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TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore jail inmates can now call home

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore: Ten public telephones (STD/ISD booths) have been set up for 5,000 prisoners in the Bangalore Central Jail at Parappana Agrahara. This is the first prison in the country with such a facility.

Inaugurating the facility on Monday, home minister M P Prakash said there are plans to provide a similar facility in other Central prisons in the state.

Prisoners will be allowed to speak for 5 minutes per week to a person of their choice but every conversation would be recorded and monitored.

If prisoners misuse the facility, their telephone cards will be seized, said sources.

The 10 booths have been spread out on the 28-acre campus — seven in the main enclosure, one each in the female block, prison hospital and quarantine section.

Each prisoner will get one card per month at a cost of Rs 102.

B’lore’s jailhouse doc clocks 200 surgeries

Pushpa Narayan | TP

Bangalore: When Dr M Basavaraj finishes surgery, he walks back to his cell in the central prison, Parapana Agrahara. The 100-bed prison hospital had been without a surgeon for many years. Their search ended when the doctor came in to serve his seven-year sentence for dowry harassment.

Now, clad in the inmate’s white-kurta-pyjama, Basavaraj looks like any other prisoner. But, every morning or whenever there’s a medical emergency, his cell doors are thrown open and he rushes to the hospital.

In the past two years, he’s performed 200 surgeries. He is also the “unappointed” prison surgeon and doubles as the ‘night doctor on call’ as four physicians employed in the hospital leave at dusk.

In 2005, 13 years after his wife committed suicide, the doctor, who’s worked at several government hospitals in Karnataka, as well as in Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi and Nanavati Hospital in Mumbai, was jailed in this prison, near Bangalore.

“After 6 pm, the doors of my barracks open whenever there is a medical emergency. I do my best to help people around with the little facilities here,” says the surgeon who has expertise in minimal access (keyhole) surgery.

He has kept the minor operation theatre busy with removal of tumours, sutures and some infectious swellings as well. “Many times I have asked the authorities to rush them to another hospital as there aren’t enough facilities here to handle emergencies such as heart or brain attacks,” he said.

“With little more equipment and back-up systems, a good theatre can handle more minor surgeries like appendicitis and hernia. The jail authorities have promised them,” says Basavaraj.

DIG (Prison) B S Abbar is not sure if permission would come for better facilities but he knows when Basavaraj completes his term he would have offers from leading hospitals.

“I help him get the latest updates in surgery through medical journals and books. The rules don’t permit us to let him browse the internet. He learns about the books from his friends and places orders,” he said.

Jail psychiatrist Dr P Rajani says: “Two years ago, Dr Basavaraj was shattered. He thought his career was ruined and his future was bleak. Today, he seems more confident.”

Basavaraj agrees. “When I walk out I’ll get back to the hospitals that I worked for. But, even then I would continue my service to this place. For me, this place is something special.”

EMERGENCY BEHIND BARS: Dr Basavaraj
Surat to get central jail soon

By Anil Pathak
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Gandhinagar: Surat will soon get a central jail, under a Rs 65-crore expansion project by the state government in its bid to reduce congestion in the 23 prisons across the state. The Rajkot Jail, which will be expanded, will also be accorded central jail status.

As per the new plan, two new district jails are being set up at Navsari and Rajpipla and also in adjacent Dahod. For Rajpipla, the government has already acquired 10 acres of land, where a new jail would be constructed.

State principal secretary (home) KC Kapoor said the government has appointed the Gujarat Police Housing Board as the nodal agency for construction of jails. The first jail to be constructed by the board would be the Surat Central Jail. A sum of Rs 8 crore has been earmarked for the proposed new central jail at Lajpore area of the diamond city.

A major expansion plan for the Rajkot Jail has also been undertaken while renovation of Gondal and Bhuj jail is likely to be completed in the next four months. The open jail at Anreli is also being expanded to accommodate more prisoners.

State principal secretary (home) KC Kapoor said that the ongoing expansion and renovation of jails would be completed by May, when more than 10,000 to 12,000 prisoners would be kept in the jails which are at present overcrowded. At present, there are 23 jails with the capacity of more than 6,000 prisoners.

