

Summary of Proposed Actions on Wafaqi Mohtasib's Report of the Committee
to Examine the Systemic Failures in the Administration of Prisons and to
Recommend Good Administration standards

1) External Oversight Committees for Jails:

- a. Provincial Governments may be directed to constitute and notify Oversight Committee for every jail, headed by District and Session Judge and including district heads of prisons, police and the local administration, besides prominent members of the civil society and philanthropists. Committee members will be authorized to inspect jails at any time, without prior notice, and will have an office premises in the jail (Recommendation No. 1 of the Committee report, page No. 23).
- b. Provincial Ombudsmen to facilitate and monitor the working of the Oversight Committees of Jails.

2) Overcrowding of Prisons

- a. Law and Justice Commission together with Advocates General and Provincial Ombudsmen to review and submit proposals for significant expansion of probation/parole facilities to reduce pressure on accommodation facilities in jails. (21,000 prisoners are on parole in Punjab alone.) (Recommendation No. II g, h and j of the Committee report, page 25)
- b. Provincial governments should build jails in every district headquarter, and the Federal Government in Islamabad. Every jail should have separate and independent portions for women and juvenile prisoners, with sleeping space for every prisoner with adequate toilet and hygiene facilities.
- c. Drug users and mentally insane prisoners to be kept outside the premises of the jail in drug clinics/homes for mentally retarded prisoners and provided medical treatment. (Recommendation No. II (e) of the Committee report, page No. 24).

3) Visiting Rights:

- a. The kith and kin/family members of prisoners, particularly women and children, in jails should have right to once a week visit to jails on pre-notified days.

- b. Provincial Governments should ensure that there is proper facility in visitor rooms of the jails including sufficient chairs, drinking water and toilet facilities. (Recommendation No. IV of the Committee report, pages 25-26)

4) Production of Under Trial Prisoners in courts

- a. Provincial Governments should review and enhance the transportation and escorting facilities for prisoners to the premises of courts so that prisoners are produced on every date of hearing, without fail.
- b. Provincial Governments should provide basic facilities in “*Bakshi Khanas*” in the court premises where prisoners have to wait for hours.

5) Provision of education and skill training to prisoners.

As a moral duty, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan should allocate every jail to nearby university or a major educational institution for providing free education to the prisoners, particularly women and children, and impart skill training to them with the help of TEVTA and other skill training institutions. Libraries should also be upgraded by the concerned universities. No fee should be charged from the prisoners intending to appear in examinations.

6) Computerization of Record of Prisoners

Provincial Governments should computerize data of all accused as well as under trial prisoners, particularly women and children, and update it on daily basis, and ensure biometric verification by NADRA. This small investment on jails will help the District Committees to monitor and ensure that prisoners are produced before the courts on due dates, and released when their jail term is completed.

7) Philanthropic assistance for prisoners

The Committee set up by the Federal Ombudsman under the chairmanship of Ms. Asma Jehangir is providing assistance to prisoners through philanthropists. Such Committees may be encouraged by the prison administrations, and allowed to ensure that the assistance in kind or cash is personally delivered to prisoners by donors or committees.
