



The

METAMORPHOSIS

A bulletin on the changing lives in the Correctional Homes of West Bengal

Issue:23

From the Editor's Desk:

In West Bengal, the Correctional Homes are regarded as abodes of rehabilitation for our inmates. Under strict vigilance, constant effort is made towards administering, monitoring and reforming the core areas which require to be redressed.

West Bengal has been one of the pioneer states to implement complete Online Prison System i.e. 'E Prison Suite' (Prisoners' Management System) in all Correctional Homes across the State. Recently, a major step taken by the State Government has been to establish video conferencing based interview system 'E Mulakaat System' at DumDum Central Correctional Home, Kolkata, on a pilot basis. This immensely helps aged, sick and distant relatives to interact with their near and dear ones electronically through video conferencing.

Innovative plans and ideas for prison reforms are nurtured, discussed and gradually materialized in all spheres on an almost constant basis; whether it is LED bulb assembling or recycling waste, aesthetics or industrial skill development training for inmates, marketing of Correctional Home products or setting up of various manufacturing units, upgradation and extension of Correctional Homes with the motive of implementing development schemes to reduce overcrowding, capacity building of Correctional Home officials and staff, participation of inmates in social awareness programs and much more.

The concept of culture therapy has proved to be 'Bacon's light', helping us take unequivocal steps towards the correction and reformation of our inmates, and a prime medium for social integration.

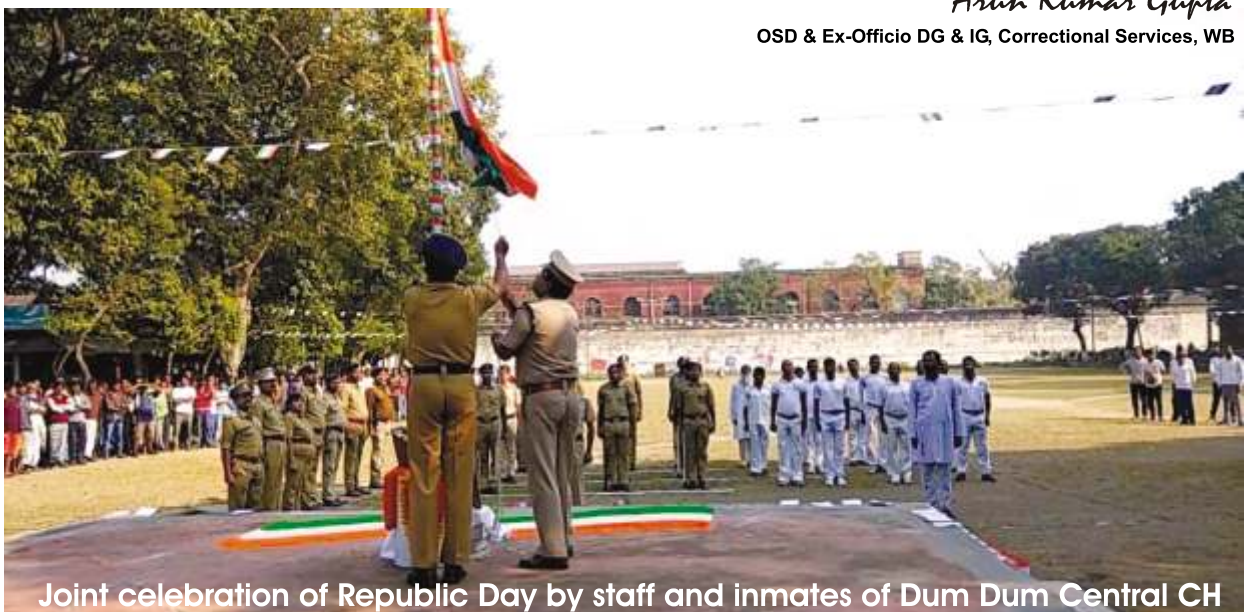
With the passage of time, new and more effective plans of action are thought of, analyzed and implemented with regard to prison reforms so that Correctional Homes can be labelled as ideal 'Homes for Corrective and Reformatory Custody and Care.'

Arun Kumar Gupta

OSD & Ex-Officio DG & IG, Correctional Services, WB



Flag hoisting by Sri Ujjal Biswas, Hon'ble MIC on the occasion of Republic Day at Krishnanagar District Correctional Home, Nadia



Joint celebration of Republic Day by staff and inmates of Dum Dum Central CH

JAN - MARCH, 2018



Light in the Dark :

While everyone loves being in the spotlight, few can assemble the spotlight themselves!

LED lights have the perfect combination of powerful luminosity and modest wattage. They not only illuminate more than a conventional bulb or tube, but are also kinder to the environment, as well as to a household's budget.

LED bulb assembling is our new project running at Presidency Correctional Home under the supervision of System & Services.

