
INCARCERATED AND INVISIBLE: UNVEILING THE RIGHTS OF DIFFERENTLY ABLED PRISONERS

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ABSTRACT

We have a plethora of cases around prisoner's rights that emphasize their right to dignity as per Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, and this is irrespective of caste, sex, race, religion, place of birth or any such differences. The Veena Sethi case in the 1980's brought to light another intersection of discrimination, 'Disability'. These problems have become much more severe at present due to overcrowding in jails. Not only are developing countries dealing with this problem of failure to adequately satisfy the essential necessities of disabled convicts, but developed nations are also dealing with the same and are attempting to find a solution to the problem. The primary objective of this study is to investigate the standing of prisoners with varying degrees of disability; to investigate the manner in which prisoners with varying degrees of disability are being treated within correctional facilities; and to investigate the initiatives that have been taken at the national and international levels to safeguard the rights of differently abled prisoners. This study is to provide the authors with the opportunity to contemplate the intersections of disability among inmates, including the civil and political rights of prisoners with disabilities. Policymakers are obligated to adhere to human rights ideals and statutory duties in order to combat structural injustices and ensure that everyone has equal access to justice. The recent judgment of L. Marumgnadam also focus on the rights of the disabled prisoners.

Keywords: Disability, Discrimination, Incarceration, Access to Justice, Human Rights

Introduction

Disability is a multifaceted concept that incorporates a wide range of physical and cognitive impairments that have an effect on an individual's ability to carry out tasks. They frequently come across with enormous challenges as a result of the existence of prejudice, the stigma that is associated with society, and the absence of assistance and accessibility in society. As a result of the junction of disability and incarceration, inmates who have disabilities are subjected to prejudice and abuse, which is a natural consequence of the systemic failure of the judicial system. The fact that the governing authorities have not included any data regarding the prison or crime statistics has led to the implementation of ineffective policies and reforms for people with disabilities and their pursuit of justice and inclusion in society, regardless of the difficulties that have been encountered. According to the Census Report of 2011, around 2.21% of India's population, or 26.8 million people, are considered to be disabled.¹ This represents a significant portion of the country's population. On average, there are around 1.50 crore males and 1.18 crore females among the overall population of people who are disabled. Individuals that fall into this category include those who have difficulties with their vision, hearing, speaking, and locomotor skills; mental illness; mental retardation; multiple disabilities; and numerous other disabilities.

Over the past several decades, the medical model of disability has been successfully replaced by a more social model that places a focus on the elimination of social obstacles and the promotion of equality and inclusion. This change has occurred as a result of measures taken by the government. For the purpose of fostering their acceptance and integration into society, the government of India has enacted a variety of laws and regulations. In India, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (also known as the RPwD Act) is the primary piece of legislation that pertains to the rights of those who have disabilities. This is in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which was ratified by the Indian government in the year 2007. Providing a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of the rights of people with disabilities in the areas of education, social security, health, and rehabilitation, the RPwD Act acknowledges 21 distinct categories of disabilities and accepts the existence of individual differences. The National Policy for People with Disabilities, 2006 places an emphasis on the significance of these individuals'

¹ Registrar General and Census Commissioner, *Census of India 2011*, available at <http://www.censusindia.gov.in> (last visited on April 26, 2026)

education and rehabilitation, while also underlining the fact that they are afforded equal opportunities and can make significant contributions to society. Section 2(s) of the RPWD act talks about “person with disability” which clearly states that person with disability *means* “a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others;”²

