JAIL ADMINISTRATION IN PUNJAB:
A CASE STUDY OF PATIALA CENTRAL JAIL

A prison is the place, where accused is kept for confinement, if such person commits any type of crime, which is punishable under the established law of a particular country\(^1\). As per provisions of the Constitution of India, prison is a state subject under entry 4 in list II (State list) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. The prison administration, therefore, is a responsibility of State Government. The state governments manage their prisons in accordance with Indian Prison Act, 1894 and rules made by them incorporated in their respective Jail Manuals. Thus, prisons in various states differ in their organization, rules and models. In the state of Punjab, prisons are governed by the rules made under Punjab Jail Manual 1996\(^2\).

From the **historical** point of view, in **ancient india** Prison systems were regulated according to *Manusamriti*. The forms of punishment were death, mutilation or banishment. During Muslim period, the principal forms of recognized punishment were capital punishment, fines and imprisonment. Quazis and Magistrates had a right to send any one to prison for the offence, which he may not have even committed. The Muslim rulers used forts as prisons. When prisoners were to be taken to prisons, they were usually loaded with iron shackles on their feet. Prisoners were treated like animals during the period of punishment.

During the period of East India Company, the prisons were in terrible conditions. A Prison Committee appointed in 1836 by Government of India suggested reformative measures for future prison administration. The enactment of Prison Act of 1894 was a great step towards organization of prison system at that time. It was first statutory enactment, which contained elaborate provisions governing admissions,
classification, health, labor, segregation and wages in respect of prison inmates. The Act also defined the duties of prison authorities\(^3\).

The Indian Jail Committee 1919-1920 suggested that the prisons should not only have deterring influence but should also have referring effect on inmates. During the period, 1907 to 1927, vigorous efforts were made to improve the conditions of prisons in India\(^4\).

After independence many Jail reform committees were appointed by the state Governments, such as the East Punjab Jail Reforms committee, 1948-49; The Madras Jail Reforms Committee 1950-51; The Jail Reforms Committee of Orissa, 1952-55; The Jail Reforms Committee of Travancore and cochin, 1953-55; The U.P. Jail Industries Inquiry Committee, 1955-56; and The Maharashtra Jail Industries Reorganization committee, 1958-59. Dr. W.C. Reckless, a U.N. Expert on correctional work, visited India during this time to suggest ways and means of improving it. His report 'Jail Administration in India' is another Landmark document in the history of prison reforms. Government of Punjab has also framed rules to regulate the prison administration and these rules have been consolidated in the Punjab Jail Manual. This manual emphasizes the responsibilities of prison authorities for the smooth functioning of prison administration, including prison discipline. The Punjab Jail Manual provides for giving work to the prisoners. The government has also made provisions about health care of prisoners, remissions of sentences, parole to the prisoners and about prisoners meeting their friends and relatives. All these factors show that statutory provisions play a very significant role in regulating the prison system and maintenance of prison standards. But howsoever good the statutory provisions may be, much depends upon how they are actually implemented. Jail administration is the main tool to implement these provisions in actual. Jail administration is a constituent part of the law and order machinery and an essential ingredient of the criminal
justice administration of a country or state. Its significance has been on a rise ever since the idea of reformation and rehabilitation gained currency.5

So far as the organizational set up of Jails in State of Punjab is concerned, as per Chapter III, IV & V of Punjab Jail Manual, 1996, the department is headed by Director General of Prisons at Chandigarh, other executive officers being Inspector General of Prisons, Deputy Inspector General of Prisons, Assistant Inspector General of Prisons, Chief Probation Officer, Chief Welfare Officer, Superintendent Central Jail, Principal Jail Training School, Deputy Superintendent Grade I & II, Assistant Superintendent, helped by Head Warders, Head Matrons & Gate keepers.

**SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Due to social awakening, Jails are attracting consistent attention of the public and also the government as institutions of not only punishment but also of reform. There is growing concern due to awareness about human rights that whether the jail inmates are being provided with basic amenities and they are given human treatment or not. 1980, jails have also been given new name of Sudhar Ghar. No doubt curative and reformative steps have been in-vogue for quite some time yet the actual visible progress in improving the conditions inside the jails has been just negligible. There is scant attention towards improvement of behavior of the jail officials towards inmates and the prisoners continue to languish under pathetic conditions. As reported in the newspapers and media from time to time, prisoners are still treated shabbily by the jail officials, they remain under unhygienic and overcrowded conditions and corruption is rampant in the jails. The jail officials have their own problems as well. But of literature shows that not many studies have been conducted on Punjab Jail Administration. Therefore, to fill this gap, the present study on Central Jail, Patiala has
been undertaken to examine the difficulties being faced by the jail officials in performing their duties; deficiency of jail staff in providing facilities to the inmates and condition of prisoners inside the jail.

According to the Punjab Government approved system/setup of jails in Punjab there are eight Central Jails i.e., Patiala, Bathinda, Ferozepur, Faridkot, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Kapurthala and Ludhiana. The Patiala Central jail is also a District Headquarter Jail and is controlling the following jails:-

Central Jail Patiala, District Jail Nabha, Open Air Jail Nabha, Sub Jail Nabha, District Jail Ropar, Sub Jail Bassi (closed for the time being), District Jail Sangrur, Sub Jail Malerkotla.

The scope of the present study includes overall jail administration in Punjab with special reference to the environment obtaining in Central Jail, Patiala, in the form of a case study.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study is organized basically with the purpose of examining jail Administration in Patiala Central Jail in Punjab with the following objectives:-

1. To study the jail administration in India and also in Punjab in historical perspective.
2. To study the organizational setup and practical functioning of the jails with special reference to Patiala Central Jail.
3. To study the provisions contained the Jail Manual, various enactments and rules governing the jail Administration in Punjab.
4. To study government schemes for reformation and welfare of prisoners in Punjab.
5. To analyze the level of efficacy of personnel system of Jail Administration of Patiala Central Jail. Keeping in view the need to meet the new challenges as a result of the reformative drive.
6. To study the nature and causes of grievances of inmates and their perceptions about the jail administration of Patiala Central Jail.
7. To examine whether Jails are truly "Sudhar Ghars" or not.
8. To suggest measures to improve the working of Central Jail Patiala.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypotheses for the present study are as given below:

1. Inadequate infrastructure of the Central Jail Patiala comes in the way of proper functioning of the Central Jail.

2. The personnel system in the Central Jail Patiala suffers from many problems.
   a) The prison personnel in the CJ Patiala are not sufficient in number.
   b) The prison personnel are not trained adequately to meet new challenges emerging in the prison administration.
   c) The prison personnel lack initiative to implement the reformatory measures.

3. Prisoners of the Central Jail Patiala are dissatisfied.
   1) Prisoners of Central Jail Patiala are not satisfied with the facilities provided to them.
   2) Jail inmates perceive jail administration of CJ Patiala as hostile.

4. Central Jail, Patiala is ill-equipped to function as a "Sudhar Ghar".

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for the present work is based on primary and secondary sources. Primary Sources include directly
obtained information through personal interviews with the help of separate Schedules for prisoners, DGP of Jails and Jail Superintendent, Deputy Jail Superintendent, Medical Staff and Head Warders/Warders working in Patiala Central Jail. Secondary sources include books, Government Documents, various Acts, journals and newspapers and articles. The study also used method of Observation.

The number of inmates in this jail under study was around 2,500 as on 02/2014, which included 112 female prisoners. Keeping in view sufficiently large number of inmates, randomly a sample of 252 prisoners including 51 female inmates was selected.