Referring to the modernisation of jails, he said that six more jails in the state would soon have a video-conferencing facility linking them with the courts like in Ahmedabad and Vadodara central jails. In the Sabarmati Central Jail in Ahmedabad, a new jail has been constructed exclusively to accommodate over 700 undertrials.

According to Kapoor, Palanpur and Mehsana jails have also been selected for expansion work. Under the new plan, housing quarters for jail staff would be also constructed closer to the jail premises.

Convict turns saviour for cops

Sarfaraz Shaikh | TNN

Ahmedabad: It could have been the perfect escape hatch for rape convict Jawahar Thakkar when the bus in which the police were escorting him to Ahmedabad crashed into a truck early Tuesday.

But, instead of slipping away under the cover of darkness, Thakkar decided to take the injured policemen and passengers to the nearest hospital. When Sanand police reached the spot they were pleasantly surprised to have a convict help them out.

Head constable Dhirubha Jorubha, who is investigating the case, told TOI that Thakkar could have easily given the slip. “It was chaos in the darkness with about 15 injured passengers shouting for help,” said Dhirubha.

According to the police, Thakkar was taken to a court in Bhuj for hearing of another case pending against him on Monday. “The escort party consisting of assistant sub-inspector Kunthi Zala and constable Mukesh Thakore were escorting the convict back to the jail in Ahmedabad-bound ST bus from Bhuj,” said police.

As the bus was speeding past the Chharodi village on the outskirts of Sanand town near Ahmedabad, the driver missed the dumper-truck parked on the roadside and rammed it. “We reached the accident site immediately and were astonished to see a prisoner with handcuffs on, helping a policeman and shouting to passing vehicles for help,” said police.

The policemen were immediately taken to the nearby primary health centre. Other injured passengers were rushed to the VS Hospital in Ahmedabad. Conductor of the bus Dinesh Chavda succumbed to injuries.
New gizmo keeps convicts in check
Gadget Installed In State Jails Can Detect Narcotics, Explosives

Sourav Mukherjee | TNN

Ahmedabad: A small black, rectangular box weighing a little more than 3 kg has struck fear in the hearts of some of the most hardened criminals housed in the Sabarmati Central Jail.

Wondering how the puny black box, just 36 cm long, can scare men accused and convicted of crimes like murder, terror attacks, rape and extortion? This is how. This little box is a hand-held trace detector for explosives and narcotic substances. The central jails in Ahmedabad and Vadodara were recently equipped with this new-age security gadget that is powerful enough to identify traces of four types of narcotic drugs and more than seven different kinds of high-power explosives.

Additional director general of jails in Gujarat, H R Gahlot, says, "Gujarat is the first state to make these hand-held narcotics and explosive detectors a part of its jail security. Many inmates have been caught trying to smuggle stuff like paan masala, tobacco and even mobiles. Prisoners who go to court with police escorts are thoroughly checked physically and then with gadgets like the trace detector when they re-enter the jail campus." However, for criminals in Gujarat jails the trace detector is a larger than life demon. Inmates of Vadodara and Ahmedabad jails see the dreaded box as a mysterious security gadget with super sniffing powers that can detect even the slightest traces of drugs and even paan masala.

The number of people trying to smuggle in stuff illegally into the jail campus has dipped drastically since we got this gadget. Of course, we have also contributed by consciously informing jail inmates about the attributes of the trace detector," said S P Jadeja, superintendent of Sabarmati Central Jail.

"We have told the inmates that apart from narcotics and explosives, the gadget can also detect other addictive substances like paan masala, among other things. This fear factor helps us make inmates follow norms," Jadeja added.

That apart, the device is scary. The small narcotics and explosive detector, fitted with a rechargeable battery, can actually tell if an inmate has smoked or injected a drug before coming to the jail.

The small detector, fitted with a rechargeable battery, can actually tell if an inmate has smoked or injected a drug before coming to the jail.

The trace detector, manufactured by a US-based company, uses ion mobility spectrometry technology to identify particles of drugs like cocaine, heroin, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and methamphetamine.