Best Out of Waste :

Newspapers are a source of knowledge and information, keeping us updated about the world at large. A huge number of old dailies lie unattended in every administrative office of the department, appropriate disposal being an issue. We have initiated a program for reusing old newspapers in the form of bags, folders, key chains and other craft items. Inmates of Alipore Women's Correctional Home will be trained by Rakshak Foundation. Starting with utility items, we plan to eventually make and market decorative items as well.



Building Self-Support :

West Bengal Correctional Services has a large network of homes and offices spread throughout the state. These buildings need constant maintenance, and often need to be added onto for the comfort of inmates and officials. Such work, when executed by the PWD, is a long drawn procedure. We espouse the ideal of self-sufficiency, and have succeeded in the same by training our own inmates in masonry and plumbing, thanks to the effort of Industrial Training Institute, Tollygunge. We now have in-house masons and plumbers who take care of day-to-day maintenance. The trained inmates can also be used for future constructions inside Correctional Homes



Depression is a prison where you are both the suffering prisoner and the cruel jailer.

..... Dorothy Rowe

Offering Opportunities :

Open Correctional Homes aim to rehabilitate and reinstate convicts back into society after long years of incarceration. It is, in a way, a field test for convicts who have served a disciplined tenure and have absorbed life skills from various correctional programs. Following the success of Open Correctional Homes in Lalgola, Durgapur and Raiganj; the Government has set up a fourth Open Correctional Home at Midnapore. The building adjacent to the Midnapore Central Correctional Home has been remodeled into the Midnapore Open Correctional Home. On 24th January, 2018, Shri Ujjal Biswas, Hon'ble MIC, Dept. of Correctional Administration, West Bengal inaugurated it for 65 inmates. Thirty-four inmates have been shifted in the first phase.



Changing Status :



Kalimpong became the 21st district of West Bengal on 14.02.2017. With its new administrative status, the erstwhile Sub Divisional Correctional Home at Kalimpong was also upgraded to the level of a District Correctional Home. Directives were issued on 13.03.2018 for upgradation and creation of new posts to run the administrative works and for smooth management of the new District Correctional Home.

Staff Accommodation :



Burdwan Central Correctional Home has been designated as a Circle, with 4 District Correctional Homes under its administrative control. Suitable housing was a long pending demand of the guarding staff. The OSD & Ex-Officio DG & IG of CS inaugurated a barrack with a capacity of 100 at Burdwan on 2nd February, 2018.

Ready, Steady

Building the professional capacity of officials is a vital endeavor of our department. RICA, DumDum, is constantly working towards the betterment of service standards and the modification of service modules. We have recently completed our 6th Basic Training of officers. Fourteen officials including the Superintendent, Chief Controller and Controllers participated in this three month program. Hon'ble MIC Shri Ujjal Biswas greeted all the trainees at the Dikshant Parade on 3rd January, 2018 at the RICA grounds in a spectacular ceremony.



Social Contact :



The Kolkata Traffic Police organized the 'Safe Drive Save Life Half Marathon, 2018' on 7th January. We thought it would send a message of hope if we allowed our inmates to take part in this event promoting a good cause. Thirteen enthusiastic convicts from Kolkata Correctional Homes participated in the marathon organized to promote the culture of safe driving.

Cultural Contact :



Theatre has remained an uncontested winner as a medium of social reintegration. Inmates of Correctional Homes come from different cultural backgrounds; theatre helps them to frame a common cause to laugh, love and celebrate life. Theatre has been effectively used as a tool for correction through culture therapy. Efforts of the inmates are regularly staged for the public at different venues as part of various cultural festivals. 'Mahua Sundori', under supervision of Natyapremi, was staged at Ranaghat on 3rd February, 2018. The show was highly appreciated by the audience. Twenty inmates of DumDum Central Correctional Home who performed the play were felicitated at the program.

In response to the invitation from Gopalganj Raghunath High School in Dakshin Dinajpur, the cultural troupe of inmates from Balurghat Central Correctional Home staged 'Nrityanjali', choreographed by Smt. Tapasi Biswas of Nupur Nrityalaya, in the annual function on 9th February, 2018.



Commercial Contact :

The Correctional Services department values the importance of marketing the various in-house products. Correctional home products were mostly consumed in-department, with the rest sold to the outside market. Marketing these innovative products is now becoming more and more lucrative. The Jail depot participates in Government fairs and exhibitions with great enthusiasm. They have also grabbed attention at private fairs like the one organized by Tata Consultancy Services on 7th-8th March, 2018. Our efforts have been lauded by the public at large, thanks to the exposure of our products.





Pacing With Time :

Our inmates greatly treasure the interview facility with relatives and friends. Communication with loved ones lessens the burden of living incarcerated and away from family and friends. Talking face to face is the best way to communicate, while getting the chance to talk through the interview room phone is also rewarding. A touch obviously shares many emotions unspoken. But what if there is no such opportunity? Several old, feeble parents cannot meet their offspring physically because of the cost of conveyance. In tune with the advancement of technology, the department has introduced video conference facilities for inmates and their near and dear ones. This will enable distant families to reconnect, at no cost to themselves.