The sample was taken from jail officials, medical officials, jail warders posted in Central jail, Patiala and prisoners lodged therein as per table given below:

**SELECTED SAMPLE OF THE JAIL OFFICIALS OF CJ PATIALA**

(A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Name of Post / Jail official</th>
<th>Total posting</th>
<th>Sample selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Superintendent/ Deputy Superintendent/ Assistant Superintendent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Medical Officials</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jail Warders</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>171</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SELECTED SAMPLE OF THE PRISONERS OF CJ PATIALA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Male Prisoners</th>
<th>No. of Female Prisoners</th>
<th>No. of Convicts</th>
<th>No. of Under-Trials</th>
<th>Total Prisoners in the sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The method of primary data collection was mainly different types of Interview Schedules for different groups of respondents comprising Jail Superintendents, Deputy Jail Superintendents, Assistant Jail Superintendents, Medical officials and Jail Warders. After obtaining the necessary permission from Chandigarh DGP office, feedback on the relevant issues concerning jail inmates through a well-structured Schedule was secured by visiting the CJ, Patiala. Efforts were made to get views of the visitors to the jail also. Secondary data like newspapers, concerned websites, books, government documents, various acts, journals and articles were also consulted. Method of observation was also used during personal visits to Central Jail, Patiala.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

The data from the total sample of 81 jail officials and 253 prisoners was carefully edited. Then it was manually analyzed and tabulated.

**CHAPTERIZATION**

The present study is divided into seven chapters:

1. **Introduction:** The first chapter is the introduction of the topic. It highlighted the significance, scope, objectives, hypothesis and methodology of the study. A review of existing literature, published books, articles in national and international journals, thesis, reports available on relevant websites and dissertations have also been made.

2. **Jail administration: A historical perspective:** In the second chapter, an effort has been made to study the jail administration from historical point of view. It also elaborates on the origin of regular prison system in ancient times and gradual changes therein during *Mauryan* rule, *Gupta* rule, *Mughal* rule, *British* rule etc. and after Independence of India. The historical prospect of
prison reforms in India and Punjab and recommendations of various jail committees has also been discussed.

3. Organization and functions of Punjab Jail Department: In the third chapter, organization and functions of Punjab jail department have been described. The posts of jail department i.e. Director General of Police (Prison), Inspector General of Prisons, Deputy Inspector General of Prisons, Assistant Inspector General of Prisons, Chief Probation Officer, Chief Welfare Officer, Superintendent Central Jail, Principal Training School, Superintendent District Jails/ Deputy Superintendent District Jails-Grade-I, Deputy Superintendent Grade-II including District Probation Officer, Assistant Superintendent/Probation Officers, Head Warders, Head Matrons, Warders and Matrons have been discussed along with their powers and functions.

4. Views of the jail officials: The fourth chapter deals with personnel administration of the prison system with reference to Central Jail, Patiala. It contains data analysis and discussions regarding jail personnel and medical staff posted in Central Jail, Patiala. An attempt has been made to discuss the social profile, working conditions, way of performing the duties and facilities available to jail officials and medical staff. Views of jail officials have also been obtained regarding financial position of jail, education of prisoners and other important issues.

5. Perceptions of Prisoners in CJ, Patiala: In the fifth chapter, an attempt has been made to evaluate the perceptions of the prisoners by analyzing their social profile, living conditions in the jail, their daily routine, facilities available to them, their opinion regarding jail officials, medical staff and parole etc with the help of tables and charts.
6. Reformation of prisoners: The sixth chapter contains data analysis and discussion regarding institutional and non-institutional reformatory measures and welfare programs for the prisoners. The reformatory measures include institutional reformatory measures like parole, furlough, remission system, gratuity scheme, convict officers, welfare programs and work in prisons, while probation is the main non-institutional reformatory measure.

7. Conclusions and Suggestions: In the seventh chapter, on the basis of field observation and data analysis, hypothesis verification has been done with detailed discussions. Conclusions are given in this chapter and requisite recommendations to improve the working of jail administration and living conditions of prisoners. In the end, bibliography of books, thesis, dissertations, journals, reports and websites having bearing on the study have been given.