For explosive substances, this trace detector has a larger span that can identify RDX, PETN, TNT, Semtex, NG, ammonium nitrate, among some of the explosives.
Jailbreak in Jamnagar: Four inmates make their escape

Members Of Notorious Sat Nari Gang, They Face 26 Criminal Cases

Rajkot: In a scene straight out of a Bollywood film, four inmates of Jamnagar district jail escaped by climbing a 25-ft high wall fenced with high voltage electric wires in the wee hours of Sunday. The four inmates, who were members of the notorious Sat Nari gang which is active in Saurashtra region, face 26 criminal cases, including loot and murders, police sources said.

Of the four fugitives, three are brothers namely Vallabh Manji Devipujak, Mansukh Manji Devipujak and Jilu Manji Devipujak. The fourth member Ramesh Lalaji Parmar is a distant relative of the brothers.

The Sat Nari gang members first broke the lock of the barrack. They then made use of pipes and blankets to climb the wall and jump to the other side of the jail over the electrified fence. A case under IPC sections 224 and 114 has been registered by the police on the basis of a complaint by jailor DM Gohil.

District superintendent of police (Jamnagar) Piyush Patel, when contacted, informed that eight members of the gang had been arrested two months ago.

"The gang was active across Saurashtra region. The survey before the burglary or loot was done by the women members of the gang, who had additional responsibility of disposing of the stolen and looted valuables," he added.

Meanwhile, patrolling in the coastal town of Jamnagar has been strengthened and police teams were carrying out searches at all the possible hideouts of the criminals. Viewing the jail break incident seriously, inspector general of police (prisons) Keshav Kumar has rushed to Jamnagar.

Pics: Darshan Thakkar

Only 35 staffers for 432 inmates: In Jamnagar district jail where there are 432 (314 undertrials and 16 female prisoners) convicts and undertrials, the staff strength is just 35. As per rules, there should be eight security personnel for night duty. Surprisingly, only two unarmed guards could be deployed on Sunday due to staff shortage. Surprisingly, the accused, who were relatives and members of the same gang, were allowed to share one barrack by the jail authorities, which only helped them to plan and co-ordinate their escape. TNN
Red storm over Jehanabad

Maoists attack town, abduct Ranvir Sena men from jail, kill 9

By Faizan Ahmad/TNN

Jehanabad: It was the night the state withered away in Jehanabad. Slogans on lips, guns and bombs in hand, nearly a thousand Maoist guerrillas ran over the town with amazing ease and opened up the jail to free their comrades. At last count, the death toll from Sunday's assault stood at seven people and nine others were killed on Monday.

In a war-like siege, that spoke of meticulous planning and smacked of a colossal intelligence failure the Red cadres, armed with information that most policemen were on election detail, cut off power and then roamed around announcing blatantly through a public address system that they were here. An embattled and cowering administration could only gawk at the charge of the Red brigade and talk about it in hushed tones later.

Leaving Jehanabad rattled, the Maoists also freed their area commander Ajay Kanu and took away with them some Ranvir Sena members. Reports said at least nine Ranvir Sena members were killed later. Up to 40 Ranvir Sena members could have been dragged away from prison, Union home secretary V N Duggal said. Moving to help the terrorised Bihar police, the Centre decided to rush nearly 1,000 additional para-military personnel, besides deploying two helicopters for air surveillance.

The fury of the attack on the upper caste army, often blamed for perpetrating heinous outrages on low caste supporters of Naxals, raised fears of a caste retaliation.

Some pamphlets left at the site spoke of social injustice. "Poor and petty criminals are rotting in jail while the bigger ones are roaming outside," it said.

The operation itself began at 9.15 pm and had Maoists swarming the jail premises from both the north and south ends. On barging into the jail, the militants immediately killed jail warden Durga Rajak.

The attackers knew just what they had to do — in fact, they were so certain that the whole operation looked rehearsed. As soon as the jail locks were broken, they freed their own, dragging out Ranvir Sena leaders and supporters. One of them, Bade Sharma, was shot dead on the spot. The siege that lasted two hours left a host of policemen wounded. Krishnanandan, one of the cops, was killed instantly.