Utilizing Time :

Healthy food is the key to peaceful and happy living. Does that imply that snacks must be completely left out from the diet? Nutritionists say that a controlled quantity of snacks is actually beneficial.

Women inmates of Jalpaiguri Central Correctional Home are learning the art of making healthy and tasty papad, chips, bhujia, gathia, sauces, pickles, khakra etc. Rajasthani House, an organization of Jalpaiguri, have begun their first training session with 18 female inmates.



Electrically Equipped :

The Domestic Electrician Course is one of the departmental programs undertaken for the capacity building of inmates. Sixteen inmates of the DumDum Central Correctional Home participated in this 6-month training program conducted jointly with the Department of Technical Education, Training & Skill Development, West Bengal. Shri Purnendu Basu, Hon'ble MIC of the Department of Technical Education West Bengal and Shri Ujjal Biswas, Hon'ble MIC, Dept. of Correctional Administration, West Bengal graced the felicitation ceremony on 13th March, 2018.

Growing Gorgeous :

The garment manufacturing unit has been initiated at Alipore Women's Correctional Home on 29th July, 2017. Under the supervision of Ms. Puja Gupta, a renowned fashion designer, 5 inmates are tailoring dresses under Ms. Gupta's brand, with 9 more inmates under training. This endeavour will certainly go a long way in rehabilitating the women inmates.



Puppets' Poetry :

Puppetry is an art whose antiquity can be established through ancient scriptures. It was perhaps the primitive urge of men to create life-like movements through figures, which later developed into a theatre form, incorporating elements of all art forms. Puppetry, as an art form, not only provides entertainment but can also be used to convey meaningful and useful messages. Over the years, it has developed into a powerful media of communication and is used widely by educators and students. Puppetry offers a real challenge to the imagination and creative ability of the individual, while being accessible to all. This



medium gives ample opportunity for originality in writing scripts, designing puppets, music and the overall presentation.

Not everybody can sing or dance or act onstage. But there is an artist inside each one of us. Puppetry gives an opportunity even to the shyest person to voice ideas. We have started teaching puppetry through workshops conducted by Shri Sudip Gupta of Dolls'Theatre at Alipore Central Correctional Home. Interested convicts from all over the state are learning the art of puppetry at the workshop. We will introduce our puppeteers to the society through a public production once the program concludes.



INSIDE :

The Correctional Services Act gives equal importance to physical fitness and the development of intellectual traits. All the state's Correctional Homes have been given directives to facilitate both indoor and outdoor games and sports. To ensure implementation of this, a program of Annual Sports has been included in the Administrative Calendar. At the last Annual Sports organized by the Correctional Homes, inmates participated in large numbers.

OUTSIDE :

The 59th Annual Sports Meet of Correctional Staff was held at the DumDum Central Correctional Home grounds on 3th-4th February, 2018. In the two days' Sports Meet, 230 participants from 7 Circles competed in 27 group and individual events. The Presidency staff secured the first position. Hon'ble MIC of the Department Shri Ujjal Biawas and Shri Raj Kanojia, Principal Secretary, Department of Correctional Administration, West Bengal, graced the ceremony and congratulated participants.





Captivity is believed to restrict all aspects of life; physical, mental and emotional. Staying amidst a heterogeneous group with members from varied socio-cultural background limits the arena for commonness. Sports can bring these minds even closer. In Darjeeling District Correctional Home, Volley Ball has done the magic. Volley Ball matches at Darjeeling DCH have brought inmates and staff closer in an environment of brotherhood.

FACES



The Face of this quarter is Md. Kuddus Alam, a middle-aged inmate of Durgapur Open Correctional Home, hailing from Jharkhand. Eldest amongst three brothers, Kuddus had to join hands with his parents in running his family after completing his 10th standard from the HAL School of Bokaro Steel Plant in 1988. In 1990, he travelled to Kolkata in search of a job and was sheltered by his uncle at Taltala PS area. He found a job checking samples in a leather bag factory, the same one where his uncle worked. Unfortunately, his uncle got involved in a dispute with his employer over the issue of his nephew's dismissal from the job. The duo then committed heinous crimes like kidnapping and murdering their employer's child as an act of revenge in 1994. Since then, his address became Presidency Jail. Kuddus was convicted for the life term. Various programs under the correctional procedure at Presidency Correctional Home was able to mould mind of Kuddus and he soon earned the confidence of officials and was entrusted with the responsibility of being the Chief Writer.

His performance gave him the opportunity to live another life at Lalgola Open Correctional Home. There he worked in a grocery shop. In 2014, he got a breakthrough when the second Open Correctional Home was established in Durgapur. He opted for his transfer to Durgapur and with the help of Correctional Home authorities, he got the job of a godown manager in an HP bottling plant. His shift starts at 8 a.m. and he works hard daily till 5 p.m. After meeting his monthly expenses, he can now manage to send around INR 7,500/- to his family. He claims he will be absorbed by the HP authorities, if released. He has hopes of settling permanently with his family in Durgapur.