



## A Review about Major Problems Of Prisons Relevant To India

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**Abstract :** Despite the relatively low number of persons in prison as compared to many other countries in the world, there are some very common problems across the jails in India, and the situation is likely to be the same or worse in many developing countries. Overcrowding, prolonged detention of under-trial prisoners, unsatisfactory living conditions, lack of treatment programmes and the allegations for the indifferent and even inhuman approaches of prison staff have repeatedly attracted the attention of the critics over the years.

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### Major Problems or Issues :

#### *More crowding*

Congestion in jails, particularly among under trials has been a source of concern. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration National Jail Census in 1970 had revealed that 52% of the jail inmates were awaiting trial.

Obviously, if prison overcrowding is to be brought down then undertrial population has to be reduced drastically. Of course, this cannot be happened without the courts and the police working in tandem. The three wings of the criminal justice system would have to act harmonically. Speedy trials are frustrated by a heavy court workload, police inability to produce the witnesses promptly and a recalcitrant defense lawyer who was bent upon seeking adjournments, even if such tactics harm his/her client. Fast track courts have helped to the much extent, but it has not made any measurable differences to the problem of pendency.

Increasing the number of courts could not bring about a desired difference as long as the current 'adjournments culture' continues (Raghavan 2004).

#### *Corruption and extortion*

Extortion by prison staff, and its less aggressive corollary, guard corruption, is common in prisons around the world. Given that the substantial power, for guards exercised over inmates, these problems are predictable, but the low salaries that guards are generally paid severely aggravate them. In exchange for contraband or special treatment, inmates