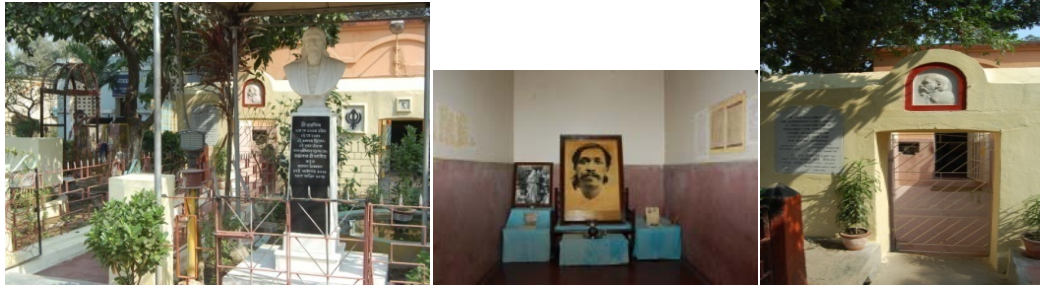
More than 1 yr	More than 2 yrs	More than 3 yr	More than 4 yr	More than 5 yr
154	1170	677	349	452

Presidency Correctional Home (West Bengal, India): a case study (with some glimpses of other homes)



Famous Personalities as Prisoner:

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh	Presidency Jail	02.05.1908 to 09.05.1909	wrote his famous book "The Life Divine" here
Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose	Presidency Jail	02.07.1940 to 05.12.1940	thought of his strategy of "Mahavinishkraman"
Mahatma Gandhi	Presidency Jail	met political prisoners in this Jail on 8 th April 1938	unconditional release
Kazi Nazrul Islam	Presidency Jail	15.01.1923	For one night
Sarat Chandra Bose, Bina Das, Kamala Dasgupta, Lila Roy, Suhasini Ganguly, Ujjala Majumder, Prafulla Chandra Sen	Presidency Jail	Different Periods	Revolutionaries
Sri Jyoti Basu	Presidency Jail		The then banned Communist Party



An Archive on Sri Aurobindo (a revolutionary-turned-into-a-religious leader)



Monument at Presidency in Memory of the Indian Martyrs for Indian Independence

Martyrs (Indian freedom fighters) hanged in Presidency Jail:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Kanailal Dutta	10 th November, 1908	shooting & killing approver Narendra Goswami inside Jail
Satyendra Nath Bose	21 st November, 1908	shooting & killing approver Narendra Goswami inside Jail
Charu Charan Bose	19 th March, 1909	shooting & killing Ashu Biswas, P.P of Alipore Bomb Case inside Jorabagan Court premises
Birendra Nath Dutta Gupta	21 st February, 1910	DSP Shamsul Alam in Calcutta High Court premises who was the prime investigator in Alipore Conspiracy case
Gopi Mohan Saha	1 st March, 1924	an Englishman mistaking him for Police Commissioner Charles Tegart

Total Area of Presidency Central Correctional Home

Sl No.	Total land of the Presidency Correctional Home with details, Mouza with JL No., Plot No. Area of the plot.	Quantum of land used by the CH Mouza with JL No., Plot No. Area of the plot.	Quantum of land lying vacant
1.	0.95 acres.	0.28 acres	0.67 acres
2.	1.77 acres.	0.40 acres.	1.37 acres
3.	20.94 acres.	20.94 acres	Nil
4.	56 acres.	38 acres.	11 acres

Registered Capacity:

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
2140	246	2386

Population of Inmates as on 20.04.2012 (Unlock)

Convicts			Under Trials			Grand Total
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
668	0	668	1375	0	1375	2043

Convict Prisoners:

Particulars	Male	Female	Total
Lifers	307	0	307
Death Sentence	02	0	02
Rigorous Imprisonment	619	0	619
Simple Imprisonment	49	0	49
Detenue (Cofeposa)	01	0	01

Administrative Staff:

