

Jharkhand Jail has 2329 Posts but only 1,399 were presently occupied

Ranchi, June 15: Jharkhand High Court today tore into the state government for its poor management of prisons, describing the condition of inmates as "pathetic", giving the authorities 48 hours to update the jail website and 15 days time to appoint personnel to plug all loopholes.

Describing the acute shortage of personnel as "shameful", the court of Chief Justice Virender Singh and Justice S. Chandrashekhara asked the government to make the appointments on an ad hoc basis if needed, failing which the chief secretary, home secretary and inspector general of police (prisons) would have to appear in person and explain the reason for non-compliance.

During the hearing of PIL, which the high court initiated suo motu, amicus curiae Manoj Tandon said that the jail website of Jharkhand lacked basic information and wasn't updated. The website of neighbouring Bihar on the other hand was filled with data and very informative, he added.

He also informed the court that of the 2,329 posts in various jails across the state, only 1,399 were presently occupied.

Additional advocate general Jai Prakash told the court that 921 women prisoners were lodged in various jails of the state for whom only eight nurses were sanctioned.

But, all eight posts were vacant. Similarly, posts of 35 male nurses, 4 pharmacists, 11 x-ray technicians, 28 computer operators and 30 video conferencing operators were all lying vacant.

"The inaction of the government in not filling up the vacancies of nurses (posts) is rather shameful," a judge said.

The PIL was initiated on the directives of Supreme Court which had instructed all high courts to monitor the condition of jail inmates in their respective states.