

NHRC, India takes *suomotu* cognizance of the reported death of 285 inmates in different jails in Chhattisgarh over the past four years

Reportedly, the state government in the Assembly cited suicide and chronic ailments as the reasons behind the inmates' death

Issues notices to State Chief Secretary and the Director General of Prisons, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks

The report to include data regarding overcrowding in the jails, vacant posts of the doctors and the steps taken to address the issue

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The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has taken *suomotu* cognizance of a media report that a total of 285 inmates died in different jails of Chhattisgarh over the past four years, with the highest number of 90 deaths in 2022 and 66 during January 2025 to 31st January 2026. Reportedly, the state government in the Assembly cited suicide and chronic ailments as the reasons behind the inmates' death.

According to the media report, carried on 23rd March 2026, prisons in the state are mostly overcrowded which is leading to increased spread of infections and mental stress among the inmates. Most prisons are facing a shortage of doctors and psychiatrists to attend to the prisoners for medical treatment.

The Commission has observed that the contents of the news report, if true, raise serious issues of violation of human rights of the victims. Therefore, it has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Prisons, Chhattisgarh, calling for a detailed report on the matter within two weeks. It is expected to include data regarding alleged overcrowding in the jails, vacant posts of the doctors and the steps being taken by the State Government to address the issue.

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