Sl No.	Name Of Post	Sanctioned Strength	Existing Strength	Vacancy
Executive Staff				
1	Superintendent	01	01	Nil
2	Dy. Superintendent	02	Nil	02
3	Chief Controller	03	03	Nil
4	Security Officer	01	01	Nil
5	Controller & Assistant Controller	10	09	01
6	Chief Discipline Officer	01	01	Nil
7	Discipline Officer	05	03	02
Non-Executive Staff				
8	Welfare Officer	02	02	Nil
9	Head Clerk	01	01	Nil
10	Cashier	01	01	Nil
11	U. D. Clerk	07	05	02
12	L.D.Clerk	06	02	04
13	Teacher	03	02	01
Guarding Staff & Other				
14	Chief Head Warder	03	02	01
15	Head Warder	20	09	11
16	Warder	290	235	55
17	Female Warder(Pr)	05	02	03
18	Female Warder (Supernumery)	Nil	17	Nil
19	Female Warder (Extra Temporary)	Nil	02	Nil
20	Driver	07	06	01

21	Sweeper	30	04	26
22	Barber	02	02	Nil

Sl No.	Name Of Post	Sanctioned Strength	Existing Strength	Vacancy
Medical / Para Medical Staff				
23	Chief Medical Officer	01	Nil	01
24	Medical Officer	05	04	01
25	Pharmacist	03	01	02
26	Senior Matron	01	Nil	01
27	Matron	01	Nil	01
Manufacturing Department				
28	Work Shop Fore Man	01	Nil	01
29	Fore Man (Umbrella)	01	01	Nil
30	Sr. Accountant	01	Nil	01
31	Jr. Accountant	01	01	Nil
32	Factory Overseer	01	01	Nil
33	Estimator Cum Draftsman	01	01	Nil
34	Oil Mill Mistry	01	01	Nil
35	Addl. Oil Mill Mistry	01	Nil	01
36	Asst. Oil Mill Mistry	01	01	Nil
37	Task Taker	02	01	01
38	Instructor Cum Task Taker(Umbrella)	02	02	Nil
39	Carpenter	01	Nil	01
40	Mistry	01	01	Nil
41	Mill Mechanic	01	Nil	01

42	Scrapper	02	Nil	02
43	Messenger	03	03	Nil
44	Store Clerk (Umbrella)	01	Nil	01
45	Tailor Master	01	Nil	01
46	Peon	01	01	Nil

Reorienting the Inmates towards Education, Creativity, Self-sufficiency and self-respect:

Rendering Green Look- Farming and Gardening Efforts:

The time available between release from cell at sunrise and lock-up at sunset is to be spent in a fruitful manner with all sorts of positive activities. One such area is Farming and Gardening. Presidency inmates produce a portion of their daily vegetable requirement (the supplemental ones). To make the place a 'Home away from Home', they cater to beautification of the area through plants and flowers.



Creative Activities:

People with Creative Abilities have been identified and encouraged by the authorities:

Name of Correctional Home	Name of Inmate	Area of Creativity
Presidency Correctional Home	Prasun Biswas	Painter
Presidency Correctional Home	Many Inmates	Stone Sculpture
Presidency Correctional Home	Many Inmates	Cement Sculpture
Presidency Correctional Home	Many Inmates	Clay Sculpture
Presidency Correctional Home	Many Inmates	Handicraft

All the exhibits made by the Inmates were displayed in the Fair at 'Pragati Utsab' at 'Milan Mela' compound. Superintendent of Presidency Correctional Home was in-charge of the stall. It attracted many prominent visitors including the Chief Minister of West Bengal.

Economic Activities:

There is an oil mill in the campus. The inmates produce oil from mustard seeds to be supplied to all jails in Kolkata, Howrah and Hooghly districts. In the factory, they produce utensils from aluminum to be supplied to all correctional homes of West Bengal. Flour is produced from wheat. Phenyl, umbrella, candles, bread, all uniforms for inmates and sipahis, iron beds, etc are produced for using in all the homes of West Bengal. Laundering clothes are done by them. All the office work of class III and class IV staff are done by the inmates. They also perform hospital duty at the home hospital.

Their wages per day are as follows:

Group A: Skilled Labour – Rs. 25

Group B: Semi-Skilled Labour – Rs. 21

Group C: Un-Skilled Labour – Rs. 18

Information Flow- Inmates to and fro their Family Members:

Inmates need to know how their families are surviving in their absence. To facilitate this information flow, in collaboration with Vodafone, telephone booths have been installed in Dumdum and Presidency Correctional Homes from where the inmates can talk for 5 minutes with their families twice a week.