But the shift from a medical model to a social model is still in progress and requires additional work, particularly with regard to the administration of justice in the criminal justice system. One of the most important aspects of the field of criminal justice is the connection that exists between incarceration and disability.³ The systemic deficiencies that exist within the criminal justice and social services systems are frequently the root cause of the disproportionate number of people with disabilities who are detained due to their condition. They are frequently falsely accused of committing crimes as a result of institutionalized biases, a lack of substantial awareness, and inadequate legal representation. As per the India Justice report 2025, People with disabilities are one group that is still mainly invisible in the legal system.⁴ A 4% reservation is required by the nearly ten-year-old Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) of 2016. The legal system in India recognises the rights of people with disabilities, but institutional inaction has resulted in their persistent marginalisation. People with disabilities are under-represented in the police, courts, and prison administration, and their inclusion is frequently disregarded in hiring practices. As a result, they are underserved as consumers of justice and under-represented as professionals. Going beyond token representation is necessary to achieve true diversity in the legal system. Despite advancements in women's and caste-based inclusion, there are still leadership disparities and disability participation are still neglected.⁵

Making the Invisible Visible: A Meta-Ethnographic Study of Indian Custodial Injustice and Disability

Case studies are the only method that we use to document the systemic challenges that are faced by inmates who have impairments. This is because we do not have official statistics on

² The Rights of Person with Disabilities Act, 2016 (Act 49 of 2016), s. 2(s)

³ L. Ixby, S. Bevan and C. Boen, “The Links Between Disability, Incarceration, and Social Exclusion”, 41 *Health Aff. (Millwood)* (2022) 1460.

⁴ Tata Trusts, *India Justice Report 2025: Ranking States on Police, Judiciary, Prison and Legal Aid* (Tata Trusts, 2025)

⁵ *Ibid.*

the number of people who are having any kind of disability and are prisoned in our country.

At the age of 23, Machang Lalung, a tribal guy from Assam, was taken into custody for a small offence. He was arrested for the offence under IPC section 323. It was determined that he was not suitable for the experiment since he was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Ironically, his case was never brought before a judge for a hearing for more than half a century. After the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) discovered that the health authorities had incorrectly diagnosed him and that he just suffered from epilepsy, he was held in the mental institution for a period of 54 years, until the year 2005. As a result of this, Lalung went from being a man who was 23 years old to a man who is now 77 years old. He may have forgotten his family, his accent, and the flavour of the cuisine that he used to adore.⁶ However, Lalung is not the only person who has experienced injustice; there are numerous other examples of people with mental disabilities who have been subjected to such treatment.

Shri Charanjit Singh is another individual who is the subject of a similar case. Over the course of sixteen years, he was unable to get a verdict in his trial due to mental health concerns. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) ultimately rescued him.⁷

The recent example of former Delhi University Professor GN Saibaba, a wheelchair user with 90% physical handicap, highlights the institutional obstacles encountered by incarcerated individuals with disabilities.⁸ In May 2014, he was apprehended by the Maharashtra Police on charges of terrorism and subsequently convicted to life imprisonment in 2017. Nevertheless, he was acquitted of the allegations by the Nagpur division of the Bombay High Court in October 2022. The Supreme Court subsequently suspended this acquittal for another evaluation. On March 5, 2024, Saibaba was yet again acquitted by the Nagpur bench, with the High Court condemning the state's case and deeming the trial court's verdict a "failure of justice." On the same day, the state appealed the acquittal to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court denied the Government's request for a stay on the acquittal, underscoring that it was a judiciously reasoned decision and asserting, "It is a hard-earned acquittal." What

⁶ *In Re: Illegal Detention of Machal Lalung*, 2006 Supreme (SC) 1462.

⁷ *Charanjit Singh v. State and Others*, 2005 (1) JCC 444 (Del)

⁸ *State of Maharashtra v. Mahesh Kariman Tirki*, (2022) 10 SCC 396.

is the duration of the man's incarceration?⁹

"I spent eight and a half years without a wheelchair in the Anda jail. Getting a glass of water, taking a bath or simply using the loo was a daily battle. There isn't a single ramp in the facility for inmates like myself. Due to hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, my heart is currently only operating at 55% of its potential. I get syncope episodes and lose consciousness. While incarcerated, I experienced two COVID-19 and swine flu episodes, but I was not given emergency medical care. Seven years ago, a doctor suggested that I perform a sleep study, but it was never carried out. My family sent me medication after I went on a 10-day hunger strike while incarcerated. I was not allowed to see my dying mother or carry out her final ceremonies. Is the purpose of the state to uplift or subjugate humanity? I was treated as the world's biggest terrorist while I was incarcerated".¹⁰ GN Saibaba at his first press conference following his release.