**FINDINGS:**

The findings of the present study are divided into two parts. First part relates to the personnel of Central Jail, Patiala, that is, Jail officials, Medical personnel and Jail Warders and second part deals with the prisoners lodged in Central Jail, Patiala. The findings are as under:

**I. Jail Personnel:**

(A) **Views of Jail Officials:**

1. Regarding the social profile of jail officials, it was found that a majority of the jail officials was of the age group of 46 years and above. All the jail officials were male. Half of the jail officials were graduates, 25% jail officials had studied upto 10+2 level and remaining 25% were having degree of post graduation. All the jail officials were having faith in Sikh religion. All the jail officials were proficient in Punjabi, Hindi and English languages.
2. Majority of the jail officials were posted in the Central Jail, Patiala for just over one year at the time of interviews held with the help of different Schedules.

3. Overall the jail officials were satisfied with their appointment in the Central Jail, Patiala. None of them ranked their appointment as a punishment.

4. Half of the jail officials were appointed in Central jail, Patiala by the jail department itself. However, other departments like State government and PPSC had also appointed jail officials there.

5. The jail officials were given training at the time of entry into the service, after every promotion and during the service period as well.

6. The jail officials got their promotions in jail department on seniority basis.

7. As per majority (62.5%) of the jail officials, they were transferred by the jail department at fixed intervals. However, 25% of the jail officials revealed that they got transferred on recommendations (sifarish) as well.

8. All the jail officials were satisfied with the training.

9. 75% jail officials said that the policies, various rules and regulations of the jail department were very well defined.

10. All the jail officials said that they listened to the complaints of the prisoners daily.

11. 75% jail officials thought that the prisoners help them in executing the works of the jail.

12. Majority (63%) of the jail officials revealed that prisoners helped them in collecting information regarding other inmates to some extent only.
13. So far as the information regarding physical and mental problems of prisoners was concerned, a majority of the jail officials said that jail administration maintained this information.

14. The behavior of half of the jail officials towards the prisoners was professional and other half said that they were sensitive.

15. Majority of the jail officials expressed that they remained vigilant regarding human rights of the prisoners while dealing with them.

16. All of the jail officials used harsh language/conversation, abuse and beating as well to keep the prisoners under control as and when required.

17. Half of the jail officials considered the annual allocation of the budget to the jail to be inadequate and many jail officials thought that it was adequate to some extent only.

18. Mostly the jail department got its financial inputs from the State government.

19. According to majority of the jail officials, the Central jail, Patiala has started the reforming activities in shape of prayer, yoga, exercise, meditation and congregation, cultural activities, interaction sessions and lectures for awareness of the prisoners so that they were able to respect the law.

20. Majority of the jail officials thought that working in the jail was compulsory for all the prisoners.

21. As per all the jail officials, the prisoners could meet their relatives after every three days.

22. According to the high majority of the jail officials, the problems being faced by the jail administration were inadequate staff/funds, political interference and over-crowding of inmates collectively.

23. 88% jail officials agreed on the question of calling the jail a rehabilitation centre.
24. Half of the jail officials opined that Model Prison Manual by B.P.R.D. was a good document regarding administration of jail. However, it was sad that 37.50% jail officials did not know anything about this manual. Remaining jail officials opined that there was nothing special in it.

25. It was shocking to observe that majority of the jail officials did not know anything about Draft Prison Bill, 2010.

26. Majority of the jail officials found their job profile full of tension/stress.

27. Findings from open questions put to jail officials are as under:
   - Very low budget to execute its works smoothly.
   - Many prisoners in the Central jail, Patiala were pursuing their study from I.G.N.O.U. and open school from Punjab School Education Board. There was no restriction or upper limit for prisoners to get the education. Employment training programs were being carried out in Central Jail, Patiala in collaboration with I.T.I. Patiala.
   - Psychiatrists/ counselors from the office of civil surgeon, Patiala visited the jail to improve behavior of the prisoners.
   - There was no program for rehabilitation of prisoners after completion of their punishment nor did the jail department provide any employment to the prisoners after completion of their punishment.
   - The prisoners carried out work relating to printing, chair-making, welding and power-loom etc in the jail factory.
   - Parole was granted to the prisoners as per guidelines of Punjab Good Conduct Prisoners (temporary relax) Act, 1962 and the prisoners were released on parole only after getting satisfactory report regarding their conduct and character.
(B) **Views of Medical Personnel:**