There was no evidence that the operation was planned with the help of the Maoists' more murderous comrades in Nepal. But Manoj Kanu, one of the main attackers who was wounded and landed in custody, said, "There are many trainers. We can't always recognise those who train us. But yes, we are told that our trainers have come from outside."
BANGALORE: Just another prison a few years ago, Devanhali was overcrowded, and short on funds and basic infrastructure. Today, it is considered one of South India's 'model prisons', its inmates engaged in remunerative work like agriculture, horticulture, sheep rearing and dairy farming.
Families to be allowed in open jails

By TEJAS MEHTA

Ahmedabad, April 24: In the footsteps of the Sanganer open jail in Rajasthan, jail authorities in Gujarat have proposed to the state government to sanction building of open jails in the state where prisoners can live with their families.

Jail administrators believe that open jails will be an excellent rehabilitative measure for the prisoners and it will also solve the widespread problem of homo-sexuality in state prisons.

Set-up in the early sixties, Dr. Sampoornanand Sanganer Open Camp is a model prison in Rajasthan based on a rehabilitative approach that relies on family and community. Rajasthan has nine 'open prison' farms or camps that accommodate about 400 prisoners, in most areas with their families, but Sanganer has turned out to be the most unique and progressive camp in the state, as per reports.

In Gujarat, at present, only the Sabarmati Central prison and Amreli Jail have provision for open jails. Top police officials said the open jail system is not a new phenomenon but proposal to introduce open jails, where the prisoners can live with their families, is a good initiative taken by the jail authorities.

When asked who will be eligible for entry into open jails, the jail officials said serial murderers and rapists, people who have committed crimes against the state, drug smugglers and professional assassins would not be eligible.

In recent years, many cases of homo-sexuality between prisoners were reported in the state. Some police officials opined that homosexuality could be another reason to introduce such a system. "Sex is a natural thing which cannot be suppressed," joint commissioner of sector I, P.C. Thakur said.

Jail authorities informed that the possibility of a prisoner escaping from such a jail is minimal. They stated the example of the Jaipur open jail where prisoners displaying good behaviour as per the jail manual go out to work on a daily basis. Many prisoners, whose earnings are taxable, pay regular income tax, the authorities said.

After implementation of the proposal, problems like quarrels on petty issues, misbehaviour with others and violent displays of anger could be controlled, jail officials at the Sabarmati Jail said.
हैदराबाद, 9 मई। कभी कहा जाता था कि जेल में कैदियों को अपनी सजा पूरी करने की सीमा पूरी करने से अलग है। लेकिन अब हजारों जेली के जेली में कैदियों को विभिन्न कल्याणी कार्यों में भी कार्य कराने का अवसर मिला है।

इस हफ्ते के बारे में जिन्हें जेली के लिए कई कल्याणी कार्य करने का अवसर मिला है।

1. स्वास्थ्य विभाग
   - जेल में बच्चों की स्वास्थ्य सेवाएं प्रदान करने का काम किया जा रहा है।
   - जेल में बच्चों को स्वास्थ्य सेवाएं प्रदान करने के लिए विभिन्न कल्याणी कार्यों को मान लेंगे।

2. शिक्षा विभाग
   - जेल में शिक्षा सेवाएं प्रदान करने का काम किया जा रहा है।
   - जेल में शिक्षा सेवाएं प्रदान करने के लिए विभिन्न कल्याणी कार्यों को मान लेंगे।

3. सैनिक विभाग
   - जेल में सैनिक सेवाएं प्रदान करने का काम किया जा रहा है।
   - जेल में सैनिक सेवाएं प्रदान करने के लिए विभिन्न कल्याणी कार्यों को मान लेंगे।

4. समाज सेवा विभाग
   - जेल में समाज सेवाएं प्रदान करने का काम किया जा रहा है।
   - जेल में समाज सेवाएं प्रदान करने के लिए विभिन्न कल्याणी कार्यों को मान लेंगे।

5. अन्य कार्य
   - जेल में अन्य कार्य प्रदान करने का काम किया जा रहा है।
   - जेल में अन्य कार्य प्रदान करने के लिए विभिन्न कल्याणी कार्यों को मान लेंगे।

जेल में जेल के दौरान कैदियों को प्रशिक्षण के साथ-साथ सफाई करने की शिक्षा भी दी जाती है। इसके लायक उम्मीद है कि जेल में कैदियों के लिए विभिन्न कल्याणी कार्यों को मान लेंगे।
Ahmedabad: Ravji Pawar was arrested when he was 34. Today, he is 50. For the last 16 years, Pawar is languishing in jail, as the trial against him for the murder case he was arrested in is yet to begin. The reason — the involvement of investigating agencies of two countries — India and Dubai.