The constraints that people with disabilities face frequently lead to the dehumanisation of those individuals, as was discussed earlier. Nevertheless, our view of disability is currently undergoing a transformation as a result of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which signals the transition from the medical model of disability to the social and human rights models. This new way of thinking is reflected in General Comment No. 6 of 2018, which emphasises that an individual's handicap is a social construct and that limits should not be used as a justification to reject or restrict human rights.¹¹ Recognising that disability is just one of many layers of identity, it emphasises the need of taking into account the diversity of persons who have impairments when developing policies and laws pertaining to disabilities.¹² Within the context of this situation, having accessibility within the built setting, even inside the boundaries of a prison, is essential for actualising all human rights. The inhumane imprisonment conditions that Dr. Saibaba was subjected to were

⁹ A. Das, "Supreme Court Refuses to Stay Acquittal of GN Saibaba & 5 Others, Says HC Judgement Prima Facie Well Reasoned", Live Law, March 11, 2024, available at [<https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/supreme-court-gn-saibaba-alleged-maoist-links-case-uapa-state-of-maharashtra-25183>] (last visited on April 26, 2026)

¹⁰ A. Sharma, "G.N. Saibaba reveals torture and injustice during 10-year imprisonment", Frontline, March 9, 2024, available at: [https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/human-rights/former-delhi-university-professor-gn-saibaba-acquitted-10-years-in-prison-unlawful-activities-prevention-act-uapa/ article67932158.ece](https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/human-rights/former-delhi-university-professor-gn-saibaba-acquitted-10-years-in-prison-unlawful-activities-prevention-act-uapa/article67932158.ece) (last visited on April 26, 2026)

¹¹ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *General Comment No. 6 on Equality and Non-discrimination*, UN Doc. CRPD/C/GC/6 (2018)

¹²T. Degener and M.G. De Castro, "Toward inclusive equality: ten years of the human rights model of disability in the work of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" in *Disability law and human rights: Theory and policy* (Springer International Publishing, Cham, 2022) 27.

condemned by a United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders. The Special Rapporteur stated that the "anda" cell was not appropriate for a wheelchair user like themselves.¹³

A large number of NGOs that advocate for human rights and disability rights started sending straws and sippers to the Mumbai office of the National Investigation Agency and to the Talaja jail, which is located outside of Mumbai, in the year 2020.¹⁴ The detention of Father Stan Swamy, a Jesuit priest and tribal rights campaigner who was 84 years old and lived with Parkinson's disease, a diagnosis that was just recognised under the RPDA, was the impetus for this action. Because of the tremors that are associated with Parkinson's disease, Stan Swamy needed a sipper and a straw in order to drink water. Additionally, he needed a walker, a wheelchair, or a personal care attendant because he had experienced several falls in prison as a result of the unsteady gait that is connected with his physical condition. Despite the fact that he had medical requirements, he was repeatedly denied bail in the Bhima Koregaon case on the basis of medical grounds. Unfortunately, he passed dead on July 5, 2021, which was the day that his request for bail was set to take place.¹⁵

Vignesh Pandit, a 27-year-old man with speech difficulty, has been disabled from birth. As a citizen of Patna district, he was part of a marginalized Bihar community. Accused of sexual harassment of a minor girl under the POCSO Act, he has been in a Bihar Central prison since 2020. The mother of the 9-year-old survivor filed a FIR alleging sexual assault by Vignesh and Mahesh Pandit (anonymised) and threats of death if she reported the occurrence. According to the FIR, Vignesh was arrested and later held in judicial custody, but Mahesh was acquitted. To communicate with the speech-disabled and illiterate individual, observation and simple sign language were utilized. Additionally, a home visit was undertaken to get more information on the participation: The legal representation and police officers misinterpreted messages and did not fully understand his case. Inability to communicate needs, problems, or sentiments can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Risk of being exploited and mocked by fellow convicts.