1. The medical personnel had Pharmacist, Staff Nurse and Compounder available to assist them in Central Jail, Patiala.
2. Majority of medical personnel was appointed permanently in Central Jail, Patiala.
3. Majority of medical personnel told that they were appointed by Health Department and some of the medical officials were appointed by State Government.
4. All the medical officials claimed to examine the prisoners medically daily.
5. Majority of medical officials told that medical equipments and accommodation were available to them.
6. Majority of medical officials (56%) told that for emergencies, medical aid was available to prisoners up to First-aid only. Rest of the medical official told that medical help was available up to minor operations as well.
7. All the medical personnel claimed to provide medical help to the prisoners free of any cost.
8. All the medical personnel admitted that there were drug-addict prisoners in Central Jail, Patiala.
9. All the Medical personnel were quite satisfied with their job profile.
10. Majority of the medical personnel told that the prisoners did pressurize them to prepare fake medical reports for getting undue benefits.

(C) **Views of Jail Warders:**

1. All the Jail Warders reported that they performed their duty for more than eight hours daily. Jail Warders in majority felt that there was too much workload on them.
2. It was serious to find that the relationship between the Jail Warders and the prisoners was quite tense as only 23% Jail Warders said that they had normal relationship with the prisoners.

3. A very high majority of Jail Warders found their salary either adequate or adequate to a large extent.

4. More than half of the Jail Warders stated that they did not have any facility for relaxation despite their long stressful working hours and enormous workload in the Jail. Jail Warders were not provided the facility of Library or indoor games; they had to rely on a small canteen or they gossiped, huddled in a very small room.

5. It is ironical that overall, around 85% of the sample of the Jail Warders found themselves insecure to varying extent because of the bully kind of prisoners in the Jail.

6. The number of Jail Warders was found to be much less in Central Jail Patiala as against the sanctioned posts. Shortage of staff combined with the over-crowding in the Central Jail Patiala is worsening the conditions of prison and increasing job-stress.

II. **Prisoners' Views:**

1. The social profile of the respondents comprising 253 prisoners of Central Jail, Patiala can be summarized as below:
   - The age wise analysis shows that majority (42%) of the prisoners were in age group of 31 to 42 years. Least prisoners were of age group of 61 years and above.
   - 80% of the prisoners were males and remaining were females.
   - 78% of the inmates were married.
   - So far as education level of the prisoners was concerned; majority (53%) of the inmates were matriculate.
   - A majority of the prisoners belonged to Sikh religion.
2. It was quite shocking to gather that most of the inmates were still under-trial.

3. Majority of the prisoners were locked up in the Jail for committing crimes other than murder, rape or theft which means for indulging in corruption and cheating etc.

4. Most of the inmates revealed that they committed the crime, which landed them into the Jail, on being misled by some other person.

5. Majority of the inmates had a bad impression about the Jail on first day of their stay in the Jail and it persisted even after spending some time in the Jail.

6. Majority of prisoners told that treatment of Jail authorities towards them was mixed i.e. occasionally good and sometimes bad as well.

7. Complaint box was made available to the prisoners by Jail authorities in accordance with the rules.

8. Ironically, most of the inmates did not know anything about the efforts being made by the Jail authorities for solving their problems.

9. A majority of the inmates revealed that facility of proper shelter has been provided to them in the Jail, whereas facility of proper clothes was not being provided to the prisoners.

10. Facility of clean drinking was available to the inmates. Facility of proper food available to the prisoners was very minimal. Most of the prisoners told that toilets in the Jail were not clean.

11. Responses of the inmates on question of availability of facility of library were on negative side. Facility of computer available to inmates was very minimal as well. Same condition was there so far as the facility of study available to the inmates was concerned.

12. More than half prisoners gave negative answer to the question of facility of free legal aid being provided to them.
13. The majority of inmates told that they were being provided with the facility of Television for the purpose of their entertainment in the Jail.

14. As per majority of the inmates, proper arrangements were made by Jail authorities for their meeting with relatives and friends.