A resident of Gholar village of Chikhli taluka in south Gujarat, Pawar worked as a domestic servant in house of one Sagar family in Dubai. On February 4, 1992, all five members of Sagar family including two children were found murdered and Pawar was missing from the place. In a couple of days, he appeared in Navsari. Police arrested him on February 8, 1992 after an Interpol message; that Pawar was accused of ‘killing five of the family. Latter, CBI took over the case, since the offense had taken place in Dubai.

Five years after his arrest, his trial commenced in 1997 in the Navsari sessions court. During three-year long proceedings conducted in Navsari, the prosecution cross-examined 33 witnesses including some from Dubai. The last person to be examined, in 2000, was the investigating officer of CBI.

However in 2000, the trial took another turn, when CBI filed an application before the Navsari court to call 13 officials of various departments of Dubai government, who were involved in the investigation of the case there. The bottleneck in this procedure was availability of people, as nobody’s addresses were known by then. Moreover, the Dubai government refused to send its officials to India, to be cross examined by an Indian court. After this, CBI moved a proposal to appoint a commission to cross examine the 13 Dubai officials. But, the Navsari court rejected it.

However, in 2002 the CBI filed a revision application before Gujarat High Court obtained a stay on proceedings in Navsari sessions court. The High Court also transferred the case to CBI court in Ahmedabad and Pawar was brought to Sabarmati Central jail from Navsari. Since then, proceedings have come to a standstill.

Objecting to this, Pawar wrote to the court in 2005 that CBI has “knowingly and willfully remained silent and not cared to proceed further in the case.” Pawar has filed three applications for bail before the High Court. However, Justice BN Mehta has refused to grant bail. Zubin Bharda, the amicus curiae appointed by the High Court to assist it in this case, said that after 16 years, CBI has forwarded another proposal to Pawar. They told him that the case might go forward, if he admits to the documents and chargesheet filed against him.
Ahmedabad: A gang that tried to extort money from a stock market dealer from Ahmedabad, Mahendra Shah, was busted by the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) on Saturday. Ironically, the racket was run by a former member of the Fazl-ur-Rehman gang, Akhilesh Tiwari, who is serving a sentence in the Sabarmati Central Jail.

To extort the money, Tiwari used convicts who were out on parole and was helped by a police constable posted at Sabarmati jail.

The incident has raised several questions on how Tiwari had access to two mobile phones used in the racket, while serving a sentence. Three of the six members, including the police constable, are in ATS custody, while two are absconding.

On October 18, four men barged into Shah's office at Sarovar Complex on CG Road, claiming to be members of a gang led by Subhash Singh Thakur, and demanded Rs 20 lakh. The men accused Shah of funding Muslim organisations and even threatened to kill him if he refused to pay.

A frightened Shah called up his friend in Kalupur and asked him to arrange Rs 10 lakh. The men were then escorted to Kalupur in Shah's car to collect the amount, while another Indica car hired by the extortionists, followed them.

Meanwhile, local BJP MLA Jitu Vaghela turned up at Shah's office by chance and was told about the incident. Vaghela called up the miscreants and asked why they were asking for the money.

"The miscreants were about to reach Kalupur when Vaghela called up. They then chose to get out of Shah's car and escaped in the Indica accompanying them as they feared that the police might have been informed," says ATS chief, additional director general of police, D G Vanzara.

Of the gang members, the police caught murder accused Dharmendrasinh Rajput alias Guddu, who was out on parole from Bhavnagar jail, from Shivdhara Apartments in Thaltej. Another murder accused Ramesh Jhala was nabbed from Gandhinagar GIDC area, while the police constable Laxman Tadvi was nabbed from the jail premises when he turned up for duty.

Two other accused, Rajneesh of Chandkheda and Suresh Gangaram of Mansa in Gandhinagar, are absconding.
Vadodara: In a scene straight out of any Bollywood potboiler, 10 members of a dreaded gang of dacoits and all undertrials, beat up four policemen and fled from their custody in broad daylight on the Ahmedabad-Vadodara Expressway while being brought to Ahmedabad from Halol on Wednesday.