¹³ UN News, "Rights expert urges India to release detained Activist", August 21, 2023, available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/08/1139932> (last visited on April 26, 2026)

¹⁴ Trends Desk, "Why people are posting orders of straws and sippers for arrested tribal activist Stan Swamy", *The Indian Express*, November 28, 2020, available at: <https://indianexpress.com/article/trending/trending-in-india/netizens-send-straws-and-sipper-for-stan-swamy-after-nia-denies-confiscating-them-7070510/> (last visited on April 26, 2026).

¹⁵ *Father Stan Swamy v. State of Maharashtra and Another*, Criminal Appeal no. 444 of 2021 (Bombay High Court, July 5, 2021)

Impairment can lead to exclusion from talks, group activities, and occupational training.¹⁶

Patna fruit merchant Saif Alam was 27 and ostracized. He entered the criminal justice system after stealing on his way to work. He is been in Bihar Central Prison since 2022 on IPC Section 379, notwithstanding his innocence.

His prison sentence revealed mental health issues, leading to a mental retardation diagnosis. To create rapport and store enough knowledge, the interview was slow due to his mental ability. He has passed the ninth standard and speaks Hindi and some English. Parental visits to Mulakati occur every 5-6 months. He often talks about his small sister and his incapacity to interact with her. He says no one listens or helps him in prison and has no legal representation. Jail and case data were analyzed to understand participants. This prisoner has faced certain challenges like miscommunication and bullying which may further isolate people. His intellectual disability may make him "easy prey." for other inmates to verbally or physically harass. Rejection from group activities and occupational trainings owing to incompetence. Medical professionals may misinterpret his issues due to poor communication. Daily conversational vocabulary and speaking limited.¹⁷

A 25-year-old disadvantaged man named Pankaj is vision impaired. He and his family sold leftover plastics and begged for food at shrines in Bihar. After three days in police detention for theft, he was sent to court. Trespassing at night and theft from a property storage building he was charged under Section 457 and 380 of the IPC.

This person has been in Central Prison since 2021, awaiting a fair trial. Due to his lack of legal education, he claimed bodily assault in the police station for three days. He describes disability prejudice and insensitivity inside the prison.¹⁸ Prisoners have challenges: Prisons can be difficult to traverse without tactile cues, aural aid, or braille. Inaccessible infrastructure causes falls and injuries. Staff and colleagues may verbally or physically attack convicts as weak targets. Challenge recognizing health signals and communicating concerns to doctors.

From Courtrooms to Cells: An Integration of Indian Disability Rights and Judicial

¹⁶ P. Kumar, Md. Q. Ali and S. Shekhar, "Challenges of Prison Inmates with Disabilities: Need for Comprehensive Data and Prison Support System for Access to Justice", 4 *TISS J. Disability & Res. Stud.* (2024).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Expansion

In the context of Indian jurisprudence, the case of *Veena Sethi v. State of Bihar* constitutes a significant turning point, particularly with regard to the fundamental right to personal liberty that is protected by Article 21 of the Indian Constitution and the writ of habeas corpus.

This decision was handed down by the bench of Justices P.N. Bhagwati and R.S. Pathak of the Supreme Court. It highlighted the need of speedy hearings in instances involving preventive detention and held the State liable for negligent delays that violate the rights of individuals. When 16 inmates who had been detained in Hazaribagh Prison for more than 25 years due to mental illness were successfully freed by a lawyer from the Jamshedpur Legal Aid Committee.¹⁹ The Supreme Court ruled that there should be more mental health institutions and that incarcerating people with mental illnesses was inappropriate because it was not a suitable setting for their treatment. This particular case is not only about the personal situation that Veena Sethi is in, but it also pertains to the more general concept of judicial vigilance in the defense of fundamental rights against the possibility of administrative overreach.²⁰