15. Majority of the inmates told that medical care available to them was very minimal. According to most of the prisoners, Doctors posted in Central Jail, Patiala were careless.

16. Most of the inmates found nothing special about relationship developed between them and Jail authorities.

17. Majority (around 80%) of inmates revealed that prisoners in Central Jail, Patiala do have tendency to quarrel with each other at times.

18. Around 81% inmates told that gangs/groups of prisoners do exist in Central Jail, Patiala.

19. Most of the inmates told that they spent their morning while praying to God. According to most of the prisoners, cultural functions are being organized in Central Jail, Patiala some-times only.

20. Most of the inmates revealed that they did not get wages for the work in the Jail.

21. Majority of prisoners felt that experience in the Jail has made them hard-hearted.

22. According to a majority of inmates, panchayats or committees have not been formed in the Jail.

23. Most of the inmates did not know that despite being prisoners, they have some rights.

24. A majority of inmates believed that Jail was a reform house. On the other hand a majority of the prisoners were also of the views that there was no such activity in the Jail, which brought positive change in their behavior.
25. Most of the prisoners thought that no gang of drug smugglers operated within the Jail. They were also of the opinion that mobile phones were not being used in the Jail.

26. A majority of the inmates interviewed had decided that they would live improved live after their imprisonment was over.

27. Most of the prisoners chose to remain mum over probation.

It also came to the notice the researcher that some improvement took place after data collection like installations of new R.O. system for drinking water, addition of one Ambulance, start of video conferencing facilities and start of I.T.I Courses etc.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

From the present research work, it is clear that there is an urgent need to make comprehensive jail reforms. The whole jail administration, whether its organization, training, posting, recruitment, transfer, attitude or discipline of its personnel, is in need of radical change. Efforts in patches have not and will not result in any substantial progress in jail reforms. The following suggestions have emerged as most important to make jail administration more effective and reformation oriented:

1. The jail administration in the Central Jail, Patiala like all other jails in India works as per rules/regulations of age old laws. The offenders have changed their ways of committing crime in the present scenario and the challenges being faced by the jail authorities have also changed. The jail personnel must be given training of modern methods of prison management at regular intervals.

2. It is suggested that government must formulate a policy for promotion of jail warders, which is sufficient to check demoralized
mental status of this important functionary of jail department. They may be promoted as Senior Head Warders or more posts of Jail Deputy Superintendent can be created for them so that they do not feel stagnated after 10-15 years of service.

3. The jail officials and warders in Central Jail, Patiala have to perform their duties for more than eight hours a day. It causes them stress and depression, which effects their health and family/social life badly. More or less, it is because of their less recruitment as compared to number of prisoners lodged in the jail. Shockingly, the Government of Punjab decided to cancel the recruitment of 537, advertised in October, 2011. It will only add to woes of jail officials and warders. It is suggested that jail personnel in sufficient numbers should be recruited, so that the prisoners are controlled and reformed well and personnel get much needed relief.

4. The jail officials and warders perform their hard and stressful duty without any reward. Stress reliving activities like sports, yoga, seminars, cultural activities and counseling session should be organized regularly to keep the performance of jail officials and warders up to the mark. Publicly appreciation for the good work can also be a good idea in this regard.

5. It is a well known fact that no organization can work properly or adapt to the changes in absence of funds/budget. It is, therefore, suggested government should increase budget of Central Jail, Patiala sufficiently.

6. Central government with the help of NGOs, state governments and prison administration should take adequate steps for effective administration of prisons and a uniform jail manual should be drafted and implemented through-out the country. The uniformity of standards can be maintained throughout all the states.
7. Multispecialty hospitals exclusively for prisoners should be established district wise within the jails.

8. A policy should be made for release of under-trial inmates, who have been kept in jails for longer periods in want of decision of their respective cases. We should recall that the Bihar government released about 27,000 under-trials in 1979 and there was no noticeable increase in crime.

9. The jails in Punjab should spend more on modern security gadgets. The jail administration should install devices for jamming of mobile phones in the jail.
References: