

Training for Non-Official Visitors On Prison Visiting System



Participating Districts

AJMER

BHILWARA

NAGOUR

TONK

ALWAR

BHARATPUR

DHOLPUR

KARALI

SAWAI MADHOPUR

DAUSA

JAIPUR

JHUNJHUNU

SIKAR

The Rajasthan State Human Rights Commission (RSHRC) and Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) in cooperation with the Rajasthan Prison Department are organizing a training on Prison Visiting System for the recently appointed 98 Non-Official Visitors (NOVs) in Ajmer, Bharatpur and Jaipur ranges. It will be held on 19th & 20th January, 2016 in Jaipur at Auditorium, Rajasthan Police Academy, Panipech, Nehru Nagar. The media is cordially invited to participate and cover the event.

The aim of this workshop is to develop the knowledge, skill and commitment of NOV's who have been appointed after a gap of 2 years. NOV's are lay people from the community appointed by the government as independent observers and monitors of prisons. They regularly inspect the prison, record their observations in the Visitors Book and report to the government. The purpose of such a mechanism is to ensure that the government has a clear picture of issues and challenges arising in jails and can set about improving conditions and preventing any undue harm. They also supply a ground where members of the public can obtain an insight into jail problems and learn to take an interest in prisons and prisoners.

This training is intended to bring the focus on the importance of the Prison Visiting System and empower the NOV's with regards to their role, powers and duties. It will also help them in placing their work in the larger framework of assisting the prison administration and protecting the human rights of prisoners who are often rendered voiceless. At the end of the training, a joint certificate from the RSHRC, Rajasthan Prison Department and CHRI will be awarded to each participant. The Rajasthan Prison Department will also be issuing identification cards to the NOV's for ensuring their unfettered access to prison and alleviating security concerns. Jail officials would also be participating in the training.

The expected outcome of this training program are early identification of vulnerabilities, solutions for improving conditions of detention, preventing unnecessary detention and overcrowding, timely redressal of prisoners' grievances and better coordination between NOV's, district and prison administration.

Key Speakers: Justice HR Kuri, Acting Chairperson, (RSHRC); Dr. M.K. Devarajan, Member (RSHRC); Mr. Ajit Singh, DG (Prisons), Rajasthan; Mr. Sachin Mittal, IG (Prisons), Rajasthan; Mr. Dalpat Singh Dinkar, ADG (RSHRC); Mr. J.C. Desai, Secretary (RSHRC); Ms. Maja Daruwala, Director, CHRI; Mr. R.K. Saxena, Retd. IG (Prisons), Rajasthan, Mr. Shreenath Sharma, Former NOV, Bharatpur Central Jail

"The State Human Rights Commission maintains that every prisoner continues to be a 'person' with rights even in prison. The Commission has always insisted on the regular appointment, training and visits by Non-Official Visitors to prisons as mandatory in this regard. It trusts that NOV's will make regular visits to the respective prisons to which they have been appointed, be the much required bridge between the needs/grievances of the prisoner and the government. This training event is to make them effective in ensuring that rights behind bars are protected and conditions improved for both prison and prisoner."

Dr. M.K. Devarajan, Member, RSHRC

"Nov's don't realize the value of their role. They are vital to the prisoners because they can help to rehabilitate them and make their time in jail more bearable and even productive. They are valuable to the jail administration because they can put the difficulties of jailors to the authorities. They are valuable to the authorities because they help the government in keeping an eye on an area which is traditionally closed to the public. It is important that NOV's must be able to demonstrate their commitment to their role by knowing their functions, their limits and privileges and preparing themselves for their duties."

- Maja Daruwala, Director, CHRI

Organized by Rajasthan State Human Rights Commission, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative in cooperation with Rajasthan Prison Department