The *Shri Rama Murthy v. State of Karnataka* case highlights India's pressing need for extensive jail reforms. It highlights the judiciary's responsibility to protect inmates' basic rights and guarantee that their circumstances of imprisonment comply with constitutional norms.²¹ This example serves as a reminder that, despite tremendous advancements, there are still many obstacles in the way of achieving compassionate and rehabilitative jail conditions. Overcrowding, trial delays, torture in prison, disregard for health and hygiene, insufficient food, lack of clothing, inadequate legal assistance, inmates held beyond their sentence, and inhumane conditions are the nine main topics of prison reform that the Supreme Court recognised. The ruling mandated extensive changes, such as the separation of convicted and undertrial inmates, the creation of district legal assistance committees, the establishment of medical facilities, and the application of the Model Prison Manual.²² It instituted continuous judicial oversight of jail conditions. The Supreme Court's decisions highlight the rights of

¹⁹ *Veena Sethi v. State of Bihar*, AIR 1983 SC 339.

²⁰ S. Tripathi, S. Tripathi and S. Singh, "Prison systems must embrace disability rights as a human rights imperative", *IX Indian J. Med. Ethics* (2024) 4.

²¹ *Rama Murthy v. State of Karnataka*, AIR 1997 SC 1739.

²² K. Malviya, "Veena Sethi v. State of Bihar: Habeas Corpus and Speedy Trial in Preventive Detention", *Lawoctopus*, available at <https://lawctopus.com/clatalogue/clat-ug/veena-sethi-v-state-of-bihar-speedy-trial-in-preventive-detention/> (last visited on April 26, 2026)

prisoners and the state's obligations to them. These decisions are based on precedents such as *Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration*,²³ *Charles Sobhraj v. Superintendent, Central Jail, Tihar*,²⁴ and *Francis Coralie Mullin v. Administrator, Union Territory of Delhi*.²⁵

The court in the case of *L Muruganadam v. State of Tamil Nadu* established a framework to protect disabled prisoners. Disability Identification at Admission requires officials to promptly ask offenders about their support needs and limitations. The ruling requires Accessible Communication to bridge communication gaps. Jail rules must be available in Braille, sign language, and other formats. Accessible infrastructure needs a comprehensive overhaul. This requires wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, ramps, and sensory-safe environments. State-Level Access Audits by specialized departments are required in Tamil Nadu within six months. Beyond physical access, the instructions emphasize Healthcare Parity, which requires convicts to get the same physiotherapy, mental care, and assistive devices as the community.²⁶

The court also wants to reform structures by mandating hospital and jail workers to learn UN-standard non-discrimination and respectful language. The Prison Manual must be updated within six months to comply with the RPwD Act, 2016, and UNCRPD. Important legal provision. The State must keep Disaggregated Data on handicap status and set up a Monitoring Committee to check on them every three months to ensure these aren't merely 'paper precautions' Finally, sending a comprehensive Compliance Report to the State Human Rights Commission increases institution accountability. This guarantees proactive, adequate accommodations for disabled prisoners.²⁷

It has been mandated by the court in the case of *Sathyan Naravoor v. Union of India* that all states and union territories must implement these disability-inclusive concepts inside their respective jail systems.²⁸ This obligation has been extended countrywide as a result of the *L. Muruganandam* case. The construction of robust and easily accessible grievance redressal systems to prevent systematic abuse and the incorporation of inclusive education programs to ensure that no inmate is denied learning opportunities due to a handicap are two of the most

²³ *Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration*, (1978) 4 SCC 494.

²⁴ *Charles Sobraj v. Superintendent, Central Jail, Tihar*, AIR 1978 SC 1514.

²⁵ *Francis Coralie Mullin v. Administrator, Union Territory of Delhi* (1981) 1 SCC 608.

²⁶ *L. Muruganandam v. State of Tamil Nadu*, 2024 (1) MLJ (CrI) 446.

