

CHAPTER 21

YOUNG OFFENDERS

Confinement of young offenders in separate block

615. Each prison shall have a separate block for young offenders who are between 18 and 21 years of age, so as to keep them away from adult habitual offenders. This block shall be divided into two separate sections one for the under-trials and other for the convicts. Normally each section shall accommodate not more than 100 inmates.

Young Offender Block Committee

616. The block shall have a Young Offender Block Committee consisting of block staff members and chaired by the Assistant Superintendent. This Committee shall meet once a week. The functions of this Committee shall be:

- i. To assist the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent in all matters pertaining to the welfare and discipline of young offenders
- ii. To study each inmate individually and understand the various problems presented by him
- iii. To gauge inmates' response to training and treatment
- iv. To extend help and guidance to inmates at the individual level
- v. To elect three inmate leaders every quarter in a section
- vi. To associate the inmate leaders with block problems like sanitation, hygiene, welfare and planning of recreational and cultural activities

Education to young offenders

617. Superintendent shall ensure that educational needs of young offenders are adequately met and necessary facilities for the overall educational development are provided in prisons. He/she shall ensure that appropriate educational programmes are designed for young offenders, if required in assistance from the N.G.Os, such that young offenders of various age groups and intelligence levels can derive benefit from them. Special emphasis shall be laid on the following aspects in education of young offenders:

- i. Physical and health education
- ii. Social and moral education
- iii. Literary education
- iv. Vocational education
- v. Arts and handicrafts education

618. For illiterate and educationally backward young offenders special educational classes shall be organized.

619. Necessary opportunities for the self-education of young offenders shall be provided in the prisons. Those who have the requisite capacity and desire to appear at examinations conducted by the State

Education Department or by a University or by any other recognized institution shall be permitted to do so.

620. Young offenders shall be taught such crafts, skills and vocations, as would be useful to them after release.

Employment of young offenders

621. Young offenders may be employed, by rotation, as assistants in running the prison's essential services, like sanitation and hygiene, kitchen and canteen, laundry and plumbing services. A young offender employed, is not to be required to perform more than 6 hours of work in any day. An offender performing work shall:

- i. comply with any reasonable direction given by the supervising officer; and
- ii. to wear any safety clothing or equipment supplied for the purpose of performing the work

Safe working environment and safe manner of work

622. The supervising officer is to take any measures that are practicable to ensure that an offender performing work:

- i. is not exposed to hazards at the place where the work is being performed; and
- ii. performs the work in a manner that does not expose the offender or any other person to hazards

Cultural development of young offenders

623. Special emphasis shall be given on the cultural development of young offenders. Programmes of recreational nature and cultural activities shall be so planned as to suit the needs of various groups of young offenders. Activities like indoor games, outdoor games, gymnastics, athletics, films, music, community and folk dances, dramatics arts, crafts, reading, writing, debating, quiz programmes, sports-meet, philately and gardening, shall be organized for recreational and cultural programmes.

Diet for young offenders

624. Adolescence being the age of growth and development, proper attention shall be given by the Medical officer to provide balanced diet to such prisoners.

Discipline of young offenders

625. Special emphasis shall be given on the discipline of young offenders. As far as possible, minor offences shall be dealt with by withdrawal of concessions. When this approach fails, recourse shall be taken to other forms of punishment.

Relatives to be informed of the date of release

626. At least one month before a young offender is due for release, a letter shall be sent to his/her parents/relatives/friends intimating the date of his/her release and copy of the same shall be endorsed to the concerned District Superintendent of Police.

Separate wing at the headquarters to deal with the problems of young offenders

627. At the headquarters of the Prisons and Correctional Services Department a separate wing shall be created under Deputy Inspector General, Prisons (Correctional Services) for dealing with the problems of young offenders.