Eleven undertrials were on their way back to the Sabarmati Central Jail after a hearing in a loot case at the Halol court. One of them failed to escape from the spot.

Police said the undertrials attacked the cops suddenly and tried to snatch their rifles at a lonely spot on the expressway. Policemen fired nine rounds to foil the escape bid. 

"Four of the undertrials had the police van stopped, saying that they wanted to relieve themselves, and got down. The rest were in the van itself. All of them suddenly attacked us and tried to snatch our rifles," said ASI D Parmar, who headed the escort team.

"The ones who had got down from the van began pelting stones at us and those inside the van attacked us with handcuffs. We even opened fire at them," added an injured Parmar whose uniform was covered with bloodstains. Two constables have been admitted at SSG Hospital.

The incident occurred about 30 km from Vadodara in Poicha village in Savli taluka around 3.15 pm. "We tried to overpower them but the attack was so sudden that we did not get time to react. But we ensured they did not get hold of our firearms," said Parmar.

The undertrials are part of a Madhya Pradesh-based dacoity gang and accused in a loot case that occurred in Halol. One ASI, two head constables and five constables were accompanying the accused. Seven rounds of .303 rifle and two rounds of TMC rifle were fired at the undertrials.

Senior police officials, however, told TOI that there was some delay in informing the control room and declaring high alert. "The accused might try to flee by swimming across Mahi river or the open fields," said a senior police official.

The police has declared high alert in the surrounding areas and sealed the roads leading from Ahmedabad to Vadodara. "The entry-exit points to the city too have been sealed as there is possibility that the absconders try to enter the city," said DCP D B Waghela.

The incident occurred about 30 km from Vadodara in Poicha village in Savli taluka around 3.15 pm. "We tried to overpower them but the attack was so sudden that we did not get time to react. But we ensured they did not get hold of our firearms," said Parmar.

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Ahmedabad: If Saturday’s incident at Sabarmati Central Jail, where murder convict Ahmed Badshah attacked another inmate Kamlesh Rathod with a knife, is any indication of the jail turning into a violent cauldron, it also reflects the lax security arrangements within the premises.

Though the Sabarmati police is yet to compare the knife used in the attack with that available in the jail kitchen, jail sources do not rule out the possibility of the knife being smuggled in truckloads of ration. “Connivance of jail staff is a strong possibility,” said jail officials.

This is the third such incident at this Jail in the last one-and-half years, where a sharp-edged weapon was used. Recently, the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) accused a gangster, Akhileish Tiwari, of running an extortion racket from within the jail premises. Tiwari had co-ordinated the racket activities using a mobile phone smuggled into the jail. Jail sources reveal that hardened prisoners at Sabarmati jail are well networked with their accomplices outside the premises. “Everybody here knows that we get our ration from contractors, and their locations must have been leaked out by some jail inmates to their accomplices outside. We have jail security personnel who are equipped with metal detectors, narcotics and explosive detectors. The personnel may have connived with the criminals to help smuggle in the knife,” says a senior jail official. “We are highly short-staffed and need more men to monitor these hardened criminals. We have plans to introduce more security rings, once additional manpower is sanctioned,” says Sabarmati jail superintendent S P Jadeja.

There have been other security breaches. On January 6, a violent clash had left five Godhra carnage prisoners injured, stabbed with sharp weapons.

In October 2005, an undertrial, Chetan Battery, was stabbed to death by members of a rival gang headed by Gova Rabari.

This had led the High Court to order an inquiry into the security within the jail premises under supervision of additional commissioner of police (sector I) P K Jha.

### CONCLUSIONS MADE

Some of the observations of the October 2005 inquiry report

- Presence of communal gangs in the jail
- Gang feuds in the jail are likely
- Drugs, sharp weapons were available in jail after bribing jail staff

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<tr>
<th>HAFTA RATE CHART</th>
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<td>'Hafta rate chart' according to the October 2005 report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rs 200 per month for a shave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rs 100 to Rs 300 for milk and bread</td>
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<td>Rs 500 for admission in jail dispensary</td>
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<td>Rs 1,200 to Rs 1,500 for a visit to civil hospital doctor</td>
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<td>Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 for admission in civil hospital</td>
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