**Legal Information:**

Weekly once, government advocate come to offer them legal advice. These advocates are frequently changed to nullify any possible attempt of foul play.

Library Facilities:

Dibyanandaji Maharaj of Belur Ramkrishna Mission has donated books and almirahs for library. But the processing work is yet to be done. There is no librarian. The teacher is running the library with the help of the Welfare Officer.

Educational Initiatives:

Presidency Correctional Home is running a school with Mr. Pintu Ash (an inmate) as a teacher to give the willing inmates a brush with literacy. Besides providing basic literacy skills, this school also provides coaching to the inmates that are sitting for Madhyamik (school-leaving i.e. 10th Standard) examination from Rabindra Open School.

Secondary Education has seen the success of Presidency Inmates since 2011 in as per following table:

Name of Correctional Home	Course	Year	No. of Students	University/Institute
Presidency Correctional Home	Madhyamik	2013	19 (proposed)	Rabindra Mukta Vidyalaya
Presidency Correctional Home	Madhyamik	2012	10	Rabindra Mukta Vidyalaya
Presidency Correctional Home	Madhyamik	2011	10	Rabindra Mukta Vidyalaya

Higher Education-

A few inmates are also hoping for a higher degree as found in the chart below:

Name of Correctional Home	Name of Inmate	Course	University/Institute
Presidency Correctional Home	Utpal Kanti Mandal	BA	Rabindra Open University
Presidency Correctional Home	Utpal Kanti Mandal	MSW	Rabindra Open University
Presidency Correctional Home	Aftab Ansari	Appeared in MA (Sociology)	IGNOU



Presidency inmate is giving MA Exam at Presidency Central Correctional Home with Welfare officer and Teacher as Invigilators. To ensure the sooth conduct, Assistant Regional Director of Indira Gandhi National Open University came to Presidency Home and had dialogue with its Superintendent Mr. Biplab Das.

Alipore Central Correctional Home in association with Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, Malda are providing help to 11 inmate students at Alipore Central Correctional Home with the potential to pursue education through the courses of Rabindra Mukta Vidyalaya and Netaji Subash Open University form Class-X to Post Graduate level.

Alipore Central Correctional Home also runs a School for Arts.

Deformity can not deter:



Artificial Limbs for WB Prisoners in association with NGOs and artificial hand is holding the pen

Training and Placements:

Name of Home	Correctional	Name of Inmate	Training	University/Institute
Presidency Home	Correctional	Utpal Kanti Mandal	MSW	Rabindra Open University
Presidency Home	Correctional	A Life Convict as Instructor	Computer Training Centre	Vedanta foundation
Presidency Home	Correctional	19 learned inmates (to be released soon)	Placement Assistance for Released Prisoners	Vedanta foundation

Government-Industry Initiatives in Vocational Training:

Name of Correctional Home		Vocational Training	Comments	University/Institute
Presidency Correctional Home	Could not sustain	Chemicals (Compost)	Initiatives By DIG, Correctional Homes and Concerned Welfare Officer	Balivara Offer NGO, Baruipur (Marketing and other assistance)
Presidency Correctional Home	Could not sustain	Jari-Work		
Dumdum Correctional Home	Women Inmates	Jute Products		
Presidency Correctional Home	Self-Help Group of Inmates	Canteen	10-12 inmates in each group	
Dumdum Correctional Home	Self-Help Group of Inmates	Canteen	10-12 inmates in each group	
Alipore Correctional Home	Self-Help Group of Inmates	Canteen	10-12 inmates in each group	

Training for the Trainers:

Name of Correctional Home	Participants	Vocational Training
Medinipur	Wardens	Wardens' Training Institute
Directorate of Correctional Institute of Correctional Administration, Dumdum	Officers	Refresher Course (Resource Person: Sr. ret'd IPS Officer S Ramakrishan)

Cultural Creativities:



Drama: Achena Prithibi



Tagore's Birthday



IG at ICDS Program

Name of Correctional Home	Name of Inmate(s)	Cultural Creativities	Resource Persons/Institutes
Presidency Correctional Home	enacted by inmates	Brotherhood beyond Boundaries	Alakananda Roy and her 'TouchWorld' Organisation
Baharampur Correctional Home	enacted by inmates	Taser Desh/Tagore	
Berhampore Central Correctional Home	Inmates	Culture Therapy Workshop	Alakananda Roy and her 'TouchWorld' Organisation
Presidency Correctional Home	enacted by inmates	Balmiki Pratibha/Tagore	Alakananda Roy and her 'TouchWorld' Organisation
Berhampore Central Correctional Home	Inmates	Theatre Workshop	Shri Pradip Bhattacharyay of Berhampore Repertory Theatre
Presidency Correctional Home	written by inmate Tapas Ghosh, enacted by inmates	Achena Prithibi	Directed by Sipahi Tarun Tapan Ganguly (Gold Medalist, RBU, Drama)
Presidency Correctional Home	enacted by inmates	Bisarjan	DTP Typing in Bengali Script and stage design by Suprakash Ghosh, Chief Controller (Jailor)
Presidency Correctional Home	To be enacted by inmates	Asoka	Casting Done

'Balmiki Pratibha' was performed on Durga Puja celebration in Bombay. For each performance, Rs.1 lakh is to be donated to the Prisoners' Welfare Fund besides arranging for cost of Production.

Festivals:



Goddess Durga and Goddess Kali with the Inmates of Presidency

Different festivals like Durga Puja, Kali Puja, EID, Saraswati Puja, etc are also celebrated here through which a sense of well-being and purpose towards positive mind set is developed.



The Production Team of Bisarjan (a dance drama by Tagore): Inmates and Staff of Presidency Correctional Home-Sosthi (the starting day) of Durga Puja 2010

Recommendations:

The Nobel Prize winning poet Rabindranath Tagore has said in his dance-drama 'Shyama' that we should hate the 'sin' not the 'sinner'. Likewise, our motto is to be gradually shifting the criminal minds to the creative joys. As the Chief Controller of Presidency Correctional Home Mr. Suprakash Roy said that it has been seen that only 1% of the inmates are habitual or repetitive in nature, the rest 99% crimes has been provoked by some stimuli of a particular moment. Hence, the main focus should be to re-orient this population towards mainstream through schooling, training, placement assistance, creating reading habits, inspiring them to flourish their cultural abilities, enthuse them towards expressing their creative abilities and more. The work in this sector has already started as revealed in the above section. Some recommendations are added here for all-pervasive and faster transition towards a more open system.

- ‡ creating the post of a librarian in each Correctional Home and also for a Library Assistant in the Central Correctional Homes
- ‡ organising trainings for special librarianship in this area, for e.g. a certificate course
- ‡ organising workshops for creating awareness in this sector
- ‡ identification of the willing and potential learners from among the inmates
- ‡ sensitizing the fresh entrants to Prison Services all over the country
- ‡ educational and developmental opportunities should be provided to the children of convicted persons and the children in the prisons.

- ‡ organising advocacy campaigns
- ‡ creating interface for smooth glide back to normal life
- ‡ undergoing user need studies for the Indian jail inmates
- ‡ emphasizing the areas where public private partnership model can be used in educational and other provisions for the inmates of the jail
- ‡ creating a book club with literature classics, storybooks, comics, drama and poetry
- ‡ involvement of common masses as volunteers
- ‡ starting and/or strengthening book donation programs
- ‡ involving the libraries to offer mobile library service to the inmates
- ‡ involving the LIS professional associations in a leadership role



From Prison to Correctional Home: the Metamorphosis (Presidency)

Metamorphosis or towards an Open Future:

Directorate of Correctional Services, Government of West Bengal has already taken some positive steps towards more open system. State Level Dialogue^{vii} was organized by Prisons Directorate, West Bengal with Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Welfare Institutions on 01.10.2007.

The Directorate has started a journal called 'Metamorphosis'^{viii} for documenting the transition from prisons through correctional homes to Open Air or Halfway Homes. Open Air Correctional Home already exists in Lalgola, Murshidabad, West Bengal and another will shortly be in Durgapur, Bardhaman District, West Bengal. This kind of Halfway Home or Rehabilitation Institute for the inmates - with the partnership from industry and other social sectors- can metamorphose the criminals to the little entrepreneurs and reinstate them in the society as useful and responsible citizens. LIS professionals can and should take a crucial part in the process of cultural and educational training of these confined people to make them caring and socially conscious citizens.

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Ms. Mahua Bagchi Mitra, Welfare Officer, Presidency Correctional Home, Kolkata, West Bengal

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