²⁷ "State under constitutional and moral obligation to protect Disabled Prisoners' rights: SC directions", *SCC Online Blog*, July 22, 2025, available at <https://www.sconline.com/blog/post/2025/07/22/state-constitutional-moral-obligation-disabled-prisoners-rights-sc-directions/> (last visited on April 26, 2026)

²⁸ *Sathyan Naravoor v. Union of India*, 2026, INSC 397.

important instructions. Given that Section 89 of the RPwD Act is now applicable to all penal institutions, it is imperative that staff members and legal-aid personnel have a comprehensive understanding of the provisions of this section. Despite the fact that the court has ordered all jurisdictions to submit a compliance report that details the structured mechanisms for the procurement, maintenance, and secure provision of mobility aids, it has deferred a final ruling on the provision of assistive devices until after institutional security assessments have been completed.²⁹ In the end, the court demanded greater visitation privileges for prisoners with cognitive disabilities in order to strengthen emotional well-being and oversight. Additionally, the court required each jurisdiction to adopt specific protocols that strike a balance between the human right to family support and dignity and the essential security measures.

The way forward: Making Indian Prisons More inclusive:

The Indian correctional system has to stop using the "custodial-only" approach and start using a "rights-based paradigm" that regards disabled prisoners not as "burdens" on the state but as people who have rights and should be treated equally under the law. The following path must be given priority:

From "Medical Necessity" to "Reasonable Accommodation": The first step is to cease thinking of things like therapy services and assistive equipment as "charitable acts" of the state and start thinking of them as mandatory reasonable accommodations under the RPwD Act, 2016. Prison infrastructure should now be built according to the Universal Design philosophy. This means that the jail's physical and digital architecture should be designed with "accessibility" in mind from the outset, not added after.

The Convergence of Jurisprudence and Practice: Judicial orders are vital, but they can be dangerous if they are not followed. To move forward, State Departments of Prisons need to set up Accessibility Monitoring Cells. These cells should be in charge of the step-by-step process of making the L. Muruganadam rules part of their daily lives. This means that compliance reports shouldn't just be a bunch of paperwork. They should be living documents that

²⁹ S. Sarkar, "Accessible Grievance redressal mechanism, inclusive education mobility aids: SC issues additional directions on the rights of disabled prisoners", SCC Online Blog, December 8, 2025, available at: <https://www.sconline.com/blog/post/2025/12/08/accessible-grievance-redressal-mechanism-inclusive-education-mobility-aids-sc-issues-additional-directions-on-rights-of-disabled-prisoners/> (last visited on April 26, 2026)

demonstrate how each disabled inmate is doing right now.

Giving the Agency of Inmates greater power: A transformative plan must put the prisoners' real-life experiences at the front of the list. It is very crucial to establish up grievance systems that allow disabled inmates to directly tell outside entities (like the State Human Rights Commission) what they need, with the help of lawyers who work for free. This makes things a little safer because of the culture of quiet that is typical in prisons and jails. The Way Forward is more than just workshops that happen every now and then. It signifies that training is an ongoing process. All regional jail training academies need to make disability-friendly lessons a permanent element of their programs. The human rights paradigm should be the main focus of this training. It will assist staff stop using old-fashioned, insulting, or punishing ways of dealing with disabilities and instead build an environment based on dignity, non-discrimination, and respectful communication.

Strengthening the link with civil society: The jail setting is closed off, which makes it hard for individuals to get involved. The State should develop formal agreements with civil society groups and legal aid clinics that are experts on disability rights. By letting outside specialists undertake audits and getting the community involved on a regular basis, the prison system can reduce the knowledge gap and make sure that the needs of disabled criminals are met with scientifically sound and caring solutions. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules, often known as the Nelson Mandela Rules, are a set of regulations that provide minimum standards for the humane treatment of prisoners. These regulations include measures for disability accessibility and reasonable accommodations for those with impairments.³⁰

Within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), India, as a signatory, is obligated to remove both physical and institutional barriers in order to guarantee equal access to justice and public institutions, including prisons.³¹

International Best Practices:

The Norway Model the Norwegian prison system places an emphasis on human dignity,

³⁰ UN General Assembly, "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules)", Resolution 70/175,A/RES/70/175 (January 8, 2016).

³¹ UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Concluding observations on the initial report of India 9CRPD/C/IND/CO/1, 2019),

accessibility, and rehabilitation. It is based on the premise that the only punishment that the state can inflict is the loss of one's freedom. The infrastructure is barrier-free, and living circumstances are compassionate.³²

In collaboration with the Prison Reform Trust, a non-governmental organization, the United Kingdom's prison service has created an informational package tailored to the needs of detained individuals with impairments.³³ Every single prisoner with a disability is given access to this resource after being admitted to the facility. All employees in the Netherlands are subject to specific guidelines that cover how to prevent suicides, deal with completed suicides, and handle post-suicide scenarios. Specific protocols have been established as a result of these protocols.

The institutions' whole communication system and the fundamental training they offer are integrated with these policies without any discernible disturbance.³⁴ Australia is leading the way in creating peer support programs aimed at avoiding suicide and self-harm. convicts with specialised training provide round-the-clock assistance to their fellow convicts at the Mount Gambier penitentiary in South Australia. In contrast, regular meetings are held between the prison administration and the inmates who provide peer support in the Western Australian prison system.³⁵

Conclusion

There is still a significant amount of work to be done before India is capable of reforming its prison system. Due to the well-known structural issues that are present in jails, the rules that were established by the Supreme Court are difficult to implement, despite the fact that they are creative. A "punitive mindset" persists among both the general public and the government, in spite of the recent historic decisions handed down by the highest court available. Local, grassroots bodies, such as the United Kingdom, should be established to oversee the implementation of these directives in order to ensure that the benefits of the judicial mandates are fully realised. Every correctional facility ought to have a Disability Rights and Accommodation Unit that functions in a manner analogous to that of equality teams in the

³² Y.A. Anderson and L. Gröning, "Rehabilitation in Principle and Practice: Perspectives of Inmates and Officers", *ResearchGate* (2026).

³³ Prison Reform Trust, *Information Book for Disabled Prisoners* (Prison Reform Trust, London, 2004)

³⁴ Jan van den Brand, "Contribution to the UNODC Expert Group Review Meeting" (Ministry of Justice, The Netherlands, Vienna, October 18-19, 2007)

³⁵ M. McArthur, P. Camilleri and H. Webb, *Strategies for Managing Suicide and Self-harm Prisons* (Australian Institute of Criminology, 1999) 4.

United Kingdom and is directed by a competent welfare officer, rather than only medical specialists. Their responsibilities would include the creation of individualised accommodation plans, the coordination of medical officers, prison workers, and families, as well as the periodic evaluation of the requirements for assistive devices. Additionally, prior to any action being taken against a disabled prisoner, such as solitary confinement or transfer, a Disability Impact Assessment must be established at the outset. These mandates would be enhanced if they were recognised by statute, which would strengthen the rights.

The implementation of accountability systems, cultural transformations, and technical improvements will significantly improve the rights of disabled convicts as well as the general security of the correctional facilities. Providing the state and the federal government with reports that demonstrate the efficacy of the reforms should be done on a yearly or biannual basis by the authorities in charge of the correctional facilities. This will ensure that accountability is maintained. Cultural changes can be initiated through training and sensitisation activities, while technological reforms can be achieved through the incorporation of assistive technology in correctional facilities and a centralised, anonymised database that records information about individuals with disabilities who are incarcerated based in correctional facilities. A doctrinal advancement has been made in India's disability-prison jurisprudence, notwithstanding the fact that it is behind institutionally. These rights are, however, restricted to verdicts that are eloquent in words but nonexistent behind prison walls due to the absence of decentralised enforcement, statutory backing, and cultural transformation. This is despite the fact that the courts have constructed a framework that is abundant in rights.