PREFACE

Prison and prison administration as a subject of research work is of very recent origin in our country. Prior to the nineteenth century, 'prison' did not find a place in the writings of social scientists. However, contemporary literatures on criminology show the change of attitudes among research scholars and social scientists towards 'prison' as an institution. Today, it is regarded as a reformatory and rehabilitative organisation along with its custodial function.

History records the origin of 'prison' as a public institution, years back in 1166 AD. Writers on it say about the existence of prisons in countries like Rome, China, India, Babylone, etc. during this period, though not in its present form. In the middle of the sixteenth century imprisonment as a means of punishment was inflicted only on some particular categories of offenders. But in the modern age imprisonment as a means of punishment is accepted by all civilized countries of the world as a substitute to corporal punishment of the past.

Prison administration forms a branch of criminal justice system along with police and judicial administration. In our state not much work is done in this field. Therefore, with a view to examine about prison administration in general and "Bhubaneswar Jail" in particular, I have taken up this subject.

For its study, we have adopted the historical and social survey method. The method used in this work includes observation of prisoners
and prison staff and interview to both on various aspects of prison life and administration. Out of 332 prison inmates during our visit to the jail, 130 were interviewed by means of a questionnaire.

In India, imprisonment as a means of punishment was used for the first time by the British government in the year 1773. Afterwards, from time to time the British government appointed different committees on prison reforms in the years 1836, 1864, 1879, 1888, 1892 and 1920:

India became a sovereign nation in 1947 and its own constitution was implemented in the year 1950. After that in the year 1952, the U.N. Expert Committee on jail reforms with Reckless as its chairperson submitted its report. Also the Jail Manual Committee appointed by the Indian government in 1957 gave its report in 1959. The two other committees on jail reforms appointed by the government in later years under chairmanship of A.N. Mulla and V.K. Krishna Ayer respectively submitted their reports in the year 1983 and 1987 for improving jail administration.

In Orissa, prison administration dated back to the year 1803 during British rule. Orissa became a separate state in the year 1936. The Jail Manual for the Orissa state then, was drafted in 1942. In the post-independent era, the government of Orissa had so far appointed two Jail Reforms committees. The first of such committees was appointed in the year 1952 under the chairmanship of Lalmohan Patnaik and the second in the year 1979 with Harihara Mohapatra as its chairperson.

On its structural basis, 'prison' is under the Home Department of the Government of Orissa and the Minister in-charge is its political head.
The Secretary is its administrative head and the Inspector General of Prisons functions as the executive head. Previously the Inspector General was to come from the Medical Service till the year 1983. This year a system was introduced by which, now a personnel from the Indian Police Service is appointed as the Inspector General, Prisons. The district jail is like a pyramid where the superintendent stands at the apex, below whom custodial staff like jailor, assistant jailor, sub-assistant jailor, warders, etc. work. Also Probation Officer, Prison Welfare Officer and After care Officer of correctional wing work in the jail department.

In our country, classification of prison inmates was based on caste wise crime. But the Indian Jail Committee of 1864 recommended for classifying prisoners according to the nature of offence. Afterwards with some improvements, now prisoners are classified on the basis of age, sex, law under which convicted, nature of sentence, criminal antecedents, etc. However, India in general and Orissa in particular do not have scientific classification of prisoners like the advanced western countries.

Our place of study, the Bhubaneswar Special Jail is situated in the eastern side of the capital city of Bhubaneswar. The total number of custodial and correction staff of this jail were seven during my visits. Facilities provided to the jail inmates in everyday life here was found to be better than other jails. However, problems like accommodation for inmates and water shortage was acute. In the present study, it is learnt that poverty is the main cause of crime, though urbanization and industrialization remained the other main causes.

Family members of the prisoners face various difficulties like shortage of funds, management of house in the absence of the male member etc.
The prison inmates suffer from loneliness, loss of liberty and lock-psychosis due to early confinement in cell. But they get facilities like communicating with family members through letters and their visits to the jail, consulting lawyers to fight their cases, reading materials like magazines and newspapers, etc. However, they are found dissatisfied with the low wage they get for their daily labour inside the jail.

Today with the introduction of liberal policy of the state government for changed attitude of prison staff towards inmates, prison life is made better, yet most prisoners feel, in spite of better treatment to the inmates in jail, it would never be a fine place since it was meant for offenders who lead a restricted life.

Most of the jail staff, in their interview agreed that in the absence of other job prospects, they joined this service. They complained that their promotion facility is very restricted and also their salary was not adequate. A few spoke about the difficulty in managing occasional prison violence, checking secret drug supply inside the jail and feeling of insecurity outside the jail premises. They too were found dissatisfied over their frequent transfer from one place to another place and about lack of leisure and restricted holidays. Therefore, all of them wanted the government to eradicate these obstacles in the way of better jail administration.

In conclusion, it can be said that increased crime all over the world has found its repercussion in India too. To reduce crime rates in the society, coercive methods appear to be inadequate. Hence, more emphasis should be given on the reformative, curative and rehabilitative
method. Also a congenial atmosphere with reduced crime rates is possible only through the combined effort of the State authority, jail staff and private citizens.

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