

Women in Custodial Establishments
Assessment of Custodial Institutions in Tamil Nadu



Sponsored by the
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Introduction

The National Commission for Women which was set up as a statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, has as one of its functions; “to inspect or cause to be inspected a jail, remand home, women’s institution or other place of custody where women are kept as prisoners or otherwise and take up with the concerned authorities for remedial action if found necessary”. In September 2003, over a series of meetings, the NCW decided to hand over the visits to custodial institutions in certain states of India to certain NGOs. This was mainly because the NCW though had the money, lacked the resources in terms of manpower to actually visit each state and cover the detention centers for women. The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative decided to assess the institutions of detention for women in Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It was eventually decided that this study would include 2 police lockups for women, 2 protective homes for women and 10 women prisons. Different interview schedules were worked upon and finalized for different institutions. The NCW wrote letters to the authorities in charge of these institutions and armed with this we started our work of contacting these heads, writing letters and seeking permissions. Though the research team in Tamil Nadu got permission to visit the women’s police stations and protective homes, access to prisons did not come through despite our working towards it over 3 months.¹ We then decided to collate all the significant material we had collected in the other institutions and present the report.

Women Police Stations and Lockups

For a long time, the grievances of women facing violation of their legal and social rights were given least priority or left unattended. A police station exclusively to attend to the grievances of women was a long felt need. The government of Tamil Nadu after expressing grave concern over the increasing trend in atrocities against women found it necessary to open up a PS exclusively to deal with crimes against women. The Thousand Lights All Women Police station, the first of its kind in India was inaugurated on 13.04.1992 by Mrs J.Jayalalitha, the Chief Minister. Their popularity grew and by 1995, the number grew to 58. In 2001, the government announced the creation of additional All Women Police Stations (AWPS) at the rate of 1 for each sub-division. At present there are 188 AWPS in Tamil Nadu, a total of 20 AWPS in Chennai out of which 11 are very new and have just started functioning. These 11 have only a sub-inspector as head while the other 9 have inspectors as head. These PS have been established for crimes against women and basically deal with dowry related cases, domestic disputes, complaints of sexual harassment, marital discord, child abuse, eve teasing, trafficking, suicides, dowry harassment and other petitions by or on behalf of women. They do not deal with women who have committed a crime-such cases (e.g., robbery, pilfering, kidnapping ,murder etc by a woman) fall under the jurisdiction of the law and order police stations and not these exclusive women police stations. Many of

¹ Pl see annexure-Process document for details.

these AWPS are located within general police stations. The usefulness of these stations their functioning and the special challenges they face has not been studied in depth. However, the increase in crimes reported to these police stations does speak to their usefulness to women. These AWPS have been successful because many women have now lost their apprehensions of approaching men police personnel at the general police stations. Thus the crimes reported have seen an increase in the last few years².

Analysis of data

Data was collected from all the 4 police stations visited through observation and interview schedules which have been attached for reference. We spoke to the police staff at all levels as well as the social workers to attain this information.

Strength of Staff

	Strength	Inspector	Sub-inspector	Head Constables	Grade-1	Armed Reserve Police Constables	Total
Thousand Lights PS	Sanctioned	1	2	12	7	-	22
(TLPS)	Actual	1	1	7	-	9+(1 from TN special police)	19
T.Nagar PS	Sanctioned	1	2	11	-	7	21
(TNPS)	Actual	1	2	7	1	3	14
Esplanade PS	Sanctioned	1	2	11	0	7	21
(EPS)	Actual	1	1	11	0	3	16
Ashok Nagar PS	Sanctioned	1	1	3	10	15	30
(ANPS)	Actual	1	2	4	1	5	13

There is a shortage of staff in all the police stations that we visited especially at the Ashok Nagar Police Station where the actual strength of 13 is less than half of the sanctioned strength of 30 personnel. There is a severe shortage of women head constables in both the Thousand Lights PS (TLPS) and the T.Nagar PS (TNPS). In the Esplanade PS (EPS) the sanctioned strength of 12 head constables meets the actual strength while in the Ashok Nagar PS (ANPS), there is actually an excess of 1 head constable. On the other hand, the sanctioned strength of armed reserve constables is far greater than what is actually present in 3 out of 4 PS.

² Tamil Nadu Police Policy Note-2003-2004

Apart from the police personnel, there are also some women warders who were recruited before 1973, and now do odd jobs in the PS as well as help in escorting detained women or even do night duty if there is a shortage of staff.

Accommodation

Separate accommodation:

The All Women's Police Stations all over Tamil Nadu cater only to crimes *against* women. Hence exclusive women's lockups are provided. Also those women who have committed crimes and need to be detained are brought from other police stations in the jurisdiction to the AWPS. In the Thousand Lights PS, we observed that those men who arrested by this police station (eg, husbands and father-in-laws in dowry cases) are detained in the men's lock-up in the adjoining men's police station (it is a separate building on the same campus). No men from the men's PS are ever allowed inside this PS except the assistant commissioner – anti dowry cell whose office is in the women's PS. Similar is the case with the Esplanade PS. In the T.Nagar PS, only women are kept in the lock-up. On rare occasions, in the absence of women offenders, men are kept in the lock-up during day time and are transferred to the nearest men's police station. While in ANPS, the lockup for women is under construction now and has been lying completely unused. Meanwhile, the women detainees are kept in the sub-inspector's room at nights under the supervision of either a constable or head constable. Since the men's PS is adjoining to the women's PS there is enough security. It was also mentioned that men staff are allowed to enter the women's PS since both the stations are close to each other.

Capacity:

Even though the Tamil Nadu Police Standing Orders 643 states, that the maximum number of inmates detained in the lockup is to be fixed for each station by the Superintendent in consultation with the Executive Engineer (looking at the size of the room) and the number is to be hung outside the lock-up, this is not done and the police officials/staff are unaware of the sanctioned capacity. On asking, however the superintendent of the Thousand Lights PS said that the maximum number they would keep is 5 and for not more than 2-3 days while the superintendent, T.Nagar PS said they would never keep more than 5 people at any time. At the Esplanade PS, the staff though was unaware of the sanctioned capacity like the others, said that a maximum of 8 women have been detained at one point of time. On the other hand, the staff of Ashok Nagar PS said they could keep at least 10 detainees in the lockup though this has never happened. However we felt that the room was not big enough for 10 unless they were all huddled together. To us, the rooms appeared to be more or less of the same dimensions. It is clear from these somewhat disparate remarks that in the absence of knowledge about the legal regulations that govern how many prisoners can be kept in the detention rooms at one time, that those in charge use their own judgement and act according to personal notions and at their discretion rather than in accordance with set down rules.

Number of Detainees:

Over the years detentions have steadily, indeed dramatically decreased. In 2002, 133 women offenders were kept in the lock up of TLPS while there were 74 women detained in 2003. There was a further reduction and 2004, saw only 19 women inmates in the TLPS. In the TNPS lock up there were 19 detainees in 2004 while EPS saw a reduction from a high of 100 inmates in 2003 to 58 inmates in 2004. The numbers also reduced in ANPS with 21 women inmates in 2003 to only 2 in this year.

This trend can be accounted for in many ways. It is not that there has occurred any substantial reduction in crime against women in TN – rather there has been an increase in such incidents and a large number of cases are being brought to the AWPS all over the state. But the association of community counseling with these AWPS has brought about a remarkable reduction in the registration of FIRs because in quite a number of cases Community Counselors succeed in settling down disputes through mutual consent and compromise, and the parties are dissuaded from entering the lengthy legal process of arrest, estrangement and litigation. In many other cases, women victims find it sufficient (and convenient, too) to set right their family situation by exhibiting the support of Police and by threatening the perpetrators with the hazard of police intervention, arrest and punishment if their tormentors do not mend their ways. More often than not the victim is content with the leverage police intervention provides at the outset without registering a case.

Physical infrastructure:

The lock ups in all the PS were small rooms with either poor ventilation or no ventilation at all. We noted with great surprise that the police standing orders did not specify the need to have proper ventilation or any other such facilities. All of them had doors made of iron bars which were heavily bolted and opened only to allow the inmates in or out. None of them had any fans or lights. The corridor outside the lock ups had lights which illuminated the insides, in all the PS. It seems unreasonable not to have fans or lights. During detention, especially if the room happens to be crowded, it seems potentially unsafe to have women maybe innocent or maybe not, to be in close proximity without lights.

Only the Esplanade PS lock up and toilet (being fairly new) was lined with tiles—all the others had ordinary cement flooring. Since the lock up of the Ashok Nagar PS was under construction, women arrestees were kept in the sub-inspector's room at nights.

Though all the PS had attached toilets, in T.Nagar PS, and Ashok Nagar PS they were part of the already small room separated by a one foot wall hindering privacy. However in Ashok Nagar PS, since the lock up is under construction, the arrestees used the toilet outside the lock up. In the other 2 PS, though the toilets were walled, they had no doors which once again was an intrusion of privacy for those inside especially in the case of more than one inmate. None of them had any running water. In the T.Nagar PS water was brought from the outside tank by the helper, who was paid by the police personnel from their pockets, while in Esplanade PS a bucket of water was placed in the toilet which is filled up from the nearby tank by the helper, paid from the permanent fund of the PS.

All the PS had toilets for staff as well but arrangements for running water were in only 2 places.

Maintenance and Sanitation:

In the Thousand Lights PS, the lockup is cleaned everyday by the helper in the station who is paid from the permanent fund. In the T.Nagar PS and Esplanade PS, the occupants of the lock ups clean it up while in the Ashok Nagar PS, since the women's and men's PS are adjoining, the helper who cleans the place is the same and is paid from the permanent fund of the men's PS. The lock ups appeared to be clean.

Food:

The Thousand Lights PS and Esplanade PS have been given a permanent fund of Rs 5000 which is replenished every month. Food expenses for those women arrested and detained by these PS are met from this fund while expenditure on food for those detainees brought from different police stations in the jurisdiction are met by the PS from where they are brought. However since the other two PS do not have a permanent fund, food expenses of the detainee are met by the police personnel mainly the inspector or SI from their own pocket. Once again, there are no rules supporting this in the police standing orders.

Bedding:

Even though rule 637 (3) of the police standing order prescribes for 2 durries for all lock-ups, the detainees are not provided with any such items as a precautionary measure against attempts of suicide. They therefore have to sleep on the floor.

Medical Treatment:

First aid is usually provided by the staff of the PS if need be, in case of an emergency, say if the detainee suddenly becomes ill while in the police station. Other injuries could be in cases of battered women due to abuse by husband or relatives, women sexually molested and raped etc. The inmate is then taken to the nearest government hospital either in the station jeep or an auto rickshaw accompanied by two constables who stay with them till the treatment is complete. Victims of rape undergo a proper examination as required under the laws. For those PS where there is no permanent fund, the expenditure on auto rickshaws is provided by the police personnel once again from their own pockets.

Transport:

Police jeep has been provided for the transport of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison. In the absence of the police vehicle, auto rickshaws are used. The inmates are usually accompanied by 2 police constables. The auto expenses are met from the permanent fund. However, in the T.Nagar PS, even though there is supposedly a jeep given to the PS it is never available as it is always used for other duties (e.g., election, escort of VIPs etc.) Hence, the staff collects money amongst themselves to transport women detainees to courts/hospitals etc. This is wrong as the vehicle should be used for the police station requirements. The staff naturally, seemed very displeased with this but according to them, there was little they could do.

On the days we visited, we found no woman detained in the lockups. There had also been no escape or deaths in police custody ever since the police station was set up. Only women police are allowed to search women offenders and the details are entered in the Police Search Register and signed by the Sr. Police Officer, the station writer and the offender (unfortunately we could not substantiate this with the versions of those detained as we were not able to meet any of them). The family members of the arrestee are given the freedom to bring lawyers. Infact one of the inspectors we met said that those arrestees who can afford it, contact their lawyers soon after their arrest and these are the ones most likely to be found guilty of the offense for they know how the system works having encountered it many a times. As we know, it is the poor who are unable to defend themselves and get caught in the web of courts, prolonged trials, unscrupulous lawyers etc. It was also observed that the notice board in the Thousand Lights PS provided information about free legal-aid.

Specific Observations

Thousand Lights Police Station

According to the staff in the Thousand Lights PS, the first step when a complaint is brought is to resolve the case by counseling (by the inspector and the other staff) both the complainant and the offender. The staff however receives no training in this and talks mainly from experience. These disputes are entered into a register called the Community Service Register (CSR). In case the police personnel feel that the case needs professional counseling they are referred to the family counseling center (FCC) which is a part of the PS. There is a provision of 2 counselors in the centre but 1 of them has been transferred to another newly opened PS. Out of 2343 cases referred to the family counseling centre by the Thousand Lights police station from 1992 to March 2004, 1552 cases of domestic problems have been resolved with the husband and wife being reunited. Only if the case is serious are an FIR filed and the investigation carried out. The station also rescues women and children in distress through the child line and women helpline³. Rehabilitation measures have been taken by referring mentally ill individuals to NGO's like Banyan, destitutes to Government Vigilance Home, and children in trouble to the ICCW. Medical camps have been conducted by the police station in various parts of the jurisdiction for the benefit of the community. Training programmes on yoga was organized for the personnel of the station from 13.07.03 to 20.08.03.

The Thousand Lights PS has rest room facilities for the staff. However the major problem that they face is a shortage of staff. Though the duty shifts are from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm, 1:30 pm to 19:30 pm and 19:30 pm to 7:30 am many of the staff lands up doing more than 1 shift. At many a time the staff also has to go for bandobast and escort duties due to which there is a further shortage.

T.Nagar Police Station

The T.Nagar PS is just a year and a half old having started on 27th January 2003. The PS has a friendly and comfortable feel about it mainly due to the garden which has been maintained

³ Details on child line and women helplines have been given at the end of this section.

outside which the inspector says is to take away the dreariness and make it more approachable. However the staff feels that the building, which is 30 yrs old, should have been demolished instead of being renovated to a station. There is no facility for running water and the water has to be drawn from the tank outside. Plumbing work has been pending despite repeated complaints. Due to a lack of a permanent fund there is a dearth of finances(money for even stationary is not given) and as mentioned before, the inspector and many others often land up spending money from their own pockets for food, conveyance for the detainees and even pay for the helper. Though this is mentioned in all the women's advisory committee meetings (to discuss all the problems that women PS face as well as innovative methods of solving those problems) that are held once a month at the district level and once in six months at the commissioner's office regularly (attended by inspectors of all the PS, range, zonal officers, and even outsiders sometimes), nothing has been done about it.

The helper is temporary and so on the days she does not come, the staff ends up cleaning the station themselves. Long working hours due to shortage of staff is a problem. Most of the SI and lower staff end up doing more than 8 hours of duty without any compensation.

The women police feel that the eligibility criteria for head constables in service to become sub-inspectors needs to be relaxed in terms of criteria for height, qualification etc to make it easier for them to be promoted. The sub-inspector at the PS also felt that training on the latest technology such as computer programmes to hone their skills should be given regularly.

Most of the cases that come to the station are related to domestic disputes and dowry. The station registered 609 and 115 Community Service Register (CSR) cases for the year 2003 and 2004 respectively. Only around 36 cases were registered as FIRs while the rest were resolved through counseling and compromise between both the parties. The station has recently rescued 11 child laborers from T.Nagar between the age of 10 -16 yrs. Most of these children were migrants from the north. They have been rehabilitated and restored back to their families through the help of child line. A family counselor has also been appointed and she visits the police station every Friday.

Esplanade Police Station

The Esplanade Police Station was started on 29.06.1993. According to the records, it was observed that most of the cases are under section 8b of Immoral Traffic Prevention Act. The police staff felt that this could be since both the main railway station and the bus stop are in the neighborhood and these are the places frequented by sex workers. The staff is also propagating both the child line and women's help line and many people according to them seek their assistance through these services. A mobile counseling system for the community in the jurisdiction has also been initiated mainly in order to reach out to a greater number of people especially those women who are house bound and hardly venture out beyond the four walls of their little hut. It functions on every Sunday except on days of important duties. The van comprising of an Inspector or a Sub-Inspector and two constables, meet people in various slums and try and solve their problems then and there by calling together the grievant parties. The problems they deal with are mainly domestic disputes or disputes amongst family members over property. People are made aware and encouraged to use the

family counseling center functioning in the PS premises. The mobile counseling system with its greater outreach, apart from helping people, also increases the people's faith in the police. There is a full time social worker/counselor in the Esplanade PS (who is there only in the mornings) but since these counselors are only paid Rs 2,500 by the Social Welfare Board every month, many of them work elsewhere as well and are not always available. These counselors mostly have a social work or a psychology background.

The station also has a rest room for the staff. The police personnel also commented that, inadequate staff due to opening of many new police stations is hindering the effective functioning of this station.

Asbok Nagar Police Station

The station which was started on 27th March, 2002 alongside the men's station mainly deals with cases of family disputes and dowry harassment. Till now 115 complaints have been registered in the community service register out of which 7 were later filed as FIRs (6 - Dowry Harassment and 1 -294 IPC).In the other 109 cases, problems were resolved between the complainant and the accused. Most of the detainees in this PS are cases that have been forwarded from other PS. The station also operates a "Mobile Counseling Centre" on Sundays to reach out to those women in their jurisdiction, who are unable to come to the police station. The complainant and the accused are called and the details are discussed. According to police officials, the petty cases of domestic quarrels are discharged by giving advice while the other cases are referred to the family counselors of NGO's like Relief Foundation and Turning Point. The Mobile Counseling team comprises of 1 Inspector, 1 Head constable and 2 Police Constables.

The staff complained of lack of funds and shortage of personnel. There is also no rest room in this PS like in some of the other PS.

Meanings and Observations

Permanent fund: The amount of Rs.5000/- sanctioned to police stations to meet the expenses such as postage, traveling, telephone, food for detainees, conveyance and other miscellaneous expenses

Community Service Register: This is the register maintained by all the women's police stations consisting of details of the cases that come to the station. Intervention is sought and if required, the case is then referred to the family counseling centre. The last option is the filing of an FIR when all other options to sort it out have failed.

Family Counseling Centre: The family counseling centre is an initiative by the Central Social Welfare Board to provide counseling services for in women need in all the women's PS. The appointed social workers are paid an honorarium of Rs.2500/- per month. The details of cases handled are submitted to the Directorate once a month.

Child line & Women Helpline: This is yet another initiative of the Directorate of Social Defense to protect girls and women in distress. Child line works towards rescuing children who are working as child laborers, bonded laborers, restoring those who have runaway from their

home etc. Women's help line rescues women in danger; victims of any form of harassment and also identify shelters for destitute women. The calls to these help lines are non-chargeable. The call reaches the Modal Control Room set-up in the commissioner's office. The message is sent to the closest police station from where the victim is identified. They are then helped/counseled and the police rehabilitate them by sending them to shelter homes or by reuniting them with their families with the aid of NGOs.

The various registers in the police stations include-General diary; Circle abstract; R.S report, Search register; Bail bond; Process register; Nuisance case register; Duty register; Sentry relief book; Visiting book.

These police stations do not generally keep women detainees for more than 1 night. In the morning they are returned to the police station in which the case has been filed against them or they are produced before the court, if the case belongs to their own PS. All the staff said there have been hardly any cases in which the women have been remanded to police custody when produced in court the next day, they are either let out on bail or remanded to judicial custody.

Recommendations:

- a. The police personnel must be made aware of all the rules and regulations concerning the police station. It was observed that most of the police personnel were not aware of the Police Standing Order and copies were available in only 3 stations out of the 4 that were visited. It did not appear that they were either read or referred to and this may be because there is little likelihood of the ground situation ever permitting their standards being reached
- b. The lock up should have good ventilation facilities and fans for circulation of air. In Tamil Nadu, most places are hot through out the year and thus the lock ups get really heated up especially during the peak summer months. The police staff has to maintain a strict vigil on the inmates to prevent any mishaps.
- c. The lockups are very gloomy and dark because there are no lights inside and there is hardly any ventilation through which light can come in. There should be provision of atleast one light inside the lockup.
- d. The toilet within the lockup should be a proper place, well enclosed with a door and not open as was observed in all the police stations visited. Facilities for running water must be available in all the toilets in all police lockups.
- e. As given in the police standing orders, inmates should be provided with 2 durries and also 2 blankets (wherever required). This is not being followed and should be implemented.
- f. As mentioned in the police standing order, the maximum number of women who can be detained in the lock up should be decided for each police station and this information should be displayed for all to see. Police personnel must be in a position to refuse to accept more than the accommodation will allow for.
- g. Training programmes on human rights, women's rights and other social issues should be conducted for all levels of police and should not be restricted only to the Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors.

- h. Supreme court directives require that all police stations must display a board that lays out the DK Basu Judgment on arrest and detention. None of the Police stations had this board up making it a violation of the rulings. This should be put up immediately. Those coming to the PS with complaints must by law be able to see their rights displayed and need to be told about free legal aid as well as other facilities such as women helplines and child lines. Due to the opening of many new women police stations, staff from the existing police stations, have been transferred to them resulting in a shortage of staff. This leads to many staff problems such as long duty hours without any compensation. Therefore, it is necessary to recruit new policewomen for the new stations and not put a strain on the existing ones.
- i. The existing staff should be compensated for overtime and given adequate time to rest and relax. Rest rooms should be provided in all PS.
- j. It was observed that the permanent fund was not available to all the police stations. The staff then ends up spending money from their pockets for traveling and even to provide meals to the detainees. This is not only grossly unfair, but may also lead to all types of oppression and corruption to recover this money making them vulnerable to pressure. It is thus necessary to provide the permanent fund in all police stations.

Protective Home for Women

The Vigilance/Protective Homes established under the provisions of Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 provide care, treatment, training and rehabilitation to the girls and women. These institutions also admit girls who face the threat of sexual exploitation and are in moral danger. There are 6 such homes all over Tamil Nadu (Chennai 2, Madurai 1, Trichy 1, Salem 1 and Coimbatore 1). Women and girls who have fallen victim of sexual exploitation and become pregnant can be admitted in the Government Vigilance Home and Stri Sadana, Chennai. Apart from the above, a home for stranded girls is also functioning under Non-Governmental Organization at “Abhaya Nilayam”, Chennai. A sum total of Rs.91.13 lakhs has been provided by the Tamil Nadu Government to run the above homes during 2003-2004.

Descriptions

Government Vigilance Home, Chennai

The government vigilance home run by the Directorate of Social Defense was set up during the British rule in 1930 under the Madras Vigilance Service. From 1948, the T.N. government has been running it. Women convicted by the court under the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act (ITPA) are detained in this institution. Girls joining voluntarily with the permission of the Director of Social Defense, orphaned or abandoned girls who are mainly

Prema was left in the government run children’s home by her mother who ran away with another man. She was released from the children’s home when she was 18 years old and found her way back to her village. Life was extremely torturous at home for Prema as she was sexually harassed by her father and brother. Her step mother (her father married thrice) also ill treated her and having had enough, she then decided to go and stay at her aunt’s house. Unfortunately, her aunt was unable to look after her and so she came to a Chennai based NGO for help, stayed with them for a month and they then sent her to this government home. She is now an inmate of the Stri Sadna. According to Prema, initially she was very reserved but she soon made friends with another inmate. They became very close and would do everything together - work together, attend vocational training classes together etc. However, the staff did not approve and abused them of homosexual behavior.

shifted from juvenile homes⁴, girls kidnapped and rescued by the police, women rescued from brothel homes are also housed as inmates of Stri Sadna (see box for example of the sort of cases that come to Stri Sadna). Unwed mothers are also kept in the home.

The government vigilance home consists of a fairly large campus with the main administrative block. The office is on the ground floor of this building while the first floor is used for storing mats, washed laundry etc and the second floor is not in use but locked up. Adjacent to this is the barrack which houses those remanded and convicted under the ITPA. Though this is a large room, a part of it has been blocked by cardboards to make the room smaller which is quite surprising. In front of this barrack is the dining room where all the inmates take their meals. Some distance away is another building, the ground floor of which is used to house the Stri Sadna inmates and the unwed mothers. There is also the mat weaving and the tailoring room, a store etc. The first floor has the same layout with most of the rooms lying unused-there is a welfare officer's room, a doctor/psychologists room, the library etc. Apart from this there are also other buildings which are vacant such as the quarters for the assistant superintendent, the remand house (earlier used for remanded inmates) which also has a waiting room for visitors.

Government Protective Home, Coimbatore

The government protective home was started in 1981 and covers the Coimbatore and Yelagiri jurisdictions. It was earlier functioning as a 'Rescue Home' under the Revenue department. The building consists of 2 office rooms, a hall, a TV room, a room where the inmates sleep and the kitchen area. The building is on rent and completely lacks storage facilities (according to the staff, since the building was on rent there was no use spending money on storage since it would be a waste of money)- no cupboards or shelves and the inmates keep their things in steel trunks. Documents are kept in sacks in the corner of the rooms. The kitchen had vessels piled on top of the platform giving it a very untidy look. There is no space around the building which faces a road. Next to it is the cement block making area which is so noisy that one has a hard time talking or hearing in the home.

Abhaya Nilayam, Chennai

Abhaya Nilayam founded in 1955 is a short stay home for distressed women cum poor girls' hostel run under the auspices of The Madras Vigilance Association and registered under the Societies Registration Act. Abhaya Nilayam which means home for protection(protective home) admits any girl above 18 years who is stranded in the city, or a destitute without any restriction of caste, creed or any preconditions at any part of the day or night (see box for example). After admission, the staff contacts either their guardians or parents to restore them back to their families. If they are untraceable, or their family is unable to take them back Abhaya Nilayam tries to rehabilitate them in other ways. The board has at present

Reema's parents passed away when she was very young and she along with her younger brother were looked after by her aunt. At a fairly young age, her aunt sent her to Delhi to work with a family as their child's maid. She worked there for 4 years and was then sent back to her aunt by those people. Her aunt took away all the money that she had and she went to live with another aunt who however illtreated her. Reema was forced to work through out the day. This gave her a back ailment that stopped her from carrying out strenuous physical activity and she was soon thrown out of the house by her aunt. She came to Abhaya Nilayam on the advice of a neighbor and has been here for 3 and a half month now. She works as a housemaid in the neighborhood and earns Rs 150 a month. Reema is happy and secure here, and says that the staff is much better than her own relatives.

⁴ Girls attaining the age of 18 are shifted from juvenile homes to protective homes if they are not rehabilitated in any other manner.

17 executive members. Board meetings are conducted once in three months and a general body meet is called for at regular intervals. The institution does get some funds from the Department of Social Defense but is mainly funded by individual donors who are of 2 types-regular i.e., those who donate money every year and one time donors. There is no foreign funding. According to their annual reports, till December 2000, there have been a total of 7946 admissions out of which 3689 have been by the police and 4257 by others, 6672 girls have been sent home while 1262 have been rehabilitated.

The building was purchased in 1973 for Rs 1.50 lakhs, by paying an advance of Rs 500 and then paying the rest through installments. The ground floor of this very old building houses those inmates who have been mentioned above while the upper floor consists of poor women who pay a small amount for their stay. This amount varies from Rs 150-600 depending on their affordability. These women are all working (teaching, tailoring units of export houses etc,) but cannot afford to live elsewhere. Abhaya Nilayam also provides them with the much needed security, difficult to find alone, outside away from their families. These women keep to their office timings which are generally 9 to 5 o'clock and just need to inform the staff if they get late in the evenings through a telephone call. They have the freedom to move about while the other inmates are restricted for the 3 months that they usually stay for and can only go out escorted.

Analysis of data

The questions in the interview schedule have been grouped together under various different aspects concerning the protective/shelter homes for women.

Rules:

Women who are placed in the government vigilance home, Chennai and the protective home Coimbatore are mostly those, under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act 1956(amended to Immoral Traffic Prevention Act). All the rules under this act pertaining to protective homes are applicable. The staff of the government home in Chennai kept repeating that there were no rules/orders available with them. Whatever data they had was destroyed a few years ago due to heavy rains. All they had was the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act while the superintendent in charge of the Coimbatore home (probation officer as acting superintendent) said there was a set of rules governing the running of the home but he completely refused to give it to us or allow us to even look at it by repeatedly saying that orders had been passed by the government not to give it to anyone. However, the officials in the Directorate had no idea about any such orders existing and did supply us with a copy of the rules under the ITPA. We saw no reason for the superintendent to be so secretive about this as this is not a confidential document.

The research team found that there were no written rules or any acts under which Abhaya Nilayam was run. On speaking to Mr Rishi, the secretary Madras Vigilance Association it was found that the memorandum /papers of registration were really old and had been misplaced.

Admission:

The judiciary issues orders for those women above 18 years, remanded and convicted under the immoral trafficking act and only then they can be admitted to the government protective homes in Tamil Nadu. For those of the Stri Sadna and unwed women's home (part of the government vigilance home, Chennai), permission from the Directorate of Social Defense has to be obtained. Earlier, those women admitted to Stri Sadna could apply voluntarily for admission but since the last 2 years under the present director this process has stopped and now only inmates from the observation home for girls are admitted to Stri Sadna if required. The Stri Sadna girls are in the age group of 18-25 years while the unwed mothers are taken after the age of 16 years. An admission book(with forms) is maintained separately for each home (Remand, Convicts, Unwed mothers and Stri Sadanaa) by one of the junior assistants which contains personal details like name, age, husband's/father's name, details of crime, date to be produced in court and details of release which is signed by the superintendent.

The police, NGOs or any other organization, and the Directorate of Social Defense can place women in need in Abhaya Nilayam. Individuals can also get admission on a voluntary basis. These women are generally; runaways due to domestic difficulties and socio-economic conditions, victims of harassment and abuse by family members and relatives, unwed mothers, divorced women or those deserted by their husbands and families, orphaned and homeless girls and women in need of shelter (e.g., women who have been found by the police in places such as railway stations). No application forms are prescribed, but case histories of the inmates are maintained consisting of basic information about the inmates, a column stating past history and another one for the present. The case histories are systematic and updated regularly. In the shelter home, women between the age group of 18-25 are kept on basis of the directions given by the Directorate of Social Defense while there is no age group for the poor girls' hostel. However they generally do not admit women who are above 40yrs (though there were no rules supporting this).

Period of Stay:

According to the superintendent-protective home, Coimbatore, those remanded to the protective home can be kept for a period of 15 days and the days can be extended as per the courts decision to a maximum of 1 year. Those convicted can be kept for a period of 2-5 years as per ITPA (1956) which says, 'the court may pass an order that a female offender, who is found guilty of an offence under section 7 or 8, be detained in a corrective institution for a minimum term of 2 years and a maximum term of 5 years. The State Governments may discharge the detenu from a corrective institution at any time but not before 6 months from the date of an order for detention.'

The inmates of Stri Sadna and unwed mothers home can stay until 5 years.

As far as Abhaya Nilayam is concerned, the Directorate of Social Defence provides funds of Rs.225/- per month only for a period of 90 days to 135 days for an inmate of the shelter home. During this time, attempts are made by the staff to then reunite them with their families by writing/sending a telegram to the families to come and pick them up. Women

who cannot be rehabilitated or restored to their families during this period are permitted to stay till they find an alternative. The staff looks out for a job for such women say in an export house. They can then opt to stay in the poor girls' hostel with a minimal rent of Rs. 150 - Rs.600 per month for as long as they like. Orphans are sometimes transferred to other NGO's, which run shelter homes.

Strength of Staff:

The actual staff strength in both the protective homes was less than the sanctioned strength. In Abhaya Nilayam, there is no sanctioned strength of staff but depending on the on the number of inmates, staff is appointed.

Accommodation:

Capacity of home:

The capacity of the government vigilance home, Chennai is 150 inmates. However this was told to us by the probation officer in the Directorate of Social Defence since no one in the vigilance home knew about this. As on 18th May 2004, there were 25 inmates in total in the home out of which there were 2 convicted and 15 remanded under the ITPA, 2 in the Stri Sadna and 1 in the unwed mother's home. The capacity of the protective home, Coimbatore is 25 and we found only 4 inmates remanded to custody under ITPA when we visited. We realized that there was a certain underutilization of the homes and the space thereof, even though there is a crying need in the city for space.

In Abhaya Nilayam, though there were no written rules, the superintendent said that at any point of time no more than 50 women are kept in the home. On our visit there were 12 girls in the shelter home and 13 in the poor girls hostel.

Segregation:

The remand and convicted women are housed together in the vigilance home, Chennai while the inmates of Stri Sadanaa and the unwed mothers are housed together. According to the manager, earlier, each category was segregated and housed separately in buildings allocated for it but due to a decrease in the number of inmates admitted and due to shortage of staff, they are now clubbed together. The inmates who come under the immoral traffic act are not allowed to mix with the others. Even though they have lunch in the same room, they are not allowed to mingle. However in the protective home, Coimbatore, the inmates are not segregated. There is also not enough room in the protective home to do so.

In Abhaya Nilayam, there is no specific categorization. Women who are working and belong to the poor girls' hostel are housed in the first floor of the building, while the others stay on the ground floor. However if there is a shortage of space in the hostel upstairs, these women then sleep downstairs.

Infrastructure:

Facilities for sleeping:

In the vigilance home Chennai, though there are 4 barracks available, only 1 is in use in which those remanded and convicted under the ITPA are housed. In a separate building, 2 rooms which were allocated for industrial classes are now used by the inmates of Stri Sadna and unwed mother's home for sleeping and storing their clothes and other items. In the protective home, Coimbatore, there is only 1 barrack/room for the inmates

There are 2 barracks/rooms for the inmates of Abhaya Nilayam. The room on the ground floor for the short stay home women can accommodate around 20 women. Since there is no separate room for meals this room doubles up for that as well. The room on the first floor can house around 10 girls. There are a few beds (iron cots) in this room which are provided to the inmates on a first come first serve basis. Both the rooms have open shelves to keep clothes and other items.

Other facilities:

- Office :

The main building which is the administrative block in the vigilance home campus, Chennai, comprises of the superintendent's room and two office rooms that are at present in use. The second floor of the building was used to stock old files but it was found that the files here were not safe as during the rains all of them were destroyed.

In the protective home Coimbatore, there are 2 rooms used as offices-one for the superintendent and one for the other administrative staff.

Abhaya Nilayam has a tiny room used as an office, with a cupboard and a table with 3 chairs. It is used by the superintendent and others for official purposes and general meetings.

- Kitchen:

The kitchen of vigilance home Chennai, comprises of a cooking area and a storage room. LPG gas is available for cooking and in its absence sometimes, wood is used. A small area in front of the kitchen is used for cleaning of utensils. There is a storeroom for storage of food provisions (which are collected from the department of civil supplies every month) in another building. Provisions are given to the cook daily by the store keeper who maintains the stock register in which details of food materials distributed for that day are maintained and signed by the superintendent. The research team checked the stock register and observed that the items taken and its amount was noted everyday. Fresh vegetables are brought from the market everyday by the driver. The cook cooks according to the menu laid down for that day (each day of the week has a fixed menu) and it is tasted by the superintendent before giving it to the inmates. This is according to the rule 22 (7) under ITPA which say that the superintendent shall ensure that the rations are weighed and issued to the cooks, and examine the food frequently by text checks. Two inmates of Stri Sadna are allocated duties such as cutting and washing vegetables, cleaning of vessels etc to assist the cook everyday.

In the protective home, Coimbatore, one section of the kitchen has a platform which is used for keeping vessels. There is a bench where the cooked items are kept. The kitchen looked very crowded. Adjoining to the kitchen is the store room where all the provisions are kept and it is locked. The items are weighed and given to the cook by the matron or the teacher and entries are made in the store book. This provision of rule 22 (7) under ITPA was being followed. However the food is not tasted everyday by the superintendent as in the Chennai home. These provisions are collected from the Department of civil supplies by the peon (male) and the office assistant, while the groceries are bought regularly by the peon (lady) and matron.

In Abhaya Nilayam, there is a kitchen attached to the barrack on the ground floor consisting of a gas stove, utensils and some provisions. An office assistant cooks food with the help of the inmates. A store room is also attached to the kitchen.

- Indoor hospital:

There is no indoor hospital in any of the institutions we visited and unfortunately the rules do not speak of having one either.

- Doctors' consultation room:

A room in one of the buildings of the vigilance home Chennai, has been allocated for the doctor. A lady doctor visits the home once a week on Wednesdays. A fulltime female nursing assistant (FNA) is appointed to provide medicines to the sick inmates as per the doctor's prescription. She also accompanies the inmates to the hospital along with the police. There is no such facility available in the protective home, Coimbatore or Abhaya Nilayam. However, in Abhaya Nilayam, a cupboard with some medicines is maintained for minor ailments and the office assistant doles them out when required.

- Place of worship:

There is a little temple inside the vigilance home campus in Chennai where the inmates pray every morning when they come out to complete their chores. However, the protective home, Coimbatore has nothing like this. Abhaya Nilayam has a small prayer room. Prayers are conducted both in the mornings and evenings everyday.

- Indoor games:

There are no indoor games as such for the inmates of these institutions. Only the inmates of Stri Sadna and unwed mothers' home Chennai play carom once in a while.

- Out-door games:

Except for the vigilance home, Chennai there is no space in the other institutions for any out door games. Unfortunately, though the Chennai home has ample space this is not being utilized and no outdoor activities are organized for the inmates. Rule 21 of ITPA laying out the daily routine of the inmates speaks of the inmates involved with games and gardening between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m, which of course is not observed.

- Garden:

Even though there is a lot of space in the Chennai home, no garden as such is actually maintained. There are some beautiful old trees and quite a bit of greenery around the campus.

There is a small patch of garden in front of Abhaya Nilayam which is maintained by the inmates sometimes.

- Open space for movement:

Though there is enough space to freely move around in the Chennai home, unfortunately, movement is thoroughly restricted. The Stri Sadna inmates are allowed out in the mornings to wash clothes and again for a little while in the evening to sweep the premises. They are allowed outside their building only if they have certain chores to perform or are working in the power laundry. The convicts and those remanded are given time to wash clothes in the evening outside their barracks under supervision. The only other time they are allowed outside their building is for meals. There is no open space available in any of the other institutions.

- Others:

Though there is a library in the vigilance home Chennai, there are at present only 2 women who can read, so it is not in use. According to the staff, women are allowed to read in the library room and cannot take the books to their rooms/barracks. Rule 26 under ITPA says that every protective home shall be provided with a library of suitable books with a catalogue. However this was not found to be in the protective home Coimbatore.

The protective home, Coimbatore also has a small room where the TV is kept and a hall which is basically used to store certain items like sewing machines etc. The inmates also sit here and watch TV which is kept at the doorway of the adjoining room. Those members of the staff who stay over at night also sleep here.

Abhaya Nilayam also has a hall which is a multi purpose room used by the staff to sleep at nights. One corner of the room is divided by a wooden screen and has an iron cot which is used by the matron in charge. It also has a few sewing machines in one corner which were donated by the rotary club and a few tables and chairs. This room is also used by the typist for typing. It also has a television in one corner.

Maintenance and sanitation:

In the vigilance home, Chennai, there are 5 bathrooms cum toilets in the building for the inmates of Stri Sadana and unwed mothers, out of which 1 is not in use right now. Though the toilets have doors, they are very dirty and poorly maintained. For bathing, there is an enclosed space with a tank in one corner, filled with water where many women can bathe at a time. There are 3 toilets outside the barrack and 1 toilet attached to the barrack in which the inmates of the vigilance home stay. There is no running water available in the toilets. The inmates carry water from the open concrete tank nearby. A sanitary worker is appointed for the cleaning and maintenance of the toilets. According to

the inmates, the worker does not clean the toilets but just spreads the bleaching powder and makes the inmates clean it. However it appeared quite clean on the day we visited. A little further away is the 'remand house' which used to house the vigilance home inmates a few years ago. This has 3 bathrooms and 3 toilets. Water facility in the remand house also consists of an open concrete tank where water is filled up and stored. The toilets and bathrooms here, appeared to be quite clean and we were told that it was generally like that. The vigilance home inmates go every morning from their barrack to the remand house for their baths. There are also 2 toilets and 1 bathroom for the staff in the office, which again do not have running water facilities.

In the protective home, Coimbatore, the 2 toilets and the small area for bathing which is attached to the room where the inmates sleep is cleaned by the sanitary worker everyday. The toilets appeared clean and chlorine powder had been spread as a disinfectant. There is no running water and water is filled up from the tube well outside.

There are 4 toilets and 3 bathrooms on the ground floor of Abhaya Nilayam and 1 toilet cum bathroom on the first floor, which appeared to be very clean. A helper has been appointed for cleaning. There is no running water available in the toilets or bathrooms. Metro water is brought in lorries and filled up in the tank on the premise. This is an expensive arrangement as each lorry charges about Rs 800 and they need at least 3-4 lorries of water per month. However this is the only option as the city is reeling under severe drought conditions. Earlier these girls would go outside and fill up water from the tube well but since that had dried up the metro water is used for all purposes now.

Food:

A scale of diet has been prescribed for the inmates of protective homes under the ITPA rules (see annexure) and these homes follow this more or less. The protective homes send a budget proposal as per their requirements and after consideration this amount is allocated every quarterly. For the year 2003 -2004 the vigilance home Chennai, received Rs. 1,62,000/- out of which Rs.1, 57,000/- for 681 remanded inmates, 2 convicts, 1 unwed mother and 7 Stri Sadana inmates has been utilized. The remaining amount will be utilized next year. Food is also donated by outsiders. Special dishes are prepared on festival days and non-vegetarian is given on Diwali, Christmas and Bakri id.

The inmates stand in a queue while the food is being served by 2 matrons. No discussion is encouraged amongst the inmates and the staff takes care to see there is minimal noise. Meal timings are 7:30 a.m, 12:30 p.m and 7:00 pm. After the meals are over, the inmates are taken back by the matrons to their barracks. On Sundays, while watching T.V they also get chana to eat-this is not given on any other day. Eggs were given to some inmates on the doctor's advice. However, the rules prescribe eggs and meat once every fortnight which is not so actually. We tasted the food that was being served to them on one of our visits and it seemed quite good.

In the protective home, Coimbatore since the number of inmates is very less they all sit and eat together. Some of the inmates said that the food given was more than enough for them. However, there are small changes in the scale of diet –e.g. meat is not given every fortnight as prescribed in the rules but 3 times a year.

There is no restriction in the quantity of food given to the inmate in Abhaya Nilayam. A set timetable is maintained with breakfast at 7.30 a.m., lunch at 12.30 p.m. and dinner at 7.30 p.m. Tea is also provided in the evening. Abhaya Nilayam also launched the "one meal project" in 1979. The project invites donors to contribute a certain amount which is put as a fixed deposit. The interest accrued from this amount is used to serve a meal which could be on any special occasion for the donor like a birthday or anniversary.

Clothing and bedding:

Rule 23 (2) under ITPA says inmates shall be supplied with the following items:

Sarees: 4

Blouses: 4

Petticoats: 4

Bodices: 4

Towels: 4

Sanitary cloth: 2 yards

Wooden combs: 2

(all in 1 year)

Carpet: 1

Pillow cases: 1

Bed sheet: 1

(in 2 years)

A sum of Rs.20, 000/- is sanctioned under the material supplies category in the vigilance home, Chennai which covers the bedding. The inmates say that this is being provided to them. However according to the superintendent, pillows are provided to everybody but while interviewing the inmates they said that many of them were just sharing a pillow. A set of 2 sarees is given to the inmates of the Chennai home as uniforms during admission. Additional sarees are given every quarterly on special days like Diwali, or Pongal, along with blouse material and petticoats. The inmates wear a particular saree on a particular day. Sometimes, the old sarees of the inmates of Stri Sadna, unwed mothers home and convicts are kept for the remanded inmates. All except the remanded are allowed to take home their belongings when they are released. At the time of her release, she is allowed to take them away with her. The Government had allocated Rs. 43,000/- for this purpose for the year 2003- 2004 out of which Rs.30,000/- has been utilized.

In the protective home, Coimbatore, bedding is provided to the inmates from the general store and is deposited back on the release of the inmate, and are thus in circulation. Two sets of sarees are given to the inmates at the time of admission and later sarees are given after 6 months. As most of the inmates do not stay that long, they leave the sarees to be used by others. They are not permitted to take the sarees along with them. On asking the present lot of inmates they did say that sarees were given to them. However no underclothes were provided.

In both the protective homes, the inmates said that no undergarments are provided to them. When a woman is remanded to the home, they submit all their belongings to the superintendent who enters them in the register.

In Abhaya Nilayam, the shelter home inmates are provided with a mat, a pillow and a bed sheet for use and sleep on the floor. These bed clothes are taken away every morning and kept in a cupboard under staff supervision. Most of the inmates have their own clothes but clothes are donated once in a while by individuals or philanthropic organizations.

Medical treatment and counseling

General:

A doctor visits the protective homes once a week. However Rule 19 (1) under ITPA says that the medical officer attached to the protective home should visit everyday except on Sundays and other holidays except when necessary. Thus, we see that the rules are not being followed. In the Chennai vigilance home, there is a nursing assistant as well who gives the medicines prescribed by the doctor. However, there is no doctor in Abhaya Nilayam and common ailments are treated by the in-house staff with simple medicines.

In times of emergency:

In the vigilance home, Chennai, the doctor is tried to be called at the home itself but incase he is unavailable, the inmates are taken to the nearest government hospital. In all the other institutions, the inmates are straight away taken to the Govt hospital accompanied by atleast 2 staff members as there is no other provision. In case of an infectious/contagious disease, the inmate of the Chennai home is referred to a corporation health center. All the other inmates are then vaccinated. E.g., in cases of a break out of cholera.

For mentally ill:

No mentally ill people are admitted to the Coimbatore home. In the other institutions, such women are referred to city based NGOS for the mentally ill or the government mental hospital.

Counseling:

In the protective homes for women, the only counseling that is available on a rare occasion is for those suffering from AIDS. For e.g., in vigilance home, Chennai, the Psychologist from DESH, a non-governmental organization working in the field of AIDS provides psychological counseling to the inmates. Though she ought to come once a week, she is not really regular. She mainly looks after the HIV patient and takes moral education classes sometimes. In Coimbatore, the district HIV and AIDS counseling cell conducts awareness programmes on AIDS for the inmates once in a while. This is also not a regular programme though. There are no other counseling facilities available at all. Unfortunately, even Abhaya Nilayam lacks a counselor of any sort.

Pregnant women:

Pregnant women are taken to the government hospital for regular check-ups from the vigilance home, Chennai and Abhaya Nilayam but their diet is no different as such from the others. However, according to the unwed mother who delivered her baby a week after coming to the Chennai home, a glass of milk was given in the morning instead of coffee.

Pregnant women are not admitted to the Coimbatore protective home but sent to the vigilance home, Chennai instead. No professional pre-natal or post natal guidance is given.

Children of inmates:

Children below 7 years are allowed to stay with their mothers in the protective homes in accordance with Rule 9, under ITPA. There were no children in the vigilance home, Chennai. The baby of the unwed mother who is in the home was given up for adoption to a NGO called Ashraya. According to these rules 9 (4) a child kept in the protective home shall be allowed such diet and clothing as the medical officer attached to the protective home think fit. We found that the one and a half year old child staying with her mother in the protective home, Coimbatore was being given 200ml of milk everyday. She was also sharing her mother's food. Similarly in Abhaya Nilayam, children below 7 years are allowed to stay with their mothers. Babies of mothers not wanting to keep them are given up for adoption to centers and the mother submits a letter forfeiting any rights over her child.

Recreation and other work:

The only type of recreational facility available is the television. However, there are rules even for this. In the vigilance home Chennai, the inmates are allowed to watch TV only on the weekends while in the protective home, Coimbatore, they can watch the national channels (they are the only channels available) between 6p.m to 9 pm. In Abhaya Nilayam, the inmates watch TV in the evenings and during other times of the day with special permission from the matron. Though we feel that inmates especially those at a suggestible age should be refrained from watching certain programmes such as those which show unnecessary violence, educational and other knowledge based programmes should be certainly encouraged.

In the government vigilance home Chennai, women are allocated work such as cleaning of vessels, assisting the cook in the kitchen, sweeping and mopping floors, and also cleaning the campus. The inmates of Stri Sadna also get water from the tank which is near the gate everyday (it is quite a distance from the main building) for use in the toilets and kitchen. It is a similar case in Abhaya Nilayam where inmates are given duties such as cleaning rooms, helping in the kitchen, filling water. Each inmate is allocated a responsibility to keep them occupied for sometime during the day. However, no work is allotted to the women staying in the Coimbatore home.

Education:

The government vigilance home Chennai has at present no educational facilities for the inmates although the rules governing the daily routine of Protective Homes (Rules 20 & 21) provide for school education. There was a higher secondary school functioning in the premises a long time ago for the benefit of the inmates but it was closed down due to a decline in the number of inmates. However, no one from the staff to the officials in the HQ could furnish any details on this. On the other hand, even though the number of inmates in the protective home is very much smaller, there are provisions for non-formal education such as teaching the girls to write their names, husbands/fathers name, address and certain other things. For this purpose, blackboard and slates have been provided and a teacher has

been appointed who holds classes for a few hours everyday depending on everyone's convenience. This method should also be adopted in the other institutions.

The inmates of Abhaya Nilayam, who wish to continue their education, can undergo their studies in the tutorials outside but the fee has to be paid by the inmates either by working or with the support of their family. At present no inmate is undergoing any sort of education.

Vocational facilities:

Rule 20 and 21 provide for school education and vocational training of inmates in Protective Homes in the state. In the vigilance home, Chennai, women who are in Stri Sadanaa, unwed mothers home and the convicts are involved in, mat weaving, tailoring and power laundry from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every day of the week. There are separate instructors for these professions. These women are paid a weekly amount of 60 paise (however this information is subject to contradictions as all the staff had varied answers and no one was really sure.) According to one of the instructors, a proposal has been sent to the Directorate of Social Defence for revised scales-skilled Rs 70 and unskilled Rs 50 a month. (Once again, none of the other staff was sure of this. However there are no rules under the ITPA for the scales and these are set by the government and the department which is in charge of the protective homes). Those in remand custody are not allowed to work. The power laundry is a normal washing unit, similar to what they have in industries/hotels/hospitals. This unit was set up around 18 years ago by the state government. It operates on steam generator using the borewell water and the instructor in charge also has a boiler attendant and a washer woman to help her. Right now there are only 2 inmates who are working here-very few people choose this work as it involves sweating it out manually. Those interested in working here are taught how to handle the equipment safely, loading, unloading, folding and ironing. The slightly educated women are also taught, the usage of raw materials and stain removal by chemicals. Orders are taken from contractors around Mylapore (the area in which the vigilance home is located), decorators and even households. The instructor explained that later on these women can set up trained mobile ironing units outside. This also gives them a work environment, which benefits them if they ever get job in any industry. The money that is earned from these orders is given back to the government to be utilized for running not only this home but also other government institutions. Some items (e.g., mats and table cloths) produced by the inmates are sold during the exhibition cum sale conducted by the Government Department.

In the protective home Coimbatore, tailoring is the only vocation available. There are 6 tailoring machines available and the inmates are taught by the tailoring teacher. Orders for stitching blouses are taken from other institutions nearby. Rs 3 is charged for each blouse and the amount is handed over to the Directorate. No money is given to the inmates for their work. However, only those inmates who can sew well do this job. So unless the inmate is proficient in it she is not really allowed to handle this and the orders are completed by the teacher. In such cases, all the new comers who are picking up the ropes have nothing to do which is generally the case.

Though Abhaya Nilayam does not have any training units in-house, women are permitted to go outside for training classes of their choice. However, this is only after the 3 months of stay in the shelter home are over as shelter home girls are not allowed to go outside. The

training expenses are met by inmates either with the support of their parents or they are asked to earn while undergoing their training. There are 2 sewing machines available in the home which are not used due to lack of funds for purchasing raw materials.

Rehabilitation:

In the protective homes, inmates are restored back to their families. Follow-up visit is conducted for a period of three years by the probation officer. Quarterly visits are made during the first year; half yearly during the second year and a visit is made at the final year. The report is prepared and documented at the head office. Unfortunately, there were no follow up cases accounted for in the protective home, Coimbatore for the women who have been sent back to their families. However, a minimal amount is given to cover traveling expenses. The government also releases two types of funds for the benefit of those women who have stayed beyond 2 years:

- 1) Lump sum amount: This amount is given to the women who have undergone vocational training in any trade and have obtained a certificate (e.g. tailoring) from the government run after care home-Vellore. So the interested individual can choose to go to Vellore, complete the training and then return to the Govt home in Chennai. Infact the research team did meet some inmates who had done that. The amount is sanctioned on the basis of the trade for example Rs.2000/- for tailoring, Rs.1500/- for weaving and Rs.800/- for mat weaving. This fund is released and is given to the inmate in kind like tailoring machines etc. This gesture of the government is always welcome by inmates
- 2) Welfare fund: Welfare fund of Rs.2000- Rs5000/- is released on seeing the inmates' conduct during the 3 years of the follow-up period by the probation officer. This fund is also mostly provided in kind (Sewing machines, other tailoring materials, material for starting petty shops, etc.) to the women to start their own business. A small amount might be initially given in cash. It takes atleast 1-2 years for the discharged inmates to get the amount and it is given to about 10-15 women together at one go. The research team found out that an inmate did actually get a sewing machine last year after she was released. We also saw the order wherein the inmates for 2001 have now been sanctioned the welfare amount.

According to the superintendent of the Coimbatore protective home, most of the convicts are released within 6 months and therefore this fund stays unutilized.

In Abhaya Nilayam, apart from restoring girls back to their families, rehabilitation measures also include transferring interested inmates and those who cannot afford to pay, to long stay institutions like the After Care Home Vellore for training in tailoring. Suitable employment is also found for individuals willing to work. However no financial assistance is provided to the inmates. Marriages are also organized and so far more than 250 marriages have been arranged under the Special Marriage Registration Act with the support of donors. Men who want to marry a girl from the home are given complete details of her and asked to submit their details including family background and the salary they earn. The information is passed on to the probation officer who enquires about the boy and if found satisfactory, the marriage is fixed and registered.

Visitors:

According to Rule 31 (3) parents and guardians may visit inmates of a protective home on Saturdays and Sundays between 4 p.m and 6 p.m. Though the inmates of the protective home, Coimbatore are allowed to meet visitors once a week on Saturdays between 5-6 p.m., the inmates of Stri Sadna, unwed mothers home and the convicts of the Chennai home are allowed to meet their relatives once a month on Saturdays. However if they come from far flung places, they are allowed to meet the inmates even on a weekday between 2-5 pm.

Necessary documents such as a ration card to prove their identity and a letter from the court are required to be shown to the superintendent of the protective homes. The meeting takes place in front of the superintendent and the visitors are allowed to give certain items like biscuits, fruits etc. No oily food items are allowed. In the vigilance home Chennai, the food items are first tasted by the superintendent and only then given to the inmates though this practice is not followed in the Coimbatore home. All legal matters are settled in the court and no lawyers ever come to the protective homes although Rule 31(2) of the rules governing the management of these Homes allows inmates meeting legal advisors.

In Abhaya Nilayam, women are allowed to meet the visitors on all days except on Sundays.

Interaction with others:

The interaction of NGOs is very limited in both the government vigilance home, Chennai and Abhaya Nilayam. They usually come to donate things, mainly food. Those who donate in Abhaya Nilayam do spend some time with the inmates though it is very limited. However, outsiders are not allowed to meet the inmates of the vigilance home, Chennai. The welfare officer from the Directorate does visit but no other officials visit the home, which is contrary to the rules under.

There are no NGOs that visit the protective home Coimbatore. Students of the psychology department, of the city college used to come for counseling in the past but they haven't been doing so for the past 2 years. According to the superintendent, this is mainly because of the stigma attached to these homes.

Interaction with the outside world would help in many ways including making the protective homes more transparent. NGOs specialized in a particular field could provide the inputs that is unavailable in these homes. For example, those which work in the field of providing psychological counseling could be involved, along with those who say, teach certain types of vocations such as making paper and cloth bags out of waste material and they could also help in marketing these products outside.

Interaction with staff:

The interaction between the inmates and staff in the vigilance home Chennai, seemed very formal and contained. The manager said that some inmates do open up to them but this seemed very rare. Many of the inmates while being interviewed said they were quite happy because they were getting much more here than what they would outside. Though this might be true in many ways, there was also an apparent fear of the staff in the inmates while

interviewing especially since the superintendent was sitting through out the interviews that were held. On the other hand, the inmates and the staff of the protective home Coimbatore seemed to have a friendly relationship. A congenial atmosphere existed and we found them chatting with each other quite pleasantly. The staff complained that in the beginning it is difficult managing new comers who have problems adjusting to the place. These inmates show their frustration by not eating properly. However they generally start counseling them and inmates settle down. Most of them are recidivists and are now quite familiar with the staff.

The research team observed that the relationship between the inmates and the staff in Abhaya Nilayam was very cordial. One of the inmates even mentioned that the matron and superintendents were like surrogate mothers. However, some inmates did feel that the staff was partial to the hostelites than the shelter home girls as they had the freedom to go out and work and even return back late. Sometimes staff faced problems with the newcomers here as well for it took them some time to settle down.

Abuse and violence:

Only the inmates of the vigilance home complained of punishments like severe beating by some matrons and the Superintendent for disobedience and for not doing the duties properly. The reasons could even be as petty as eating the fallen mangoes on the ground from the trees without permission. They also said that the present superintendent is much better then the former whose punishments were extremely severe such as making them lie on the bench and hitting them on the legs or putting them into a separate cell, and giving them “thanni Sorru” to eat which is rice with plain water, without any salt and side dishes. Complaints against the matron go unheard since the superintendents are really not bothered. Verbal abuse by both inmates towards each other and by the staff are quite common. The inmate who mainly opened up to give us these details however clammed up on the next day when we wanted some clarifications and refused to divulge any thing. We feel that she was probably punished for having told us about this abuse.

General Observations:

Government Vigilance Home, Chennai

The first impression that we got of the staff in the government home was one of extreme lethargy and indolence. There would be atleast 2 people who would be sleeping on their desks in the office on the days we visited only to be woken up by us. It was obvious that we had destroyed the comfortable routine that they had carved for themselves and they were certainly not too happy about it. Not only were they not welcoming, we soon realized that they were very closed and unwilling to share much information so much so that it made us feel that they were actually hiding a lot of things. This could be because many of them and especially the superintendent were ignorant of many issues that we questioned them on. Different people had different things to say on the same topics/questions thus proving how unaware they were of things. Infact on certain issues they were so ambiguous and ignorant that we were really surprised. They had little knowledge of any rules/regulations, strength of

staff, money that was given to the inmates for their work (we got extremely varied answers for all this) etc. The vocational training instructor was given instructions not to answer any questions apart from her area of work and she out of apparent fear of the consequences refused to dwell upon anything apart from the training she was imparting. The staff was very hesitant in allowing us to meet the inmates and put their foot down on us meeting the remand population as this according to them required the permission of the courts. According to them, we were outsiders and the fact that we were visiting on behalf of the National Commission for Women failed to strike a note. The officials in the Directorate of Social Defence whom we then approached backed them up on this despite our arguments, with the result that we could not interact with the major chunk of inmates. {However Rule 31 under ITTPA under which these protective homes are established, says that no male visitor shall be permitted to interview any of the inmates except in the presence of the superintendent or any other member of the staff of the home so authorized by the superintendent in this behalf.} While interviewing the others, the superintendent was always present (again orders were said to be given on this) which obviously inhibited the inmates from being open. On the days that the superintendent was absent we were not allowed to interact with any inmates or collect any information. This created some unpleasantness amongst them and us as weekends were anyways closed to us and that meant major disruptions in our schedule. The staff really disliked our visits and the times we went back to fill in the gaps in the information, we did face some hostility. While speaking to the inmates, some of them complained of abuse by the staff especially the earlier superintendent. One of the inmates complained of severe punishment in different ways- beaten by a cane, transferred to the barracks of the convicts for a week, made to eat plain rice, kneel down for hours etc. She also complained of the matrons being very cruel and finding lame excuses for punishing them. However despite their complaints to the superintendents no remedial measures were taken. The inmate accused the staff of other inappropriate behavior such as only partly distributing the food donated by NGO's and pocketing the rest. The cook steals provisions and if caught blames it on the inmates who help out in the kitchen. This becomes another reason for punishing the inmates.

However on our next visit, these same inmates totally clammed up and refused to divulge any details. We think that the staff somehow got the wind of this and punished them for being candid to us.

The inmates are rarely allowed to freely roam around outside their barracks-their movements are heavily restricted. Though they are locked up most of the times, the final locking is at 6:00p.m after all their chores are over. According to the staff, these restrictions are mainly due to scarcity of personnel. Since there is very little to occupy them in the absence of much constructive activity esp. for the vigilance home inmates, we realized how boring it could be for them. Most facilities like schooling, physical education and rehabilitation measures have been withdrawn, stating decline in numbers as the reason. We observed that a large number of rooms/buildings etc were lying unused-infact a very small portion of the campus was actually in use.

The inmates are not sent on parole except in case of emergency, like death or severe illness of family members. A letter stating the details of the inmate's custody is given to the nearest police station and the security of the inmates is then the responsibility of the police. The

inmates are sent in the morning and have to return back before 6.00p.m. Night stay is not permitted.

One of the matrons also said that homosexuality was pretty much prevalent. According to her these women, especially the vigilance home inmates did feel sexually deprived very often as they came from the sex worker profession. Theft of personal items such as soaps, shampoos etc were also very common amongst the inmates.

From the annual report which gives the expenditure under different heads, it was also observed that under many heads, the actual expenditure over the years from 1996 is much less than the allotted sanctioned amount. For e.g.,

2000-2001

<i>Allotted</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
Salaries: 20, 61,000	18, 88,165
Medical allowance: 19, 000	18,482
HRA: 1, 60,000	1, 57,098
Traveling: 12,500	12,068
Telephone charges: 8,500	10,423
Electricity: 59,000	51,400
Water charges: 23,500	22,982
Materials and supplies: 36,000	31,911
Clothing and bedding: 46,000	44,125
Medicines: 5000	4988
Dietary changes: 1, 34,000	1, 25,691

Specific Recommendations

- Since there were complaints of abuse by the staff towards the inmates in the government vigilance home, Chennai, we feel that more information should be collected on this to be able to take adequate measures against the perpetrators. Since the government home is very closed and the inmates not allowed to talk freely, it is necessary to collect such sensitive data very discreetly.
- The staff should be more aware of the rules and regulations, and other issues pertaining to the running and maintenance of the home. The Directorate of Social Defence could arrange for preliminary classes during their induction and postings from other institutions. Brief meetings and brainstorming sessions with the head quarters from time to time would increase their knowledge. Problems faced by both staff and inmates could be thrashed out in these meetings. We felt that there was a total disconnect in the interaction between the staff of the home and the headquarters.
- Today, lack of space is a major problem in all cities in India esp. in the metros, Chennai being no exception. The government vigilance home has a huge campus with many buildings lying unused and it is sad to see this space being unutilized.

This could be used appropriately by the government in many ways. A school could be set up for not only this protective home inmates but other custodial institutions in Chennai (infact Abhaya Nilayam-another protective home for women is just opposite and lacks space for any activities).An exhibition hall in one of the buildings to display handicrafts made by women prisoners and others in detention would be a good idea.

- The inmates of this home are very restricted in their activities and are not even allowed to freely walk outside their barracks. Being so few in numbers the security risk in doing so is definitely low. They should be allowed some time to walk/move around instead of being cooped up in their rooms even if it is under supervision.
- The law permits inmates, personal visits by their relatives and others every Saturday and Sunday. However, in contravention of this law, visits are permitted only once a month. This practice should be definitely changed and the rules applied.

Government Protective Home, Coimbatore:

The staff was quite friendly and did not mind giving us any information. Only the book of rules which the superintendent claimed to have, was not shown to us which was quite surprising as these cannot be confidential. We were allowed to meet the remanded girls here contrary to the vigilance home in Chennai which said that government orders did not allow them to permit us to interview them which was reconfirmed by the Directorate. However, the staff here did not know about any thing like this. We thus felt that most of the staff was not fully aware of government orders passed and framed their own rules. Nevertheless, this protective home was certainly vastly different from the one in Chennai as the people here were more aware of what was happening and were not ambiguous about the running of the home. The atmosphere was also very different-this was just a building which housed the inmates and there was no open campus like the vigilance home in Chennai. However, unfortunately, since the inmates could not go out they had to be enclosed within the four walls all through out their period of stay. On the other hand, they were not locked inside one room as in the vigilance home, Chennai but could move around in the house.

Since the protective home is housed in a rented accommodation, every time the lease expires, they have to shift to a new place, which is very inconvenient. In the present building, there is no storage space but investing in making cupboards etc to make it more livable would mean extra expenditure, as this is not a permanent quarter.

The staff complained that many of them work overtime, as there is a shortage of staff. For e.g, when the cook takes her weekly off, the matron and the other office staff do the cooking. The office staff is made to stay at nights when the matron is on leave. They are not compensated for this, which is unfair. They also said that since the police personnel are not always available for escort duties, this is also carried out by the protective home staff.

None of the inmates we spoke to opened up when asked about the behavior of the staff towards them. They all said that things are okay and they do not face any problems as such. This could also be because in such a short time, it was difficult for them to open up to us.

Specific Recommendations:

- The government should have a building of its own for the protective home in Coimbatore instead of shifting from one rented accommodation to another.
- There should be a full time superintendent staying on campus and not the probation officer taking charge of the protective home.
- The inmates are neither allowed outside the building nor do they have any recreational activities. The only vocational training they get is tailoring. It is necessary to introduce some more vocational training and recreational activities to keep them occupied.
- There should be some knowledge-based books/magazines for those women inmates who can read. Members of the staff can also read them out to these women when they are free.

Abhaya Nilayam, Chennai

The research team felt that the atmosphere in Abhaya Nilayam was much better than in many other such institutions. The staff who have earlier been inmates of the same institute (the matron was an inmate almost 47 years ago and all the others including the superintendent have been inmates) understand their problems and seemed to genuinely care for the inmates. The inmates were quite satisfied and since these girls came from the lower-socio-economic backgrounds they themselves felt that Abhaya Nilayam was offering them more than what they would get at their homes. They were getting proper meals, had toilet and bathroom facilities and lived in a congenial atmosphere which provided them with the security that many of them lacked in their homes. Relaxation in the rules of period of stay gave enough time to the inmates to decide their future course of action. The poor girls' hostel in the same building was a good option for those who could afford to pay a small sum for their stay.

According to the secretary, Madras Vigilance Association, there were enough funds to meet the running of the home. He says, they have limited staff to be able to utilize the money optimally. However, the staff in the home kept emphasizing that there was a shortage of funds and this led to a dearth of many amenities including recreational and vocational training facilities. Without these facilities the shelter home inmates complained of thorough boredom. Some of them wanted to read books but there were none available. The staff mainly faces a problem of scarcity and delay in the release of funds by the Directorate of Social Defence and they have to somehow manage within the meager resources that they have.

Also many of these inmates badly needed counseling and there were no such services provided. Though there were no cases of suicide reported, many of the shelter home inmates either threatened or have even tried to commit suicide. (infact the day before we went to Abhaya Nilayam, an inmate had tried to commit suicide by hanging herself on a rope in the

bathroom but the inmates alerted the staff who then rescued her). Interaction with the outside world is very limited for the shelter home girls which also troubles them to a great extent.

Specific Recommendations:

- The Central Social Welfare Board should increase the amount of money they give for each inmate as the present amount of Rs 225 per month per inmate is extremely low and insufficient. Also some central funds ought to be given to support costs of maintenance, general upkeep etc.
- The staff also informed that the Central Social Welfare Board has plans to take over Abhaya Nilayam and merge it with the Government Vigilance Home. The staff feels that this would hinder the freedom of the inmates. We strongly feel that such a step should not be taken, since run by an NGO, Abhaya Nilayam has a much more congenial atmosphere conducive to the well-being of the inmates. We also observed that the staff here was more caring and genuinely concerned for the welfare of the individual than the staff of the Chennai Govt Vigilance Home.
- A full time or at least a part time psychological counselor and a visiting doctor (general physician) need to be appointed to give professional guidance.
- We observed that many of the inmates were either involved in divorce cases or wanted advice on the legal aspects of issues such as domestic abuse etc, but had very little money to afford any legal help. There should therefore be a legal counselor attached to the home maybe from the State Legal Services Authorities who can take up cases of those who cannot afford, it free of cost.
- There should be some knowledge based books/magazines for those women inmates who can read. Members of the staff can also read them out to these women when they are free.

General Recommendations for all Homes:

- The rules and regulations under the ITPA should be bound together and given to all the protective homes as guidelines for them to follow. These rules should be available for everyone to see as these are not confidential documents.
- Staff working overtime should be given some compensation. This would also serve as an incentive for them.
- In order to prevent violations of human rights by those in authority and make the system of protective homes more transparent there should be a system of board of visitors consisting of official visitors and non-official visitors from the community. Section 41 under the ITPA (1956) rules, call for this and should be enforced strictly. This would serve as a monitoring mechanism and remove the veil of secrecy that surrounds many of these homes.
- Human rights training programmes for staff should be held during their induction or in the course of their work.
- There should also be atleast some facilities for recreation apart from television such as indoor games, books etc for all age groups as some inmates have children with them as well.

- Interaction with outsiders-NGO's/women's groups/students of law, social work, and humanities should be encouraged. Apart from other benefits, they would also help in opening up the system to the outside world.
- There should be educational classes held if not everyday atleast 3-4 times a week. Many of these women are illiterate and learning to read and write during the time they are here would not only keep them occupied but also benefit them greatly later on. The Directorate of Social Defence can help in organizing this or in case of Abhaya Nilayam, the Madras Vigilance Association can arrange for a teacher by paying a monthly salary. The protective home, Coimbatore already holds classes for the inmates and this should be emulated by the other institutions as well.
- More vocational training courses such as sewing, knitting, pickle-making, book-binding, envelope making should be organized for all those interested. Many of these activities such as envelope making can also be done by those who are in the home for a short time and this should not be an excuse for not having such activities.
- Efforts should be made to reintegrate these women back to mainstream society equipped with some skill.
- There should be regular socio-psychological provided to the inmates. Many of these inmates (the commercial sex workers) are recidivists and maybe counseling and appropriate and timely guidance would help to give up this way of life and find alternative means of living. Psychological counseling is also necessary for those who may be depressed and in need of help
- Legal counseling should be provided. The inmates should be made aware of free legal aid and the legal aid authorities should provide all help to these women in custody which was not observed..
- Women suffering from HIV AIDS should be properly looked after. All precautions must be taken to ensure that this does not spread. Those poor patients who are discharged should be helped financially so that they can continue their medication even after release, otherwise their re-entry into the community without proper care could lead to the spread of AIDS, especially in the occupation that most of these inmates are from.
- The judges dealing with the cases of the commercial sex workers should take into view their rehabilitation and long term benefits and not just sentence them to short terms or let them off on bail or by imposing a small fine. This does not deter the women from going back to their profession and the cycle goes on. The probation officer should also be consulted before making a decision on the cases. Even though applications have been written to the courts to take this into account, they have as yet gone unheard.
- Rehabilitation measures like arranging marriages and jobs are good steps which have been taken by Abhaya Nilayam and should be emulated by the other institutions as well. The probation officers and welfare officers from the Directorate of Social Defence should take charge of this.

Annexure: 1

ASSESSMENT FORMAT FOR POLICE LOCK-UPS

1. Name of Lock-up:

W1, All Women Police Station, Thousand Lights (Central Zone)

2. Location (address and telephone):

Greens Road, Chennai
Ph no: 28295151/28293958

3. Date of visit:

May 4th 2004

4. Officer -in-charge:

Ms.Manghayarkarasi –Inspector. (She came to the Thousand Lights PS as a sub-inspector in 1992. Being the inspector now she is in-charge of the Triplicane district which has 8 PS under it including Thousand Lights PS)

5. Circle Officer:

Central zone in- charge- Mr Jha-Joint Commissioner of Police

6. I. Sanctioned strength:

- a. Woman Inspector :1
- b. Women Sub-inspector : 2
- c. Women Head constables : 12
- d. Grade 1 Women Police Constables: 7
- e. Women Police Constables (armed reserve):0

II. Actual posting:

- a. Woman Inspector :1
- b. Women Sub-inspector : 1
- c. Women Head constables : 7
- d. Grade 1 Women Police Constables: 0
- e. Women Police Constables (armed reserve): 9+1

Due to shortage of required staff the Government has appointed 9 constables from the Armed Reserves(their duty is actually escorting and bandobast) and 1 from the Tamil Nadu Special Police. There is usually 1 head constable and 2 police constables posted at night. Those women warders who were recruited before 1973, now do odd jobs in the PS as well as help in escorting detained women or even do night duty if there is a shortage of staff.

7. Is separate accomodation available in the lock-up for women?

The all women's police stations all over Tamil Nadu cater only to crimes against women. Hence exclusive women's lockups are provided. Also those women who have committed crimes and need to be detained are brought from other police stations in the jurisdiction to the Thousand Lights PS. The men who are arrested by this police station (eg, husbands and father-in-laws in dowry cases) are detained in the men's lock-up in the adjoining men's police station (it is a separate building on the same campus). No men from the men's PS are ever allowed inside this PS except the assistant commissioner – anti dowry cell whose office is in the women's PS.

b. Sanctioned capacity of lock-up:

Even though the Police Standing Orders 643 states that the maximum number of inmates detained in the lockup is to be fixed for each station by the Superintendent in consultation with the Executive Engineer (looking at the size of the room) and the number is to be hung outside the lock-up, it was observed that this is not done and the officials are unaware of the sanctioned capacity. However the superintendent said that the maximum number they would keep is 5 and for not more than 2-3 days.

c. Accused kept on the day of visit:

There were no women in the lockup on the day that the research team visited the PS.

8. Number of women offenders kept in the lock -up

- 2002 - 133
- 2003 -74
- 2004 - 19(as on 3.05.04-data is provided below)

S.No	Name	Offence	No. of days in custody	From	To
1	Sheela	Preventive arrest u/s.41CrPC	1	18/01.04	19.01.04
2	Latha	"	"	31.01.04	01.02.04
3	Dhanalakshmi	42 IPC	"	09.02.04	10.02.04
4	Muneeswari	392r/w 34IPC	"	18.02.04	19.02.04
5	Cheriyar	380 IPC	"	19.02.04	20.02.04
6	Ragini	Missing girl	"	22.02.04	23.02.04
7	Maria	120 b, 468 K,420 IPC	"	25.02.04	26.02.04
8	Krishnaveni	384 &506 IPC	"	27.02.04	28.02.04
9	Subhalakshmi	41 CrPC	"	9.03.04	10.03.04
10	Saraswathi	381 IPC	"	12.03.04	13.03.04
11	Lakshmi	41 CrPC	"	19.03.04	20.03.04
12	Amudha	381 IPC	"	19.03.04	20.03.04

13	Lakshmi	41CrPC	„	5.04.04	6.04.04
14	Lakshmi & Maheswari	380 & 381 IPC	„	6.04.04	7.04.04
15	Mallika	363 IPC	„	21.04.04	22.04.04
16	Mallika	"	„	22.04.04	23.04.04
17	Mallika	"	„	1.05.04	2.05.04
18	Mallika	"	„	2.05.04	3.05.04
19	Mallika	"	„	3.05.04	4.05.04

9. Did any women escaped from custody during the period Jan 2002-march 2004?

No

10. Did any women offender die while in custody during the above period?

No

11. What arrangements exist for:

a. Food:

The Thousand Lights PS has been given a permanent fund of Rs 5000 which is replenished every time money is drawn from it. Food expenses for those women arrested and detained by this PS are met from this fund while expenditure on food for those detainees brought from different police stations in the jurisdiction are met by the PS from where they are brought.

b. Bedding:

Even though rule 637 (3) of the police standing orders prescribes for 2 durries for all lock-ups, the detainees are not provided with any such items as a precautionary measure against attempts of suicide. They therefore have to sleep on the floor.

12. Are there separate toilets for women inmates within lock-up?

a. Number:

There is one toilet attached to the lock up. There are also 2 toilets outside for the staff and those who visit the PS.

b. Condition:

The lock up is a small dark room where 2-3 persons can stay and any more than that would be a crowd. It has only a door with iron bars and no other ventilation. Though there are neither fans nor any lights inside the lock up, there are 2 lights just outside the door which throw light inside. The lock up looked clean.

The toilet is separated from the room with a wall but has no doors thus causing an invasion of privacy. There is no running water in the toilet.

c. Arrangements for cleaning:

It is cleaned every day by the helper in the station who is paid from the permanent fund.

13. What arrangements exist for medical treatment of inmates at times of emergency?

In case of any emergency, first aid is provided by the PS staff. The inmate is then taken to the Royapettah government hospital in the station jeep or auto rickshaws. Two constables accompany them to the hospital and stay with them till the treatment is complete.

14. Is search of women offenders done by lady staff only/ are lady officials available for this purpose?

Yes, only women police are allowed to search women offenders and the details are entered in the Police Search Register and signed by the Sr.Police Officer, the station writer and the offender.

15. Are inmates in the lock-up allowed to meet their lawyers/legal authorities? Are there any rules prescribed for such meetings?

The family members of the arrestee are given the freedom to bring lawyers or legal authorities. It was observed that the notice board in the station provided information about free legal-aid.

16. What arrangements exists for transportation of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison?

Police jeep has been provided for the transport of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison. In the absence of the police vehicle, auto rickshaws are used. The auto expenses are met from the permanent fund.

ASSESSMENT FORMAT FOR POLICE LOCK-UPS

1. Name of Lock-up:

All Women Police Station, T.Nagar (South Zone)

2. Location (address and telephone):

Madley Road, T.Nagar, Chennai 600 017
Tel: 24330951

3. Date of visit:

May 4th 2004

4. Officer -in-charge:

Ms K.S.Malavarzhi - Inspector

5. Circle Officer:

Mr Tripathy-Joint Commissioner of Police (South Zone)

6. I. Sanctioned strength:

- a. Woman Inspector :1
- b. Women Sub-inspector : 2
- c. Women head constables : 11
- d. Grade 1 Women Police Constables: 0
- e. Women Police Constables (armed reserve): 7

II. Actual posting:

- a. Woman Inspector :1
- b. Women Sub-inspector : 2
- c. Women Head constables : 7
- d. Grade 1 Women Police Constables: 1
- e. Women Police Constables (armed reserve): 3

Due to shortage of required staff 3 constables from the Armed Reserves have been appointed. As on 4th May 2004, 1 sub inspector and 2 head constables are on leave whole 1 head constable is on other duty. Those women warders who were recruited before 1973, now do odd jobs in the PS as well as help in escorting detained women or even do night duty if there is a shortage of staff.

7. a. Is separate accomodation available in the lock-up for women?

Only women are kept in the lock-up. On rare occasions, in the absence of women offenders, men are kept in the lock-up during day time and are transferred to the nearest men's police station.

b. Sanctioned capacity of lock-up:

Even though the Police Standing Orders 643 states that the maximum number of inmates detained in the lockup is to be fixed for each station by the Superintendent in consultation with the Executive Engineer (looking at the size of the room) and the number is to be hung outside the lock-up, it was observed that this is not done and the officials are unaware of the sanctioned capacity. However the police staff said that they never keep more than 5 people at any time.

c. Accused kept on the day of visit:

None. Detention of women in the nights is generally avoided and arrest are made in the day and produced to the Magistrates immediately. { Police Standing Order 637 (4) (a) }

8. Number of women offenders kept in the lock-up

2004 -19 inmates out of whom three were men who were arrested for eve teasing and dowry

S.No	Name	Offence	No.of days detained	From	To
1.	Kala	380 IPC	1 night	10.01.04	11.01.04
2	Saraswathi	380 IPC	"	10.01.04	11.01.04
3	Rubika	380 IPC	1 night	15.01.04	16.01.04
4	Uma	363 IPC	"	8.02.04	9.02.04
5.	Lakshmi	41 (ii) CrPC	"	10.02.04	11.02.04
6	Subhaamma	380 IPC	'	4.03.04	5.03.04
7.	Lakshmi	380 IPC	'	"	"
8.	Chanduu	"	"	"	'
9.	Susheela	380 IPC	1 night	4.03.04	5.03.04
10.	Abhirami	75 CP Act	1 night	22.03.04	23.03.04
11	Priya	75 CP Act	1 night	22.03.04	23.03.04
12	Rajee	41 (ii) CrPc & 8a ITP	1 night	29.03.04	30.03.04
13	Radha	41 (ii) CrPc & 8a ITP	1 night	29.03.04	30.03.04
14.	Thana amma	75 CP Act	1 night	14.04.04	15.04.04
15.	Rani	75 CP Act	1 night	14.04.04	15.04.04
16.	Valli	75 CP Act	1 night	14.04.04	15.04.04

9. Did any women escaped from custody during the period Jan 2002-march 2004?

No

10. Did any women offender die while in custody during the above period?

No

11. What arrangements exist for:

a. Food:

Expenditure on food for those detainees brought from different police stations in the jurisdiction are met by the PS from where they are brought. However since the permanent fund of Rs. 5000/- is not allocated to this station, food expenses of the detainee are met by the police personnel mainly the inspector or SI from their own pocket.

b. Bedding:

Even though rule 637 (3) of the police standing orders prescribes for 2 durries for all lock-ups, similar to all the other PS, the detainees are not provided with any such items as a precautionary measure against attempts of suicide. They therefore have to sleep on the floor.

12. Are there separate toilets for women inmates within lock-up?

a. Number:

The lock up has a toilet attached to it.

b. Condition:

The lock-up is high roofed room with a small window with iron bars which allows some light to come in from the outside. It has the typical door with iron bars seen in all police stations. The toilet is in corner separated by a one foot wall hindering privacy. Since there is no running water, it is brought from the outside tank by the helper who is paid by the police personnel from their pockets.

c. Arrangements for cleaning:

The lock-up is cleaned by the occupant whenever there is one.

13. What arrangements exist for medical treatment of inmates at times of emergency?

Incase of an emergency, the inmate is first referred to any private practitioner (whoever is available) in the nearby crowded locality and then sent to the Saidapet government hospital if required, accompanied by 2 police personnel mostly in an auto rickshaw, the expenses once again borne by the staff of this PS.

14. Is search of women offenders done by lady staff only/ are lady officials available for this purpose?

Yes, only women police are allowed to search women offenders and the details are entered in the Police Search Register and signed by the Sr.Police Officer, the station writer and the Prisoner.

15. Are inmates in the lock-up allowed to meet their lawyers/legal authorities? Are there any rules prescribed for such meetings?

The family members of the arrestee are given the freedom to bring lawyers. Infact the inspector said that those arrestees who can afford it contact their lawyers soon after their arrest and these are the ones most likely to be found guilty of the offense.

16. What arrangements exists for transportation of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison?

Even though there is supposedly a jeep given to the PS it is never available as it is always used for other duties (eg, election, escort etc).Hence, the staff collects money amongst themselves to transport women detainees to courts/hospitals etc. transportation of the offenders is done out of the personal expenses of the police personnel.

ASSESSMENT FORMAT FOR POLICE LOCK-UPS

1. Name of Lock-up:

W2, All Women Police Station, Madras Esplanade (North Zone)

2. Location (address and telephone):

Near High Court, Chennai
Police exchange no: 28555089

3. Date of visit:

May 6th 2004

4. Officer -in-charge:

Ms.Anusuya, Inspector

5. Circle Officer:

Mr Surendra Babu, Joint Commissioner, North Zone

6. I. Sanctioned strength:

- a. Woman Inspector: 1
- b. Women Sub-inspector: 2
- c. Women Head Constables: 11
- d. Grade 1 Women Police Constable: 0
- e. Women Police Constables(armed reserve): 7

II. Actual posting:

- f. Woman Inspector :1
- g. Women Sub-inspector : 1
- h. Women Head constables : 11
- i. Grade 1 Women Police Constables: 0
- j. Women Police Constables (armed reserve):3

Due to shortage of required staff, 3 constables from the Armed Reserves have been appointed. Those women warders who were recruited before 1973, now do odd jobs in the PS as well as help in escorting detained women or even do night duty if there is a shortage of staff.

7.a. Is separate accomodation available in the lock-up for women?

There is a lockup exclusively for women.

b. Sanctioned capacity of lock-up:

The police officials were unaware of the sanctioned capacity of the lock-up. However they said that a maximum of 8 women have been detained at one point of time.

c. Accused kept on the day of visit:

There were no accused on the days we visited. As per the Police Standing Order 637 (4) (a) detention of women in the nights is generally avoided and arrests are made in the day and produced to the Magistrates immediately.

8. Number of women offenders kept in the lock –up

- a. 2003 - 100
- b. 2004 - 58

S.No	Name	Offence	No.of days detained	From	To
1.	Radha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	7.01.04	8.01.04
2.	Nagharani	8 (b) ITP	1 night	7.01.04	8.01.04
3	Amsa	8 (b) ITP	1 night	7.01.04	8.01.04
4.	Parameshwari	341 , 294 (b)	1 night	8.01.04	9.01.04
5	Jayanthi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	17.01.04	18.01.04
6	Vellaiammal	8 (b) ITP	1 night	17.01.04	18.01.04
7	Rani	8 (b) ITP	1 night	17.01.04	18.01.04
8	Thulasi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	17.01.04	18.01.04
9	Leela	8 (b) ITP	1 night	17.01.04	18.01.04
10	Chandra	8 (b) ITP	1 night	19.01.04	20.01.04
11	Shantbhi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	19.01.04	20.01.04
12	Uma	8 (b) ITP	1 night	19.01.04	20.01.04
13	Kala	8 (b) ITP	1 night	19.01.04	20.01.04
14	Sanjana	20 (b) NDPS Act	1 night	27.01.04	28.01.04
15.	Vasanthi	4(i) TNP Act	1 night	28.01.04	29.01.04
16.	Selvi	20 (b) NDPS Act	1 night	31.01.01	1.02.04
17	Radha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	8.02.04	9.02.04
18	Valli	8 (b) ITP	1 night	8.02.04	9.02.04
19.	Sudha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	8.02.04	9.02.04
20	Bhagyam	8 (b) ITP	1 night	8.02.04	9.02.04
21	Geetha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	8.02.04	9.02.04
22	Anjali	8 (b) ITP	1 night	8.02.04	9.02.04
23	Mariya	420 & 465 IPC	1 night	17.02.04	18.02.04
24	Sunita	420 & 465 IPC	1 night	17.02.04	18.02.04
25	Rohini	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
26	Valli	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
27	Mariyam	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
28	Kamala	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
29	Amsa	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04

30	Valli	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
31	Jayalakshimi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
32	Sudha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
33	Vasanthi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.02.04	19.02.04
34	Kausalaya	8 (b) ITP	1 night	19.02.04	20.02.04
35	Mary	8 (b) ITP	1 night	20.02.04	20.02.04
36	Kalpana	8 (b) ITP	1 night	29.02.04	1.03.04
37	Mary	8 (b) ITP	1 night	29.02.04	1.03.04
38	Maragatham	8 (c)r/w.20 (b) NDPS Act	1 night	4.03.04	5.03.04
39.	Muramma	410	1 night	15.03.04	16.03.04
40	Thangam	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.03.04	16.03.04
41	Shanthi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.03.04	16.03.04
42	Shanthi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.03.04	19.03.04
43	Mallika	8 (b) ITP	1 night	18.03.04 (Midnight)	18.03.04 (Morning)
44	Sudha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	25.03.04 (Midnight)	19.03.04 (Morning)
45	Kamatchi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	25.03.04 2.45 a.m.	25.03.04 6.30 a.m.
46	Seetha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	25.03.04 2.45 a.m.	25.03.04 6.30 a.m.
47	Bhavani	8 (b) ITP	1 night	25.03.04 2.45 a.m.	25.03.04 6.30 a.m.
48	Saradha	41 (i) CrPC	1 night	3.04.04	4.04.04
49	Elina	8(a) ITP	1 night	4.04.04	5.04.04
50	Asha	8 (a) ITP	1 night	4.04.04	5.04.04
51	Jayanthi	8 (b) ITP	1 night	11.04.04	12.04.04
52	Bhavani	8 (b) ITP	1 night	11.04.04	12.04.04
53	Valliyamma	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.04.04 00.20 a.m.	15.04.04 6.45 a.m
54	Josphine	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.04.04 00.20 a.m.	15.04.04 6.45 a.m
55	Victoria	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.04.04 00.20 a.m.	15.04.04 6.45 a.m
56	Anjali	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.04.04 00.20 a.m.	15.04.04 6.45 a.m
57	Priya	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.04.04 00.20 a.m.	15.04.04 6.45 a.m
58	Seetha	8 (b) ITP	1 night	15.04.04	16.04.04

9. Did any women escaped from custody during the period Jan 2002-march 2004?

No

10. Did any women offender die while in custody during the above period?

No

11. What arrangements exist for:

a. Food:

Food expenses for those women arrested and detained by this PS are met from the permanent fund of Rs 5000 which has been allocated to this PS, similar to the Thousand Lights PS while expenditure on food for those detainees brought from different police stations in the jurisdiction are met by the PS from where they are brought.

b. Bedding:

Even though rule 637 (3) of the police standing orders prescribes for 2 durries for all lock-ups, similar to all the other PS, the detainees are not provided with any such items as a precautionary measure against attempts of suicide. They therefore have to sleep on the floor.

12. Are there separate toilets for women inmates within lock-up?

a. Number:

There is a toilet attached to the lock-up. There is also a toilet outside used by the police staff.

b. Condition:

The lock up is a narrow room lined with tiles. Since the building is fairly new, it appeared to be clean and in good shape. There is a small window with iron bars across it. The iron gate of the lock up, like in all the other PS, is always kept under lock and key (the key remains with the writer in the PS). There are no lights or fans in the lock up and similar to the other stations, the light in the corridor outside is used to illuminate the inside. There is a toilet attached which is also tiled. However there is no door to the toilet and hence privacy is not maintained. A bucket of water was placed in the toilet. This water is filled up from the nearby tank by the helper who is paid from the permanent fund.

c. Arrangements for cleaning:

The lock-up is cleaned by the occupant during their stay.

13. What arrangements exist for medical treatment of inmates at times of emergency?

In case of emergency, first aid is provided by the staff. The inmate, accompanied by 2 police constables is then taken to the Stanley government hospital in the PS jeep or in an auto rickshaw.

14. Is search of women offenders done by lady staff only/ are lady officials available for this purpose?

Yes, only women police are allowed to search women offenders and the details is entered in the Police Search Register and signed by the Sr.Police Officer, the station writer and the Prisoner.

15. Are inmates in the lock-up allowed to meet their lawyers/legal authorities? Are there any rules prescribed for such meetings?

Yes, inmates are allowed to meet their lawyers though no such rules are prescribed.

16. What arrangements exists for transportation of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison?

A police jeep has been provided for the transport of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison. In its absence, auto rickshaws are used. The inmates are usually accompanied by 2 police constables. The auto expenses are met from the permanent fund provided to this PS.

ASSESSMENT FORMAT FOR POLICE LOCK-UPS

1. Name of Lock-up:

All Women's Police Station, Ashok Nagar (South Zone)

2. Location (address and telephone):

Ashok Nagar
Police exchange no: 28555089

3. Date of visit:

May 5th 2004

4. Officer -in-charge:

Ms.S.Flora Jayanthi - Inspector

5. Circle Officer:

Mr J.Tripathy -Joint Commissioner of Police-South Zone

6. I. Sanctioned strength:

- a. Woman Inspector: 1
- b. Women Sub-inspector: 1
- c. Women Head constables : 3
- d. Grade 1 Women Police Constable: 0
- e. Women Police constables: 15

II. Actual posting:

- a. Woman Inspector :1
- b. Women Sub-inspector : 2
- c. Women Head constables : 4
- d. Grade 1 Women Police Constable : 1
- e. Women Police Constables: 5

Due to shortage of staff 5 constables from the Armed Reserves have been appointed on OD. Those women warders who were recruited before 1973, now do odd jobs in the PS as well as help in escorting detained women or even do night duty if there is a shortage of staff.

7. a. Is separate accommodation available in the lock-up for women?

The lockup for women is under construction now and has been lying completely unused. The women detainees are kept in the sub-inspector's room at nights under the supervision of either a constable or head constable. Since the men's PS is adjoining to the women's PS there is enough security. It was also mentioned that men staff are allowed to enter the women's PS since both the stations are close to each other.

b. Sanctioned capacity of lock-up:

The staff said that they can keep at least 10 detainees in the lockup though this has never happened. However we felt that the room was not big enough for 10 unless they were all huddled together.

c. Accused kept on the day of visit:

None

8. Number of women offenders kept in the lock –up

- a. 2003 - 21
- b. 2004 - 02

Detainees details for the year 2003

S.No	Name	Offence	No.of Days	From	To
1.	Mallika	41 (ii) CrPC	1 night	28.01.03	29.01.04
2.	mary	41 (ii) CrPC	1 night	29.01.03	30,01.04
3	Shanthi	381 IPC	1 night	30.01.03	31.01.03
4	Devi	292(A)	1 night	4.02.04	5.02.04
5	Munniammal	Girl missing	1 night	21.02.03	22.02.03
6.	Sajini & Sharein	75 CP Act	1 night	27.02.03	28.02.03
7	Mahalakshmi	Girl missing	1 night	4.03.03	5.03.03
8	Gowri	41 CrPC	1 night	13.03.03	14.03.03

9	Aazher	75 CP Act	1 night	22.03.03	23.03.03
10	Sasikala	41 CrPC	1 night	16.05.03	17.05.03
11	Allammal	75 CP Act	1 night	31.05.03	1.06.03
12	Chitra	381	1 night	13.06.03	14.06.03
13	Anusya	381	1 night	13.06.03	14.06.03
14	Kalpana	381	1 night	13.06.03	14.06.03
15	Kavitha	381	1 night	13.06.03	14.06.03
16	Anu	381	1 night	13.06.03	14.06.03
17	Perumakkan	75 CP Act	1 night	2.06.03	3.06.03
18	Murasoli	75 CP Act	1 night	2.06.03	3.06.03
19	kaliammal	75 CP Act	1 night	2.06.03	3.06.03
20	Kalaiselvi	41 (ii) CrPC	1 night	1.12.03	2.12.03
21	Kuppuammal	41 (ii) CrPC	1 night	1.12.03	2.12.03

Detention for the year 2004

S.No	Name	Offence	No.Of days	From	To
1	Amaravarathi	Girl missing	1 night	20.03.04	21.03.04
2	Maheswari	Girl missing	1 night	20.03.04	21.03.04

9. Did any women escaped from custody during the period Jan 2002-march 2004?

No

10. Did any women offender die while in custody during the above period?

No

11. What arrangements exist for:

a. Food:

Expenditure on food for those detainees brought from different police stations in the jurisdiction are met by the PS from where they are brought. However since the permanent fund of Rs. 5000/- is not allocated to this station, food expenses of the detainee are met by the police personnel mainly the inspector or SI from their own pocket.

b. Bedding:

No bedding is provided and the detainees sleep on the floor.

12. Are there separate toilets for women inmates within lock-up?

a. Number :

The lock up which is under construction has a toilet attached to it. There are also 2 proper toilets in the building, 1 for the staff and 1 for public use. Since the arrestees are not kept in the lock up now, they use the toilets outside. There is running water in both.

b. Condition :

The lock up was cleaned by the inmates when it was in use. It has 2 small windows with iron bars. Once again like in all the other PS, lights were placed in such a manner in the outside corridor, that they would light up the inside. The toilet was in a corner of the room, separated by around a one foot wall thus hindering privacy if there was more than 1 inmate.

c. Arrangements for cleaning:

Since the women's and men's PS are adjoining, the helper who cleans the place is the same and is paid from the permanent fund of the men's PS.

13. What arrangements exist for medical treatment of inmates at times of emergency?

In case of an emergency, the accused is taken to the nearby government hospital for treatment in the jeep or auto rickshaw accompanied by 2 police personnel.

14. Is search of women offenders done by lady staff only/ are lady officials available for this purpose?

Yes, only women police are allowed to search women offenders and the details are entered in the Police Search Register and signed by the Sr.Police Officer, the station writer and the Prisoner.

15. Are inmates in the lock-up allowed to meet their lawyers/legal authorities? Are there any rules prescribed for such meetings?

The inmates are given the freedom to meet the lawyers.

16. What arrangements exists for transportation of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison?

A police jeep has been provided for the transport of women offenders to courts, hospital or prison. In its absence, auto rickshaws are used. The inmates are usually accompanied by 2 police constables. The auto expenses are met by the staff from their pockets as no funds for this are available.

Annexure 2:

**Permanent Information
Government of Tamil Nadu
Abstract**

Police-Madras city- opening of an All Women Police Station in Madras City-Orders issued
Home (Police.H.)Department

G.O(MS) No 446

Dated:16.3.1992

Read:

1. From the Director General of Police, letter no 204994/RAII(3)/9,dated 24.9.91
2. From the Inspector General of Police (Personnel) D.O.letter no:204494/RAII(3),dated 26.2.92

Order:

1. A proposal to open an all Women Police Station in Madras city comprising only women police personnel/officers to attend to and redress the grievances of women was considered by the government.
2. The DG of Police has proposed that the following staff are required for the proposed women police station-

Name of Post	No of Post
(i)Women Inspector	1
(ii)Women Sun-inspector	3
(iii)Women Head constables	6
(iv)Women Police Constables grade-1	24
(v)Driver Police Constables-grade II	2

The DG of police has also agreed to deploy 50% of th required strength from the existing strength. He has also suggested that 1 vehicle may be allotted from the new vehicles proposed to be purchased under the modernization scheme for 1991-1992.

3. The government after carefully examining the proposal of the DG police passed the following orders:

a) Sanction is accorded to open an All Women Police Station in Madras city with the following staff initially for a period of 1 year from the date of opening the PS.

Name of Post	No of Post
(i)Women Inspector	1
(ii)Women Sun-inspector	3
(iii)Women Head constables	6
(iv)Women Police Constables grade-1	24
(v)Driver Police Constables-grade II	2

b) Sanction is accorded to incur a sum of Rs 10,790/- (Rs 1,980 recurring and Rs 8810 non-recurring) for the provision of 1 direct line telephone to the All Women Police Station and,

c) sanction is also accorded to incur a sum of Rs 10,000 for the purchase of furniture to the All Women PS

4. The posts mentioned shall carry the dearness allowance, house rent allowance, city compensatory allowance and other allowances as admissible under the orders in force.

Strength of staff were reduced later on as many more PS were opened and there was shortage of staff.

Duties:

- Registration and investigation of all dowry related cases.
- Enquiry into all petitions preferred by women or on behalf of women.
- Tracing of looking after stray and runaway female children.
- Counseling in domestic disputes and discords.
- Registration and investigating of IPC cases involving women and accused or complainant referred to the units only by the commissioner of police/superintendent of police.
- Providing guard and escort for female prisoners. If any woman has to be detained for the night, in the other stations in the city/district HQ under unavoidable circumstances, they should be kept only in the All Women PS.

NOTE: The staff of the AWPS should not be used on beat, bandobast or traffic duties. The commissioner of police/superintendent of police may however utilize their services during major bandobasts like PM/CM's visit etc.

Annexure: 3

TAMIL NADU POLICE STANDING ORDER(Vol I Corrected and brought upto 25th September 1999)

637 Prisoners in Police Custody

3. Use of Prisoners

- a. 1. All Police Lock Up : Two Dhurries each
2. Police Lock-up in the station where: 2 blankets each
the police staff are supplied with blankets
- b. The Police lock-up if it contains a prisoner or prisoners shall be unlocked at daybreak. The bedding of prisoners shall be at once brought outside, well shaken and if it is clean, left for some hours in sun.
- c. Night vessel shall be removed and lock-up thoroughly cleaned. As far as possible a flush -out seat should be provided in each lock-up cell in Police station.
- d. Should be taken for latrine and allowed to wash. They shall be fed at 10.00 a.m. or earlier if to be produced before the court after meals and again at 5.00 p.m. If time passé, then fed as soon as possible.

4.

- a. Custody of women in Police Lock-up in night should be avoided. Ensured by avoiding arrest of women where custody during night may be necessary and by sending them off for remand as soon as possible after arrest. If night custody becomes inevitable either 2 or 3 Police constables should be detailed to guard the prisoner or elderly female warden should be engaged for the full duration of women custody in Police Lock-up.
- b. Should have a list of female wardens who can be called for duty whenever necessary and they may be paid for their service from contingencies.

642. Sick Prisoners

1. If medical aid not available in Police station, the prisoner should be sent by the quickest conveyance to the nearest station on the line of march where assistance can be provided.
2. In case of injury or ill it should be recorded in station General diary with two witnesses and their attestation.
3. Prisoners with cholera should be moved to an airy part of the station and possible treatment to be applied and removed from lock-up.

643. Scale of accommodation for prisoners

1. Maximum number to be fixed by Superintendent in consultation with Executive Engineer.
2. Maximum number of male or female prisoners should be hung outside the lock-up in regional language and a notice in English.
3. Number so fixed shall never be exceeded shall accommodate in a convenient building with adequate guard.

Annexure: 4

Assessment of Women's Protective Homes

Preliminary:

Acts/Rules under which women are kept in the Home/Shelter

Women who are placed in this government vigilance home are mostly those, under the Immoral Trafficking Act. The staff of this government home kept repeating that there were no rules/orders available with them. Whatever data they had was destroyed a few years ago due to heavy rains. All they had was the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act. Only on asking the probation officer at the Directorate of Social Defence did they give us the rules under Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act 1956.

Officials/Organizations/individuals authorized to place/commit/introduce a woman in the Home/Shelter

The judiciary issues orders for those remanded and convicted under the immoral trafficking act and only then they can be admitted to the vigilance home. For those of the Stri Sadna and unwed women's home, permission from the directorate of social defence has to be obtained. Earlier, those women admitted to Stri Sadna could apply voluntarily for admission but since the last 2 years under the present director this process has stopped and now only inmates from the observation home for girls are admitted to Stri Sadna if required.

Form of application (if prescribed) to admit a woman in the Home/Shelter

An admission book with forms is maintained separately for each home (Remand, Convicts, Unwed mothers and Stri Sadanaa) by one of the junior assistants which covers the reasons for coming, period of stay, date of discharge etc.

Maximum period for which a woman can be kept in the Home/Shelter

Remand - 3 months to a maximum of 1 year in some rare cases.

Convicts - 5 years

Unwed Mothers - 5 years

Stri Sadanaa - 5 years

Minimum/maximum age for keeping a woman in the Home/Shelter

Stri Sadanaa - 18 years to 25 years

Unwed mothers home - 16 yrs and above

Convicts and remanded in the vigilance home: Above 18 yrs

Category/kind of women that can be admitted and through whom

- Orphaned or abandoned girls who are mainly shifted from juvenile homes to Stri Sadanaa

- Unwed mothers – Unwed Mothers Home
- Women who are remanded under section 8b ITP – Vigilance Home
- Women who are convicted under section 8b ITP – Vigilance Home

The government vigilance home run by the Directorate of Social Defence was set up during the British rule in 1930 under the Madras Vigilance Service. From 1948, the T.N. government has been running it. Women convicted by the court under the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act are detained in this institution. Girls joining voluntarily with the permission of the Director of Social Defence, girls kidnapped and rescued by the police and also women rescued from brothel homes are housed in this institution.

The government vigilance home consists of a fairly large campus with the main administrative block. The office is on the ground floor of this building while the first floor is used for storing mats, washed laundry etc and the second floor is not in use but locked up. Adjacent to this is the barrack which houses those remanded and convicted under the ITPA. Though this is a large room, a part of it has been blocked by cardboards to make the room smaller which is quite surprising. In front of this barrack is the dining room where all the inmates take their meals. Some distance away is another building, the ground floor of which is used to house the Stri Sadna inmates and the unwed mothers. There is also the mat weaving and the tailoring room, a store etc. The first floor has the same layout with most of the rooms lying unused-there is a welfare officer's room, a doctor/psychologists room, the library etc. Apart from this there are also other buildings which are vacant such as the quarters for the assistant superintendent, the remand house (earlier used for remanded inmates) which also has a waiting room for visitors.

7th May, 17th May, 18th May

Dates of Visit:

1. Name and location of the protective home:

Government Vigilance Home,
16, Rosary Church Road, Chennai-60004
Ph no: 24941224

2. Officer-in-charge:

Ms.A.Kadhir Begum, Superintendent

3. a) Sanctioned strength of staff:

1. Superintendent: 1
2. Psychologist; 1
3. Asst/Superintendent: 2
4. Manager: 1
5. Chargemen cum laundry mechanic: 1
6. Assistant: 3
7. Jr.Assistanct: 3
8. Typist: 1
9. Headmistress: 1
10. Secondary grade teacher; 4
11. Secondary grade Higher Secondary teacher: 4
12. Higher Grade Upgraded teachers: 2
13. Higher grade elementary teacher: 1
14. Physical education teacher: 1
15. Music mistress: 1
16. Technical education teacher: 5
17. Matron grade I : 3
- 18 Matron Grade II: 6
19. Matron Grade III: 2
20. Driver: 1
21. Driver attender: 1
22. Compounder: 1
23. FNA: 1
24. Gateman: 3
25. Watchman: 5
26. Washer man: 1
27. Attendant: 2
28. Welfare officer: 1
29. Cook: 3
- 30: Sanitary worker: 2
31. Office assistant: 3

b) Actual strength of staff:

Superintendent: 1
 Manager: 1
 Chargemen cum laundry mechanic: 1
 Assistant: 3
 Junior assistant: 1
 Music mistress: 1
 Technical education teacher: 3
 Matron Grade I: 1
 Matron Grade II: 2
 Driver: 1
 FNA: 1
 Watchman: 1
 Attendant: 2
 Welfare Officer: 1

Cook: 1
Sanitary worker: 1
Office assistant: 1

4. a) Sanctioned capacity of the protective home?

None of the staff knew of the sanctioned capacity of the home. The probation officer at the head quarters said that the sanctioned strength of the Chennai vigilance home is 150.

b) Actual Number of women (on the day of the assessment)

Total inmates =25

5. a) Age-wise distribution

Stri Sadna+unwed mother:

18 - 20 =3

21- 23 = 3

24 - 26 = 2

Convicts:

The inmates are aged 20 and 21.

b) Category-wise distribution (e.g., destitute, delinquent, victims, mentally ill, vagrant, beggars, rescued from moral danger, etc.)

1. Convicted: 2

2. Remand: 15

3. Stri Sadna: 7

4. Unwed mother: 1

(As on 18.05.04)

c) Distribution according to period of stay.

Not available.

6. Facility for segregation of different categories of women:

a) Which categories are housed together?

The remand and convicted women are housed together and the inmates of Stri Sadanaa and the unwed mothers are housed together. According to the manager, earlier, each category was segregated and housed separately in buildings allocated for it but due to a decrease in the number of inmates admitted and due to shortage of staff, they are now clubbed together.

b) Which categories are segregated?

The inmates who come under the immoral traffic act are not allowed to mix with the others. Even though they have lunch in the same room, they are not allowed to mingle.

7. Accommodation :

S.No	Kind of accommodation	Number available	Number in use	Toilets – attached or outside
i	Cells for single persons	-	-	-
ii	Rooms for up to 4 persons	-	-	-
iii	Association dormitories for upto 10 persons	-	-	-
iv	Barracks for 20 or more persons	4	1 (in which the remanded and convicts are kept)	1 attached toilet cum bathroom and 3 toilets outside the barrack.
v	Assembly Halls for occasional gatherings/functions/entertainment	-	-	-
vii	Others (if any)- Rooms	2 rooms which were allocated for industrial classes are now used by the inmates of Stri Sadna and unwed mothers home for sleeping and storing their clothes and other items.		5 toilets cum bathrooms are attached to the building.

The superintendent says that according to government orders (there is no written proof of this) the inmates should be given new bedding consisting of blankets, bedspreads and a pillow once in 2 years. A sum of Rs.20, 000/- is sanctioned under the material supplies category which covers the bedding. The inmates say that this is being provided to them. However according to the superintendent, pillows are provided to everybody but while interviewing the inmates they said that many of them were just sharing a pillow.

8. Other facilities :

Office
Kitchen
Indoor hospital
Doctors' consultation room
place of worship
indoor games
out-door games,
garden,
open space for movement,
others

- **Office:** The main building which is the administrative block comprises of the superintendent's room and two office rooms that are at present in use. The second floor of the building was used to stock old files but it was found that the files here were not safe as during the rains all of them were destroyed.
- **Kitchen:** The kitchen comprises of a cooking area and a storage room. LPG gas is available for cooking and in its absence sometimes, wood is used. A small area in front of the kitchen is used for cleaning of utensils. There is a storeroom for storage of food provisions (which are collected from the department of civil supplies every month) in another building. Provisions are given to the cook daily by the store keeper who maintains the stock register in which details of food materials distributed for that day are maintained and signed by the superintendent. The research team checked the stock register and observed that the items taken and its amount was noted everyday. Fresh vegetables are brought from the market everyday by the driver. The cook cooks according to the menu laid down for that day (each day of the week has a fixed menu) and it is tasted by the superintendent before giving it to the inmates. Two inmates of Stri Sadna are allocated duties such as cutting and washing vegetables, cleaning of vessels etc to assist the cook everyday.
- **Indoor Hospital:** There is no indoor hospital.
- **Doctor's consultation room:** A room in one of the buildings has been allocated for the doctor. A lady doctor visits the home once a week on wednesdays. A fulltime female nursing assistant (FNA) is appointed to provide medicines to the sick inmates as per the doctor's prescription. She also accompanies the inmates to the hospital along with the police.
- **Place of worship:** There is a little temple inside the campus where the inmates pray every morning when they come out to complete their chores.

- **Indoor games:** Carom is the only indoor game that the inmates of Stri Sadanaa and unwed mothers home play while the others do not have any indoor activities.
- **Outdoors games:** There are no out door games being played by the inmates. Earlier when there were more number of inmates, teachers would organize games to involve the inmates but now there is nothing. However on Mondays, the national flag is raised and for everyone except those from the remand home a drill is conducted.
- **Garden:** Even though there is a lot of space, no garden as such is actually maintained. There are some beautiful old trees and quite a bit of greenery around the campus.
- **Open space:** Though there is enough space to freely move around, unfortunately, movement is thoroughly restricted. The Stri Sadna inmates are allowed out in the mornings to wash clothes and again for a little while in the evening to sweep the premises. The convicts and those remanded are given time to wash clothes in the evening under supervision.
- **Others:** Though there is a library, there are at present only 2 women who can read so, it is not in use. According to the staff, women are allowed to read in the library room and cannot take the books to their rooms/barracks.

9. General condition of toilets and provision for cleaning and maintenance.

There are 5 bathrooms cum toilets in the building for the inmates of Stri Sadanaa and unwed mothers, out of which 1 is not in use right now. Though the toilets have doors, they are very dirty and poorly maintained. For bathing, there is an enclosed space with a tank in one corner, filled with water where many women can bathe at a time. There are 3 toilets outside the barrack and 1 toilet attached to the barrack in which the inmates of the vigilance home stay. There is no running water available in the toilets. The inmates carry water from the open concrete tank nearby. A sanitary worker is appointed for the cleaning and maintenance of the toilets. According to the inmates, the worker does not clean the toilets but just spreads the bleaching powder and makes the inmates clean it. However it appeared quite clean on the day we visited. A little further away is the 'remand house' which used to house the vigilance home inmates a few years ago. This has 3 bathrooms and 3 toilets. Water facility in the remand house also consists of an open concrete tank where water is filled up and stored. The toilets and bathrooms here, appeared to be quite clean. The vigilance home inmates go every morning from their barrack to the remand house for their baths. There are also 2 toilets and 1 bathroom for the staff in the office which again do not have running water facilities.

10. What arrangements exist for

a) food:

The food menu has been prescribed by the government. The home sends a budget proposal as per its requirements and after consideration this amount is allocated every quarterly. For the year 2003 -2004 the home has received Rs. 1,62,000/- out of which Rs.1, 57,000/- for 681 remanded inmates, 2 convicts, 1 unwed mother and 7 Stri Sadanaa inmates has been utilized. The remaining amount will be utilized next year. Food is also donated by outsiders. Special dishes are prepared on festival days and non-vegetarian is given on Diwali, Christmas and Bakri id.

The inmates stand in a queue while the food is being served by 2 matrons. No discussion is encouraged amongst the inmates and the staff take care to see there is minimal noise. Meal timings are 7:30 a.m, 12:30 p.m and 7:00 pm. After the meals are over, the inmates are taken back by the matrons to their barracks. On Sundays, while watching T.V they also get chana to eat-this is not given on any other day. Eggs were given to some inmates on the doctor's advice. We tasted the food that was being served to them on one of our visits and it seemed quite good.

b) Clothing:

A set of 2 sarees is given to the inmates as uniforms during admission. Additional sarees are given every quarterly on special days like Diwali, or Pongal, along with blouse material and petticoats. The inmates wear a particular saree on a particular day. Sometimes, the old sarees of the inmates of Stri Sadna, unwed mothers home and convicts are kept for the remanded inmates. All except the remanded are allowed to take home their belongings when they are released. When a woman is remanded to the home, they are expected to submit all their belongings to the superintendent who enters them in the register. At the time of her release, she is allowed to take them away with her. The Government had allocated Rs. 43,000/- for this purpose for the year 2003- 2004 out of which Rs.30,000/- has been utilized. According to the inmates, no undergarments are provided.

As per rule 23(2) ITPA (1956), clothing and bedding will be supplied on the following scale:

Sarees: 2

Blouses: 3

Petticoats: 2

Bodices: 4

Towels: 2

Sanitary Cloth (yards):2

Wooden comb: 2

(all the above in a year)

Carpet: 1

Pillowcases: 2 bed sheet:1

(all the above in 2 years)

However, it was found that some of the items given above were inadequate in the time frame proposed and therefore some amendments were made such as:

Saree : 4

Blouses:4

Petticoats:4

Bodices:4

(all the above in 1 year)

(Attach copy of relevant rules/administrative orders)

11. Arrangements for medical treatment of inmates?

a) General

A doctor comes to the home every Wednesday. Medicines are prescribed for minor ailments and given by the nursing assistant.

b) In times of emergency:

The doctor is called to the home and in case of non-availability of the doctor the inmates are taken to the nearby Gosha Hospital, Triplicane (government hospital). In case of an infectious/contagious disease, the inmate is referred to a corporation health center. All the other inmates are then vaccinated. E.g., in cases of a break out of cholera.

c) For mentally ill:

The mentally ill inmates are referred to the Zonta Resource Centre, Pallavaram which is a Chennai based NGO for the mentally ill.

d) Counseling:

The Psychologist from DESH, a non-governmental organization working in the field of AIDS provides psychological counseling to the inmates. Though she ought to come once a week, she is not really regular. She mainly looks after the HIV patient and takes moral education classes sometimes.

The inmates complain that at night they are locked inside their barracks and the matrons go off to sleep in the office. So incase they require help, they have to scream aloud to be heard. This becomes difficult for the Stri Sadna people because their barrack is at a considerable distance from the office. This can also be dangerous since in case of an emergency, help might be required immediately.

12. Are there separate facilities for pregnant women?

a) Diet

According to the unwed mother who delivered her baby a week after coming to the home, no separate diet was allocated to her during the pregnancy. However she was given a glass of milk in the morning instead of coffee.

b) Medical care

Pregnant women are taken to the government hospital for regular check-ups.

c) Pre-natal training in childcare

No professional counseling is given to the mother

13. Are women with children kept in the home? Yes | No

If yes, attach rules/administrative orders for the upkeep of children?

Yes, women are allowed to keep their children till the age of 7 years. At present, there are no children in the home. The baby of the unwed mother who is in the home was given up for adoption to a NGO called Ashraya.

14. Are recreation facilities available for these women?

There is a television which the inmates are allowed to watch only on weekends. Apart from this there are no recreation facilities available.

15 a) Are they involved in any kind of vocational training? Yes | No

Yes

b) If so, names of vocations available

Women who are in Stri Sadanaa, unwed mothers home and the convicts are involved in, mat weaving, tailoring and power laundry from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every day of the week. These women are paid a weekly amount of 60 paisa.(however this information is subject to contradictions as all the staff had varied answers and no one was really sure. According to one of the instructors, a proposal has been sent to the Directorate of Social Defence for revised scales-skilled Rs 70 and unskilled Rs 50 a month. However none of the other staff was sure of this). Those in remand custody are not allowed to work. The power laundry is a normal washing unit, similar to what they have in industries/hotels/hospitals. This unit was set up around 18 years ago by the state government. It operates on steam generator using the borewell water and the instructor in charge also has a boiler attendant and a washer woman to help her. Right now there are only 2 inmates who are working here-very few people choose this work as it involves sweating it out manually. Those interested in working here are taught how to handle the equipment safely, loading, unloading, folding and ironing. The slightly educated women are also taught, the usage of raw materials and stain removal by chemicals. Orders are taken from contractors around Mylapore (the area in which the vigilance home is located), decorators and even households. The instructor explained that later on these women can set up trained mobile iron units outside. This also gives them a work environment which benefits them if they ever get job in any industry. The money that is earned from these orders is given back to the government to be utilized for running not only this home but also other government institutions. Some items (e.g., mats and table cloths) produced by the inmates are sold during the exhibition cum sale conducted by the Government Department.

c) Number of vocational teachers available

3 teachers are appointed for vocational training-1 for the power laundry division, 1 for tailoring who takes classes only twice a week and 1 for mat weaving

d) Are women allowed to choose what they want to do? Yes | No

Yes, women do have options to choose from the limited availability of training units.

15. Is any work allotted to the women within the home? Elaborate.

Women are allocated work such as cleaning of vessels, assisting the cook in the kitchen, sweeping and mopping floors, and also cleaning the campus. The inmates of Stri Sadna also get water from the tank which is near the gate everyday (it is quite a distance from the main building) for use in the toilets and kitchen.

16. Facilities for education

Right now, there are no educational facilities for the inmates. The Gandhi Hr.Sec. School was functioning in the premises earlier but was closed down due to a decline in the number of inmates. The teachers have been shifted to the observation homes for children run by the Directorate of Social Defence. This was for the benefit of the inmates of the home. We asked everyone from the staff to the officials in the head quarters, details about this but no one could provide us with any information. They all said that it had been a very long time and they knew nothing about it.

17. Are these women allowed visitors? If so, how often and for how long (Rules)

The inmates of Stri Sadna, unwed mothers home and the convicts are allowed to meet their relatives once a month on Saturdays. However if they come from far flung places, they are allowed to meet the inmates even on a weekday between 2-5 pm. Necessary documents such as a ration card to prove their identity and a letter from the court are required to be shown to the superintendent. The meeting takes place in front of the superintendent and the visitors are allowed to give certain items like biscuits, fruits etc. No oily food items are allowed. These are first tasted by the superintendent and only then given to the inmates.

19. Rehabilitative measures for women (see Rules)

Actual rehabilitation during past 3 years

Year	Nature of Rehabilitation	No. of women rehabilitated	Follow-up meetings	Number of failures
01-02	Restored back to their families	2 from Stri Sadanaa and Unwed mother	Follow-up visit is conducted for a period of three years by the probation officer. Quarterly	

			visits are made during the first year; Half yearly during the II year and a visit is made at the final year. The report is prepared and documented at the head office.	
02-03	Restored back with their families	1 unwed mother	„	
03-04	Sent to after care home at Vellore	1 unwed mother	„	

These details were taken from the admission register.

20. Are women given any financial assistance when they leave the institution?

Apart from the pocket money they obtain when they leave, two types of funds are sanctioned by the Government:

1. Lump sum Amount: This amount is given to the women who have undergone vocational training in any trade and have obtained a certificate (e.g. tailoring) from the after care home-Vellore. So the interested individual can choose to go to Vellore, complete the training and then return to the govt home in Chennai. Infact the research team did meet some inmates who had done that. The amount is sanctioned on the basis of the trade for example Rs.2000/- for tailoring, Rs.1500/- for weaving and Rs.800/- for mat weaving. This fund is released and is given to the inmate in kind like tailoring machines etc.
2. Welfare fund: Welfare fund of Rs.2000- Rs5000/- is released on seeing the inmates' conduct during the 3 years of the follow-up period by the probation officer. This fund is also mostly provided in kind (Sewing machines, other tailoring materials, material for starting petty shops, etc.) to the women to start their own business. A small amount might be initially given in cash. It takes atleast 1-2 years for the discharged inmates to get the amount and it is given to about 10-15 women together at one go. The research team found out that an inmate did actually get a sewing machine last year after she was released. We also saw the order wherein the inmates for 2001 have now been sanctioned the welfare amount.

21. Do NGO's and other people from the community interact with the inmates? If yes, in which way?

NGO's and other people do come to the home for giving donations mainly food once in a while, but are not allowed to interact with the inmates. The welfare officer from the Directorate does visit but no other officials visit the home.

22. Is there any socio-legal counseling cell operating?

No. Lawyers are also not permitted to meet the inmates at home. The bail procedures are moved by owners of the brothel houses and they are released from the court itself. A welfare officer reports once a week from the head office to discuss the proceedings of new comers.

23. What is the interaction between the inmates and staff like? Elaborate.

The interaction between the inmates and staff seemed very formal and contained. The manager said that some inmates do open up to them but this seemed very rare. Many of the inmates while being interviewed said they were quite happy because they were getting much more here than what they would outside. Though this might be true in many ways, there was also an apparent fear of the staff in the inmates while interviewing especially since the superintendent was sitting through out the interviews that were held..

24. Is there any sort of abuse that the women complain of?

The inmates complained of punishments like severe beating by one of the 4 matrons and the Superintendent for disobedience and for not doing the duties properly. These could be really small reasons like eating the fallen mangoes on the ground from the trees. They also said that the present superintendent is much better then the former whose punishments were extremely severe such as making them lie on the bench and hitting them on the legs or putting them into a separate cell, and giving them “thanni Sorru” to eat which is rice with plain water, without any salt and side dishes. Complaints against the matron go unheard since the superintendents are really not bothered. Verbal abuse by both inmates towards each other and by the staff are quite common. The inmate who mainly opened up to give us these details however clammed up on the next day when we wanted some clarifications and refused to divulge any thing. We feel that she was probably punished for having told us about this abuse.

Assessment of Women’s Protective Homes

Preliminary:

Acts/Rules under which women are kept in the Home/Shelter

Only those women arrested under the Immoral Traffic Act are kept in the home. All the rules under this act pertaining to protective homes are applicable. The superintendent in charge here(probation officer as acting superintendent) said there was a set of rules governing the running of the home but he completely refused to give it to us or allow us to even look at it by repeatedly saying that orders had been passed by the government not to give it to anyone. However, the officials in the Directorate had no idea about any such orders existing and did supply us with a copy of the rules under the ITPA. We saw no reason for the superintendent to be so secretive about this as this is not a confidential document.

Officials/Organizations/individuals authorized to place/commit/introduce a woman in the Home/Shelter

Women are admitted only through the court as under the rules of the ITPA

Form of application (if prescribed) to admit a woman in the Home/Shelter

An admission form is maintained by the home which contains personal details like name, age, husband's/father's name, details of crime, date to be produced in court and details of release which is signed by the superintendent.

Maximum period for which a woman can be kept in the Home/Shelter

Those remanded to the protective home can be kept for a period of 15 days and the days can be extended as per the courts decision. Those convicted can be kept for a period of 2-5 years.

Minimum/maximum age for keeping a woman in the Home/Shelter

A woman should be 18 years and above to be staying in the protective home.

Category/kind of women that can be admitted and through whom

Only those arrested under the ITP Act can be admitted and the court is the only body of authority to be able to do so.

General observations of the Study Team

The government protective home was started in 1981 and covers the Coimbatore and Yelagiri jurisdictions. It was earlier functioning as a 'Rescue Home' under the Revenue department. The building consists of 2 office rooms, a hall, a TV room, a room where the inmates sleep and the kitchen area. The building is on rent and completely lacks storage facilities- no cupboards or shelves and the inmates keep their things in steel trunks. Documents are kept in sacks in the corner of the rooms. The kitchen had vessels piled on top of the platform giving it a very untidy look. There is no space around the building which faces a road. Next to it is the cement block making area which is so noisy that one has a hard time talking or hearing in the home.

23rd and 24th June
Date of Visit:

18. Name and location of the protective home:

Government Protective Home
315 A, Kannusamy Gounder Street
Sanganur, Rathinapuri Post
Coimbatore 641027
Ph no: 0422-2330588

19. Officer-in-charge:

Mr Malaisamy, Probation Officer and superintendent in charge.

20. a) Sanctioned strength of staff:

Superintendent: 1
Probation officer: 1
Assistant: 1
Secondary grade teacher: 1
Tailoring instructor: 1
Matron (grade I):1
Matron (grade II):1
Cook: 2
Office Assistant: 2
Sanitary worker: 1
Watchman: 2

b) Actual strength of staff:

Superintendent: 1 Probation officer: 1
Assistant: 1
Secondary Grade teacher: 1
Tailoring instructor: 1
Matron (Grade I):1
Matron (Grade I):1
Lady peon: 1
Male peon: 1
Cook: 1
Sanitary worker: 1
Watchman: 1

The superintendent has been on deputation at the Probation Home, Salem for the past 3 years. The probation officer who is the superintendent in-charge, took over a year ago. Before him was another PO who was the acting superintendent but he would not come regularly to the protective home. The present superintendent in-charge comes only in the mornings and goes off by evening. One of the matrons then takes over. However, these matrons consult the superintendent for everything and even if there are admissions in the night, though they take them in, the superintendent comes in the morning checks and signs the register.

21. a) Sanctioned capacity of the protective home?

The sanctioned capacity of the home is 25.

b) Actual Number of women (on the day of the assessment)

There were only 4 inmates during the 2 days that we visited.

22. a) Age-wise distribution

W-20 years

X-23 years

Y-36 years (she also has a year and a half child with her)

Z-45 years.

b) Category-wise distribution (e.g., destitute, delinquent, victims, mentally ill, vagrant, beggars, rescued from moral danger, etc.)

All the inmates are admitted under ITPA

c) Distribution according to period of stay.

W-since 2nd June 2004

X-since 18th June 2004

Y-since 9th June 2004

Z-since 9th June 2004

23. Facility for segregation of different categories of women

a) Which categories are housed together?

b) Which categories are segregated?

The inmates are not segregated. There is also not enough room in the protective home to do so.

24. Accommodation :

S.No	Kind of accommodation	Number available	Number in use	Toilets – attached or outside
i	Cells for single persons			
ii	Rooms for upto 4 persons			
iii	Association dormitories for upto 10 persons			
iv	Barracks for 20 or more persons	1	1	2 attached toilets and a small bathing enclosure
v	Assembly Halls for occasional gatherings/functions/entertainment	1*		
vii	Others (if any)	1 small room where the TV is kept.		

- This is basically used to store certain items like sewing machines etc. The inmates also sit here and watch TV which is kept at the doorway of the adjoining room. Those members of the staff who stay over at night also sleep here.

25. Other facilities :

Office
Kitchen
Indoor hospital
Doctors' consultation room
place of worship
indoor games
out-door games,
garden,
open space for movement,
others

- **Office:** There are 2 rooms-One is used as the office by the superintendent and the other is used by the other staff.
- **Kitchen:** One section of the room has a platform which is used for keeping vessels. There is a bench where the cooked items are kept. The kitchen looked very crowded. Adjoining to the kitchen is the store room where all the provisions are kept and it is locked. The items are weighed and given to the cook by the matron or the teacher and entries are made in the store book. These provisions are collected from the Department of civil supplies by the peon (male) and the office assistant, while the groceries are bought regularly by the peon (lady) and matron.

26. General condition of toilets and provision for cleaning and maintenance.

The 2 toilets and the small are for bathing which is attached to the room where the inmates sleep is cleaned by the sanitary worker everyday. The toilets appeared clean and chlorine powder had been spread as a disinfectant. There is no running water and water is filled up from the tube well outside.

27. What arrangements exist for :

- a) **food :** According to the superintendent, food is provided as per the scale of diet which has been prescribed which is as follows:
- Wheat rava: 100 gms
 - Milk: 100ml
 - Coffee powder: 5gms
 - Jaggery: 15gms
 - Salt: 15gms
 - Rice: 300gms
 - Vegetables: 150gms
 - Greens: 100gms
 - Onions: 15gms

Groundnut: 15gms
Tamarind: 10gms
Masala Powder: 9gms
Tuar dal: 30gms
Mustard: 1/2 gm
Pepper and jeera: 1/4 gms
Asafetida: 2gms (50 persons)
Red chilly: 1gm
Bengal gram: 35 gms (weekly thrice)
Egg: 1 (weekly once)
Black gram: 25 gms
Mutton: 60 gms (yearly 3 times)
Bath soap: 250 gms (monthly twice)
Bar soap: 250 gms (monthly twice)
Coconut oil: 3ml
Oil: 142 ml (weekly once)

b) clothing:

Following are the rules for clothing;

Saree: 4
Blouse: 4
Towels: 2
Bodice: 2
Sanitary cloth: 2 mtrs
Carpets: 1 (once in 2 years)
Bedsheets: 1 (once in 2 years)

Two sets of sarees are given to the inmates at the time of admission and later sarees are given after 6 months. As most of the inmates do not stay that long, they leave the sarees to be used by others. They are not permitted to take the sarees along with them. On asking the present lot of inmates they did say that sarees were given to them. However no underclothes were provided. The remanded inmates also submit their belongings when they come in and this is duly noted in the registers.

(Attach copy of relevant rules/administrative orders)

28. Arrangements for medical treatment of inmates?

a) General:

Medical check-up is carried out once a week by the doctors from the Coimbatore medical college. A doctor is assigned by the medical college every month to visit the protective home. Details of the check up are entered in the medical register which was observed by the researcher.

b) In times of emergency

They are taken to the Coimbatore medical college accompanied by 2 staff members.

c) For mentally ill:

No mentally ill women are admitted in this home.

d) Counseling:

The district HIV and AIDS counseling cell conducts awareness programmes on AIDS for the inmates once in a while. This is not a regular programme though.

AIDS patients, according to the superintendent are not kept in the protective home but transferred to the government vigilance home, Chennai.

29. Are there separate facilities for pregnant women?

a) Diet

b) Medical care

c) Pre-natal training in childcare

Pregnant women are not housed in this home and are transferred to the government vigilance home, Chennai.

30. Are women with children kept in the home? Yes | No

If yes, attach rules/administrative orders for the upkeep of children?

Yes, children till the age of 7 years are permitted to stay with their mothers in the home as per the rules under ITPA. According to these rules 9 (4) a child kept in the protective home shall be allowed such diet and clothing as the medical officer attached to the protective home think fit. On the days of the visit we found that the child who was staying with her mother was being given 200ml of milk everyday. She was also sharing her mother's food.

31. Are recreation facilities available for these women?

Television is the only recreation provided. The inmates can watch TV between 6p.m to 9 pm and only national channels are available.

32. a) Are they involved in any kind of vocational training? Yes | No

Yes

b) If so, names of vocations available

Tailoring is the only vocation available. There are 6 tailoring machines available and the inmates are taught by the tailoring teacher. Orders for stitching blouses are taken from other institutions nearby. Rs 3 is charged for each blouse and the amount is handed over to the Directorate. No money is given to the inmates for their work. However, only those inmates who can sew well do this job. So unless the inmate is proficient in it she is not really allowed to handle this and the orders are completed by the teacher. In such cases, all the new comers who are picking up the ropes have nothing to do which is generally the case.

c) Number of vocational teachers available

Only 1 tailoring teacher is available.

d) Are women allowed to choose what they want to do? Yes | No

As there are no other options available, the inmates whether they like it or not do try their hand at this to atleast keep themselves occupied.

33. Is any work allotted to the women within the home? Elaborate.

No work is allotted to the women within the home.

34. Facilities for education

Non formal education is provided to the inmates –basically teaching them to write their names, husbands/fathers name, address and certain other things. For this purpose, blackboard and slates have been provided and a teacher has been appointed. A few hours everyday are spent on this, after which the inmates carry on with their tailoring.

35. Are these women allowed visitors? If so, how often and for how long (Rules)

The inmates are allowed to meet visitors once a week on Saturdays between 5-6 pm. The visitors are asked to show their proof of identity which usually happens to be in the form of a ration card. They are allowed to give non-oily snacks to the visitors. Lawyers are not allowed in the home. All legal matters are settled in the court.

36. Rehabilitative measures for women (see Rules)

Actual rehabilitation during past 3 years

Year	Nature of Rehabilitation	No. of women rehabilitated	Follow-up meetings	Number of failures
2001	Sent back to family	Convicts: 41	Nil	-
2002	Sent back to family	Convicts 54	Nil	-
2003	Sent back to family	Convicts: 21	Nil	-
2004	Sent back to family	Convicts: 6	Nil	-

Are women given any financial assistance when they leave the institution?

The women are sent back to their families by giving them the minimum amount required to travel. There is a welfare fund of Rs 2000-Rs 5000 available for women who stay beyond 2 years. According to the superintendent, most of the convicts are released within 6 months and therefore the fund stays unutilized.

37. Do NGO's and other people from the community interact with the inmates? If yes, in which way?

Students of the psychology department, of the city college used to come for counseling in the past but they haven't been doing so for the past 2 years. According to the superintendent, this is mainly because of the stigma attached to these homes.

38. Is there any socio-legal counseling cell operating?

There is no legal cell operating in the protective home, but according to the staff, the inmates are aware of free legal aid. However they usually do not wish to make use of this as it is a long process. The lawyers are mostly arranged by the pimps of these sex workers. On asking one of the inmates we found that she did not know anything about free legal aid.

39. What is the interaction between the inmates and staff like? Elaborate.

The inmates and the staff have a friendly relationship. A congenial atmosphere exists and we found them chatting with each other quite pleasantly. The staff complained that in the beginning it is difficult managing new comers who have problems adjusting to the place. These inmates show their frustration by not eating properly. However they generally start counseling them and inmates settle down. Most of them are recidivists and are now quite familiar with the staff.

40. Is there any sort of abuse that the women complain of?

No, the inmates did not talk about any abuse in the home.

Assessment of Women's Protective Homes

Preliminary:

Acts / Rules under which women are kept in the Home/Shelter:

The research team found that there were no written rules or any acts under which the home was run. On speaking to the secretary, Madras Vigilance Association Mr Rishi it was found that the memorandum /papers of registration were really old and had been misplaced.

Officials/Organizations/Individuals authorized to place/commit/introduce a woman in the Home/Shelter:

The police, NGOs or any other organization, and the Directorate of Social Defence can place women in need in this home. Individuals can also get admissions on a voluntary basis.

Form of application (if prescribed) to admit a woman in the Home/Shelter:

No application forms are prescribed, but case histories of the inmates are maintained consisting of basic information about the inmates, a column stating past history and another one for the present. The case histories are systematic and updated regularly.

Maximum period for which a women can be kept in the Home/Shelter:

The Directorate of Social Defence provides funds of Rs.225/- per month only for a period of 90 days to 135 days for an inmate of the shelter home. During this time, attempts are made by the staff to then reunite them with their families by writing/sending a telegram to the families to come and pick them up. Women who cannot be rehabilitated or restored to their families during this period are permitted to stay till they find an alternative. The staff looks out for a job for such women say in an export house. They can then opt to stay in the poor girls' hostel with a minimal rent of Rs. 150 - Rs.600 per month for as long as they like. Orphans are sometimes transferred to other NGO's which run shelter homes.

Minimum/maximum age for keeping a woman in the Home/Shelter:

In the shelter home women between the age group of 18-25 are kept on basis of the directions given by the Directorate of Social Defence while there is no age group for the poor girls' hostel. However they generally do not admit women who are above 40yrs.

Category/kind of women that can be admitted and through whom.

- Runaways due to domestic difficulties and socio-economic conditions
- Victims of harassment and abuse by family members and relatives.
- Unwed mothers
- Divorced women or those deserted by their husbands and families
- Orphaned and homeless girls.
- Women in need of shelter (e.g, women who have been found by the police in places such as railway stations)

Abhaya Nilayam founded in 1955 is a short stay home for distressed women cum poor girls' hostel run under the auspices of The Madras Vigilance Association and registered under the Societies Registration Act. Abhaya Nilayam which means home for protection(protective home) admits any girl above 18 years who is stranded in the city, or a destitute without any restriction of caste, creed or any preconditions at any part of the day or night. After

admission, the staff contacts either their guardians or parents to restore them back to their families. If they are untraceable, or their family is unable to take them back Abhaya Nilayam tries to rehabilitate them in other ways. The board has at present 17 executive members. Board meetings are conducted once in three months and a general body meet is called for at regular intervals. The institution does get some funds from the Department of Social Defence but is mainly funded by individual donors who are of 2 types-regular i.e., those who donate money every year and one time donors. There is no foreign funding. According to their annual reports, till December 2000, there have been a total of 7946 admissions out of which 3689 have been by the police and 4257 by others.6672 girls have been sent home while 1262 have been rehabilitated.

The building was purchased in 1973 for Rs 1.50 lakhs, by paying an advance of Rs 500 and then paying the rest through installments. The ground floor of this very old building houses those inmates who have been mentioned above while the upper floor consists of poor women who pay a small amount for their stay. This amount varies from Rs 150-600 depending on their affordability. These women are all working (teaching, tailoring units of export houses etc,) but cannot afford to live elsewhere. Abhaya Nilayam also provides them with the much needed security, difficult to find alone, outside away from their families. These women keep to their office timings which are generally 9 to 5 o'clock and just need to inform the staff if they get late in the evenings through a telephone call. They have the freedom to move about while the other inmates are restricted for the 3 months that they usually stay for and can only go out escorted.

10th May,11th May,12th May,14th May,17th May
Dates of Visit

1. Name and location of the protective homes:

Abhaya Nilayam
187, Cutchery Road
Mylapore
Chennai-600004
Ph no: 24981679

2. Officer in charge:

Superintendent- Ms. Seeniammal

3. a. Sanctioned strength of staff:

There is no sanctioned strength. Depending on the number of inmates, staff is appointed.

b. Actual strength of staff:

Superintendent: 1
Matron: 1
Office clerk: 1

Typist: 1
Office assistants: 2
Total: 6

A cleaner is also appointed to clean the toilets and bathrooms but she is not a permanent staff of the organization.

4. a. Sanctioned capacity of the home:

Though there are no written rules the superintendent said that at any point of time no more than 50 women are kept in the home.

b. Actual number of women (on the day of assessment)

Short stay home: 12
Poor Girls hostel: 13

5. a. Age - wise distribution

18 years to 20 years: 3
21 years to 25 years: 7
Above 25 years : 15

Total 25

b. Category -wise distribution:

Runaway: 1
Homeless: 3
Domestic problems: 8
Women in hostel: 13

c. Distribution according to period of stay:

- upto 3 months :3
- 3 months to 6 months: 9
- Above 6 months : 13

6. Facility for segregation of different categories of women

- a) Which categories are housed together?
b) Which categories are segregated?

There is no specific categorization. Women who are working are housed in the first floor of the building, while the others stay on the ground floor. However if there is a shortage of space in the hostel upstairs, these women then sleep downstairs.

7. Accommodation:

S.No	Kind of accommodation	Number available	Number in use	Toilets – attached or outside
i	Cells for single persons	-	-	-
ii	Rooms for upto 4 persons	-	-	-
iii	Association dormitories for upto 10 persons	-	-	-
iv	Barracks for 20 or more persons	2*a	2	attached
v	Assembly Halls for occasional gatherings/functions/entertainment	1*b	1	-
vii	Others (if any)			

*a There are 2 barracks/rooms. The room on the ground floor for the short stay home women can accommodate around 20 women and has 1 toilet attached, for use at nights. The shelter home inmates are provided with a mat, a pillow and a bed sheet for use and sleep on the floor. These bed clothes are taken away every morning and kept in a cupboard under staff supervision. Since there is no separate room for meals this room doubles up for that as well. There are 3 bathrooms and 3 toilets outside the room (separate) for use during the day which are common to both staff and inmates. The first floor (hostel) which can house around 10 girls also has a toilet attached but is under repair at present (these women have been using the toilets downstairs). There are a few beds (iron cots) in this room which are provided to the inmates on a first come first serve basis. Both the rooms have open shelves to keep clothes and other items.

*b This room is a multi purpose room which is used by the staff to sleep at nights. One corner of the room is divided by a wooden screen and has an iron cot which is used by the matron in charge. It also has a few sewing machines in one corner which were donated by the rotary club and a few tables and chairs. This room is also used by the typist for typing. It also has a television in one corner.

8. Other facilities:

Office
 Kitchen
 Indoor hospital
 Doctors' consultation room
 place of worship
 indoor games
 out-door games,
 garden,
 open space for movement,
 others

- **Office:** The office is a tiny room with a cupboard and a table with 3 chairs. It is used by the superintendent and others for official purposes and general meetings.
- **Kitchen:** There is a kitchen attached to the barrack on the ground floor consisting of a gas stove, utensils and some provisions. An office assistant cooks food with the help of the inmates. A store room is also attached to the kitchen.
- **Hospital/consultation room:** There is neither an indoor hospital nor a separate doctor's consultation room. A cupboard with some medicines is maintained for minor ailments and the office assistant doles them out when required.
- **Place of Worship:** There is a small prayer room. Prayers are conducted both in the mornings and evenings everyday.
- **Indoor Games:** There are no such games available.
- **Garden:** There is a small patch of garden in front of the home which is sometimes maintained by the inmates.
- **Open Space:** There is no open space for out door games or any other activities. No outdoor games are available.

9. General condition of toilets and provision for cleaning and maintenance.

There are 4 toilets and 3 bathrooms on the ground floor and 1 toilet cum bathroom on the first floor which appeared to be very clean. A helper has been appointed for cleaning. There is no running water available in the toilets or bathrooms. Metro water is brought in lorries and filled up in the tank on the premise. This is an expensive arrangement as each lorry charges about Rs 800 and they need at least 3-4 lorries of water per month .However this is the only option as the city is reeling under severe drought conditions. Earlier these girls would go outside and fill up water from the tube well but since that had dried up the metro water is used for all purposes now.

10. What arrangements exist for:

a.) Food: There is no restriction in the quantity of food given to the inmate. A set timetable is maintained with breakfast at 7.30 a.m., lunch at 12.30 p.m. and dinner at 7.30 p.m. Tea is also provided in the evening. Abhaya Nilayam also launched the " one meal project" in 1979. The project invites donors to contribute a certain amount which is put as a fixed deposit. The interest accrued from this amount is used to serve a meal which could be on any special occasion for the donor like a birthday or anniversary.

b) Clothing: Most of the inmates have their own clothes but clothes are donated once in a while by individuals or philanthropic organizations.

11. Arrangements for medical treatment of inmates:

a) general

Common ailments are treated in-house by giving simple medicines.

b) in times of emergency

In case of emergency or sickness, they are taken to the government hospital accompanied by the staff.

c) for mentally ill

In case of mental illness, the individual are referred to 'Kilpauk' Mental Hospital or other Chennai based organizations which work for the mentally ill like 'Banyan'.

d) Counseling

There are no counseling facilities available.

12. Are there separate facilities for pregnant women?

a) diet

Diet of the pregnant woman is not any different from the others.

b) medical care

Pregnant women are referred to Gosha Govt Hospital and are taken for frequent check-ups.

c) pre-natal training in childcare

Pre-natal counseling is given to mothers by the staff of the organization

13. Are women with children kept in the home? Yes | No

If yes, attach rules/administrative orders for the upkeep of children.

Yes, women with children are allowed to stay in the home. Children can stay till they are 7yrs after which they are placed in certain free hostels in the city run by NGO's. Babies of mothers not wanting to keep them are given up for adoption to centers like Bala Mandir and Karnaprayag. The mother submits a letter forfeiting any rights over her child.

14. Are recreation facilities available for these women?

Television is the only recreational facility available in the home, which the women are allowed to watch in the evenings and during other times of the day with special permission from the matron.

15. a) Are they involved in any kind of vocational training? Yes | No

b) If so, names of vocations available

c) Number of vocational teachers available

d) Are women allowed to choose what they want to do? Yes | No

Some inmates are involved in vocational training. Though Abhaya Nilayam does not have any training units in-house women are permitted to go outside for training classes of their choice. However this is only after the 3 months of stay in the shelter home are over as shelter home girls are not allowed to go outside. The training expenses are met by inmates either with the support of their parents or they are asked to earn while undergoing their training. There are 2 sewing machines available in the home which are not used due to lack of funds for purchasing raw materials. At present there are no inmates undergoing any such training.

16. Is any work allotted to the women within the home? Elaborate.

Women inmates are given duties such as cleaning rooms, helping in the kitchen, filling water. Each inmate is allocated a responsibility to keep them occupied for sometime during the day. A small patch of garden is also maintained but there are hardly any plants.

17. Facilities for education

The inmates who wish to continue their education can undergo their studies in the tutorial but the fee has to be paid by the inmates either by working or supported by their families. At present no inmate is undergoing any sort of education.

18. Are these women allowed visitors? If so, how often and for how long (Rules)

Women are allowed to meet the visitors on all days except on Sundays.

19. Rehabilitative measures for women (see Rules)

Actual rehabilitation during past 3 years				
Year	Nature of Rehabilitation	N0. of women rehabilitated	Follow-up meetings	Number of failures
01-02		18 out of 149*	-	-
02-03		21 out of 148*	-	-
03-04		28 out of 118*	-	-

* the remaining have been sent to their homes and girls who are brought for temporary custody (by the police for one night) are handed back to the police personnel.

Rehabilitation measures include transferring interested inmates and those who cannot afford to pay, to long stay institutions like the After Care Home Vellore for training in tailoring. Suitable employment is also found for individuals willing to work. Marriages are also organized and so far more than 250 marriages have been arranged under the Special Marriage Registration Act with the support of donors. Men who want to marry a girl from the home are given complete details of her and asked to submit their details including family background and the salary they earn. The information is passed on to the probation officer who enquires about the boy and if found satisfactory, the marriage is fixed and registered.

20. Are women given any financial assistance when they leave the institution?

No financial assistance is given by the organization.

21. Do NGO's and other people from the community interact with the inmates? If yes, in which way?

Individuals and organizations that donate do spend sometime with the inmates. This is however very rare. Sometimes students of social work are also placed in the home for a very short period as part of their field work requirements.

22. Is there any socio-legal counseling cell operating?

No

23. What is the interaction between the inmates and staff like? Elaborate.

The research team observed that the relationship between the inmates and the staff was very cordial. One of the inmates even mentioned that the matron and superintendents were like surrogate mothers. However, some inmates did feel that the staff was partial to the hostelites than the shelter home girls as they had the freedom to go out and work and even return back late. The staff was also comfortable with the present set of inmates. They did complain that they faced problems with the new comers who use abusive language and threaten them by trying to commit suicide.

24. Is there any sort of abuse that the women complain of?

None of the inmates complained of any sort of abuse.

Annexure 5:

Case Stories

Case 1

1. Name of Institution

Government Vigilance Home, Chennai

2. Name of inmate

Jayanti

3. Name of father/husband

Shahul

4. Age

16 years

5. Education

3rd standard

6. Number of accompanying children with age

Nil

7. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

She is very weak and often catches a cold.

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Unwed mother

Jayanti's father worked as a cart puller. She has 4 sisters and a grandmother who is unable to walk due to a paralytic attack. Jayanti was training in tailoring in her village in Coimbatore where she fell in love with Shalul. She ran away to live with him for a year before they got married. However, all was not well and they would quarrel frequently due to his drinking habit. On one such occasion, Jayanti retaliated by beating him back and then ran away to Chennai. She did not know that she was pregnant at that time. She approached an NGO who then transferred her to this vigilance home in Chennai which also houses unwed mothers where she delivered a baby girl. The child was given up for adoption.

Jayanti wants to go back to her supposed husband but his whereabouts are not known. She said that she had no problems with the food or the other arrangements. She however complained that the matron and superintendent do beat them for not doing their duties and wants to leave the home as early as possible.

Case2

1. Name of Institution

Government vigilance home

2. Name of inmate

Krishna

3. Name of father/husband

Not applicable

4. Age

23 years

5. Education

10th standard

6. Number of accompanying children with age

Nil

7. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

She has severe back problems and also problems of wheezing.

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Orphan

Krishna's parents died when she was very young and she along with her 2 sisters were admitted to different orphanages in Chennai. Krishna was brought up in Dr Vardappan's orphanage in Chennai from where she was later shifted to the government run juvenile home. She completed her schooling there and after the age of 18 was transferred to the short stay home at Vellore. Krishna completed her training in tailoring there and was then shifted to Stri Sadna. Her elder sister is married and her younger sister who is working in an export firm for garments often visits her. Krishna says that after her release she would like to go back and join the firm her sister works in. As she knows tailoring, she is confident that she will be able to make a living for herself. She says she is quite alright in this place.

Case 3

1. Name of Institution

Government Vigilance Home

2. Name of inmate

Rama

3. Name of father/husband

Vasudevan

4. Age

22 years

5. Education

8th standard

6. Number of accompanying children with age

Nil

7. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

Falls ill very often and also complains of poor eyesight.

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Orphan

After her mother's death, Rama and her brother were admitted to Bala Mandir, an orphanage. At the age of 10, her brother was taken away by her father without informing her and she still doesn't know where they are. Rama was transferred to the government run children's home and stayed there till the age of 18, after which she was shifted to the present government protective home and has been here ever since. She knows tailoring and is very confident that she can earn a living after being released. However Rama was unwilling to share much information about the protective home and just said that everything was fine.

1. Name of Institution

Government Vigilance Home

2. Name of inmate

Saraswati

3. Name of father/husband

Not available

4. Age

19 years

5. Education

Nil

6. Number of accompanying children with age

Nil

7. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

HIV positive

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Convicted under section 8b of ITP Act for 5 years.

Saraswati after her mother's death ran away from her home with a cousin and started working in a hotel in Tirupathi. A friend, promised them a lucrative job and believing her they came to Arakkonam. However they were sold to a brothel house there and as they needed the money they continued to stay in the profession. They were caught by the police during a raid and convicted for 5 years. They have already completed 3 years of their stay and will be here for another 2 years. She wants to go back to her father who doesn't know of the work she was involved in and says she will earn a living by being a domestic help. In the tests that were conducted on admission, Saraswati was found to be HIV positive. This was told to us by the superintendent who asked us not to discuss this issue with the inmate. On asking, the Superintendent said that she was under medication but was not segregated from the others in any way. She lives in the same barrack as the other convicted and remanded inmates and they all eat together as well.

Case 4

1. Name of Institution

Government Protective Home, Coimbatore

2. Name of inmate

Deepa

3. Name of father/husband

Palani

4. Age

36 years

5. Education

Nil

6. Number of accompanying children with age

I girl aged 1 and half years

17. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

Normal

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Under section 8 (b) ITPA

Deepa has been in the profession for a good number of years now and says she got into it due to a shortage of money. Though her family stays in the same village, she does not want

to put up with them and hence stays at the bus stop with her child. The child's father is no more. Deepa keeps getting admission to the protective home regularly- goes out on bail or when her short term gets over and then is caught by the police again.

She says that she is happy here and the staff treats her well. She shares a good rapport with all of them. However, encouraged by the staff, she very firmly says that she doesn't want this life for her child and wants to admit her to a hostel when she is a little older.

Case 5

1. Name of Institution

Abhaya Nilayam

2. Name of inmate

Mary

3. Name of father/husband

Prem Edward John

4. Age

38 years

5. Education

12th Standard

6. Number of accompanying children with age

1 girl, 10 years

7. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

Normal health

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Needs shelter.

Mary ran away from her husband and his family with her child-Linda to seek a secure, sheltered place and landed in Abhaya Nilayam-(protective home for women and poor girls' hostel) where she was taken in by the supervisor and staff. This was on the 29th of April 2004. Having been here for a while she says that this is one place where her abusive husband cannot locate her and force her to go back to him. Meanwhile she has engaged a lawyer with help from her friends and filed for a divorce on the grounds of ill-treatment, violence and abuse which was to such an extent that she fears he would kill her if she stays with him any longer. With tears in her eyes she relates her story....

Married 18 years ago, she has 2 children, a boy who is 15 and mentally retarded and a girl who is studying in the 5th standard. They live in a joint family with her mother-in-law, and two brothers-in-law. Though both her husband and she are only higher secondary qualified Mary got a good job on compassionate grounds after her father's death in the Madras port trust, and has been working there since before her marriage. She is now a junior assistant there and earns around Rs 13,000 a month. Her marriage to Prem Edward John wasn't approved by her family who soon cut her off from them. She has a younger sister who is married to man working abroad but does not keep in touch with them any more. They do not know about her predicament and she does not want them to either.

She soon realized that her husband was not able to hold on to a job and kept changing from a cook in Taj Coromondal-Madras to other big hotels. He then procured a visa 8 years ago

and went off to the UK where he lived as a refugee and worked, earning good money. However Mary was not aware as to the nature of his work. Meanwhile Mary and her children lived in the same place where she frequently encountered abuse both verbally and psychologically from her in-laws. They wanted her to do all the household work, this despite her long work hours and she was not ready to oblige, leading to frequent quarrels and unpleasantness. Disgustedly she says that her brothers-in-law are alcoholics and do not work. Her husband returned from the UK around 5 months ago and has not been able to go back due to certain legal problems for which he is also wanted by the immigration authorities. On his return, things took a turn for the worse with her husband drinking heavily and abusing her physically as well as emotionally. Mary says he is very suspicious of her and claims that she has been having an affair with another man. He would wake her up in the middle of the night and hit her so hard that her body would be covered with bruises. However, even when she would go to the hospital for dressing she never complained about him. Soon it was too much to take and she ran away from home with her daughter...

Prem Edward John is on the look out for Mary and has put up posters of her and her child as "Missing People" all over her office and certain bus stops. However Mary's lawyer has sent copies of the divorce notice to the commissioner of police as well as the inspector of the police station near her house. This notice very explicitly accounts for all the abuse and violence that she has been subjected to all these years. Her mentally challenged son who was in a hostel in the city has now been removed from there and is with her husband. She hopes he is looking after him well. On asking, Mary emphatically says she wouldn't want to go back even if her husband wanted her to and promised to behave in future, as she is sure he would never change but ill-treat her more as time goes by. She feels he has mental problems and needs treatment.

Mary is very happy in the poor girls' hostel which forms the top part of Abhaya Nilayam. She pays Rs 900 a month as the hostel fees. The staff is very cooperative and supportive and she is grateful for the security that they provide her. The superintendent also counsels them sometimes. Her co-mates are nice and they all live together in a room upstairs. Though it does tend to get crowded they somehow manage within that space. The food according to Mary though sufficient is not of very good quality and since they do not get running water, they have to make do with the stored water in the buckets.

Mary is also very thankful to her lawyer for reducing his rates and taking up her case. She however does not really have much faith in the police system for she has had bad experiences with them earlier. I advised her to register a complaint against her husband with the all women's police station near her house as these are meant for cases of crime against women like these. Mary does not know what will happen next but she is hoping against hope that her divorce comes through and she gets custody of both her children as she feels she will be able to look after them much better than her husband. Very determinedly she says that she will then take up a place of her own and lead her own life peacefully.

Case 6

1. Name of Institution

Abhaya Nilayam

2. Name of inmate

Shabnam

3. Name of father/husband

Basha

4. Age

20 years

5. Education

Illiterate

6. Number of accompanying children with age

Nil

7. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

Normal health

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Runaway from home

Shabnam comes from a family of 10 children. All her sisters are married but she has an unmarried younger brother. Her father works on the weekends as a butcher and earns some money through this. One of her sisters whose husband works abroad stays next door and helps them meet the household expenses. Shabnam says that her sister would keep quarrelling with her and accusing her of not doing any work. Having had enough of this she left home and came away to Chennai. Since she didn't have any where to go Shabnam started spending nights at the railway station. The police identified her as a homeless and brought her to Abhaya Nilayam where she has been for the last week and a half.

The in-house matron told us that Shabnam is quite desperate to go back home and even tried to commit suicide by hanging herself. Fortunately, some of her roommates found her in time and alerted the staff who rescued her. Since, there is a rule wherein the inmates have to be handed over to their family/relatives during discharge, the authorities cannot let Shabnam go unless someone comes to pick her up. They have already written to the address given by her, but are yet to receive an answer. Shabnam did not speak much during the interview and appeared quite depressed. She also kept changing her statement every once in while and hence seemed unreliable.

On the next day when we visited, we found that Shabnam had left for her home. When asked, the staff said that she was really unhappy despite all their counseling and quite adamant about going home alone. She was quite confident of the way back so they let her go.

Case 7

1. Name of Institution

Abhaya Nilayam

2. Name of inmate

Jyoti

3. Name of father/husband

Dinesh Kumar

4. Age

21 years

5. Education

12th standard (stood first in commerce in school)

6. Number of accompanying children with age

Nil

7. General health (any disability, sickness worth mentioning)

Normal health

8. Reason for being lodged in the institution as on record

Left home due to quarrel with in-laws

Jyoti the eldest of three sisters fell in love with an auto driver while still studying. She later married him with the permission of her parents. Dinesh, her husband was brought up by his father and step mother as his biological mother had left them and married another man. However soon after their marriage, Dinesh was reunited with his mother and all three of them started living together. Jyoti soon realized how possessive the mother was about her son. She not only interfered with their day to day living but also in their intimate matters. Living in one room with the mother-in-law constantly interfering became extremely tough. Soon they all started quarrelling and things became very unpleasant. Jyoti and her husband decided to shift out and were quite happy. However the happiness was short lived as Dinesh's mother once again started complaining about Jyoti, so much so that Dinesh actually started believing her. Being a complete mama's boy he forced Jyoti to return to his mother's place. By this time, Jyoti had had enough and she moved out. She stayed in a Chennai based organization called "Ashraya" where she discovered that she was pregnant. She delivered a premature baby at the government hospital who soon died. She was then transferred to Abhaya Nilayam as her period of stay in "Ashraya" had expired.

Jyoti doesn't mind getting married again. She wants to take up a job in an export firm like many of the inmates in Abhaya Nilayam do and be independent. Though she is happy in this place she feels that their movements are very restricted and some more freedom would have been welcome.

Annexure 6:

Rule 22, ITPA 1956-Scale of Diet of inmates in protective homes:

Name of article of diet	Per capita scale of diet per diem
Ragi or wheat	300 gms
Red gram dal	30 gms
greens	100 gms
Vegetables	150 gms
Mutton	60 gms (once a fortnight)
Egg	1 (,,)
Onions	15 gms
Milk	100 ml
Ground nut oil	15 gms
Curry powder	10 gms
Coffee	3 gms
Jaggery	35 gms (3 days in a week)
Puffed Bengal gram dal	35 gms (,,)
Black gram dal	25 gms (once a week)
Pepper	25 gms
Cumin seeds	25 gms
Garlic	50 gms
Asafetida	5 gms
Black gram dal	50 gms
Mustard seeds	50 gms
tamarind	10 gms
salt	15 gms
leco	150 gma

Annexure 7:

Process documentation:

The Process in Delhi:

The National Commission for Women which was set up as a statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, has as one of its functions; “to inspect or cause to be inspected a jail, remand home, women’s institution or other place of custody where women are kept as prisoners or otherwise and take up with the concerned authorities for remedial action if found necessary”.

In September 2003, the NCW called for a meeting of certain NGOs in Delhi of which CHRI was a part, to discuss the possibility of these NGO’s taking up the role of inspecting custodial institutions for women in India. This was mainly because the NCW though had the money, lacked the resources in terms of manpower to actually visit each state and cover the detention centers for women. In the meetings that followed, the feasibility of this project and the various logistics were worked out. A format for the jail inspection was given to the participating NGOs. The NGOs however felt that this required very many changes both in terms of language and content and it was decided that suggestions would be made by each NGO and given to the NCW to be incorporated. We decided to cover police lockups for women, protective homes for women and women prisons. All the organizations made it very clear that in the allotted time frame of 3-4 months, it would be impossible to do an in-depth study of all the custodial institutions in the states and thus only representative samples would be covered. The NGO’s were asked to choose the states that they wanted to cover and in the discussion that followed, CHRI chose to study the states of Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. (We decided to take up at least one state in which we already had an entry to make the whole process much easier.) States like Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerela etc were chosen by other NGOs like All India Women’s Congress, Praja, and Joint Woman’s Programme.

The NCW then asked the NGOs to write a formal proposal in the next 2 weeks stating their budget, keeping in mind the guidelines given by the Government of India for such short term projects. CHRI then quickly wrote a proposal and sent it to be considered. In the meantime, all the interested NGOs decided to meet up separately to discuss a combined proposal and also to make changes in the interview format that had been given. We met up at the premises of the All India Women’s Congress and made certain changes in the questionnaire and also framed a new budget which was then sent to the NCW. There was no news from the NCW in the next few months, till the end of February, when they informed us (CHRI) that our individual proposal had been accepted and we could now go ahead with the study. We had in our earlier meetings with them repeatedly stressed on the fact that permissions to visit these institutions would be their responsibility and the start of the study would be from the day we had written access to all three centers of custody. In early March, the prisons team of CHRI visited the member secretary, Mrs Suneela Basant in the NCW to clarify certain things and suggest a few more changes in the jail inspection format. In the meeting we decided on the terms of the project and got our suggestions incorporated in the format. The NCW promised to write to the Home Secretaries and the Secretary, Dept of

Social Welfare in both M.P and Tamil Nadu. They also asked us to build a format for police lockups and protective homes which would be circulated to other NGOs as well and in the days that followed we completed it.

The Process in Tamil Nadu:

It was mid march by this time and the first thing I did after coming down to Chennai was to start looking for appropriate people to build up the research team. I started networking with various people asking them to let me know of suitable candidates interested in doing a 4 month project and by the end of the month I had located the research assistant. The NCW formally passed an order giving the assessment of custodial institutions in Tamil Nadu and M.P to CHRI and with this in hand, I contacted the DG Prisons, Mr Bholanath who extended his cooperation to us and said that the permission would not really be a problem. He asked me to come back after the NCW had written to them formally and I once again contacted the Prisons HQ a few weeks later along with the letter of the NCW to the Home secretary and the IG Prisons which they had failed to receive. In the long conversation that I had with him, he changed his stand and said that he would have to refer our case to the concerned ministry since we were an NGO and that was the unspoken rule that the department followed. He also asked CHRI to write a letter with the names of the team members seeking permission to visit jails.

We also wrote to the DG Police, Commissioner of Police and the Director, Dept of Social Defense to be able to visit the police lockups and protective homes. By the last week of April, I managed to locate the field investigator and sent the names to the DG Prisons office who promised to send the file to the ministry soon. We decided to go ahead and start visiting the other institutions because by this time, our letter had reached the Police Commissioner's office. I met the Joint Commissioner South Zone, Mr J.K Tripathi who was extremely helpful and asked one of his assistant commissioners to organize our visits. From the 3rd of May we started visiting the police lockups. Our experience in the women police stations was positive since the staff and the officers in charge were only too willing to share information. This could be because they had been asked to render all possible help by their incharge and also because nothing that we asked was confidential or secretive.

By this time, the Directorate of Social Defense had also granted us permission albeit with certain conditions to be followed such as we would not give out any information collected to the media or any other sources without prior permission, we would not interrogate the inmates in the homes or ask them personal questions-only questions with a social relevance and some general information could be asked and this to in the presence of the superintendent or in her absence the deputy superintendent, etc. and soon after we finished with the lockups we started visiting the 2 protective homes in the city. The government vigilance home that we visited treated us with a lot of animosity in the beginning. The first impression that we got of the staff in the government home was one of extreme lethargy and indolence. There would be atleast 2 people who would be sleeping on their desks in the office on the days we visited only to be woken us by us. It was obvious that we had destroyed the comfortable routine that they had carved for themselves and they were certainly not too happy about it. Not only were they not welcoming, we soon realized that they were very closed and unwilling to share any information and hesitant to allow us to

meet the inmates. The officials in the Directorate kept emphasizing on the rules laid down in the permission letter and could not give us anything except the very basic information. There were also hardly any records that were being maintained. On the other hand, the protective home Abhaya Nilayam run by the NGO-Madras Vigilance Association was very cordial and open and we did not face any problems in collecting information there. This brought to our notice the contrast between the 2 homes, one government and the other run by an NGO, which was quite stark. The style of functioning differed and this could be due to the interest taken by those in authority in the case of Abhaya Nilayam while this was not so in the government run institution.

I kept a track of the prisons file, which was in the ministry by now and made innumerable trips to the secretariat. The initial positive response soon gave way to skepticism as weeks went by and no permission came through. The file traveled from the deputy secretary's (DS) office to the law dept for clearance, back to the DS office, then to the home secretary's office and finally found its way to the minister. The minister, after the much talked about debacle in the elections did see the file, in the midst of salvaging the party's lost pride. The DS by then had suggested, that I meet the minister to expedite matters, which I tried to do for more than a week finally to be told by his PA that it was not a good idea as he had already returned the file to the department for certain reasons (not divulged) and I was to wait for further intimation from them. By this time we had almost lost hope for the whole process had taken around 3 and a half months and the momentum with which we had started had been broken. In the meantime, we thought we would try and get some data from the prisons headquarters which we could work on but the DIG and the DG prisons did not even give us that. They also refused to give us the prison manual and put forward some ludicrous arguments against it (he kept saying that the laws do not permit us to give out the prison manual and I should try other sources!) but we managed to eventually get a copy from the State Legal Services Authority.

My visits to the secretariat reduced, as I didn't see much point in going there anymore. The NCW was contacted by all of us in the prisons unit, both at Delhi and from Madras. The Director herself spoke on more than three occasions to the Chair of the NCW explaining that information and access was being denied and asking that a strong letter or protest be sent to the state government as the refusal to allow access was a direct challenge to the authority and remit of the NCW. But despite their assurances that they would write strongly to the Tamil Nadu government the NCW in the end only resent a copy of the same letter which they had originally written to the home secretary months ago. The NCW seemed little concerned about the outcome of the study or the defiance being shown the institution and this did depress us even though it could not lessen our commitment to the work. It did make the team thinking as to the whole purpose of this study. Would they actually care to implement the suggestions we give them after visiting these institutions or would they merely be forgotten lines on paper? The latter seemed more likely and we then decided not to wait any further but to give in a consolidated report of the information collected so far. Other reasons for not waiting further was that as time had gone by our researchers who had been diligent had other commitments to care for and the coordinator who had also carved out time from her schedule felt that she must complete what she could or lose the whole study.

By this time we had also decided that one of us would visit the protective home for women in Coimbatore as we needed to study one more government run home to complete this part of the study and we did that. This home was very different from the one we visited in

Chennai not only physically but also in the atmosphere that existed. Much smaller in size and strength, the inmates appeared very friendly with the staff. The staff was very cooperative and helpful, also more aware of what was happening around them. We realized how differently two government homes could run in the same state.