



DG's Desk



The role of Kerala Prisons & Correctional Services Department in containing Corona Virus second wave

- Rishi Raj Singh IPS -

COVID 19 pandemic had caused serious challenges and the onslaught of the second wave has been even more formidable. Jails do have their own set of challenges in normal circumstances, which increased substantially by the advent of COVID 19. The second wave of COVID 19. was initially felt at Districts of Ernakulam and Kannur which eventually spread among inmates in Jails situated there.

We have been fairly successful in tackling the first wave and even at the onset of the second wave, we had already put into motion a set of actions to tackle it. District Jail, Ernakulam and Central Prison and Correctional Home, Kannur reported the most number of cases. Steps taken to bring it under control were:--

- ♦ We started testing all prisoners for COVID 19 when the second wave commenced.
- ♦ We prepared Covid First-Line Treatment Centres inside Jails and arranged Medical teams in each of them with the help of concerned District Medical Officers.
- ♦ Special diets enriched with protein were provided to prisoners in consultation with Medical Officers.
- ♦ Steps were taken to ensure prisoners over the age of 45 were vaccinated.
- ♦ Registration of prisoners belonging to the age category of 18-44 were completely done and 25% of them are already vaccinated.
- ♦ To vaccinate prisoners and Prison Personnel, Jail Institutions were in itself used as Vaccination Centres.
- ♦ Prison Personnel being front line workers, we have successfully inoculated every one of them.
- ♦ Timely interventions and prompt actions have resulted in keeping down mortality rate low during this period of the second wave.

We had only 2 cases of deaths who had tested positive for COVID 19, but, both were under treatment at Hospitals for cancer-related ailments and unfortunately, succumbed to cancer.

As part of a preventive measure to halt spread of Covid 19 in Jails, a webinar was held on 07.05.2021 for Officials of Kerala Prisons Department. Dr. Mohammad Ashil, Executive Director of Social Security Mission who is also an expert in the field of COVID19 defense, explained important matters that need to be done in Prisons by Prison Officials. Following it, all Superintendents were directed to urgently follow the following instructions to effectively prevent the spread of Covid 19 disease.

1. Doors and windows of all rooms, including the offices of all Prison authorities, should be kept open to ensure air circulation in the rooms. The use of AC should be avoided.
2. All officers working in CFLTC / Quarantine Jails must use the N95 mask itself. Other officers are required to use a double mask (a surgical mask + a cloth mask) instead of the N95 mask. When using N95 masks, one should be used three times at four-day intervals without subsequent use and then destroyed.
3. All inmates must wear masks in Prisons. Superintendents are required to provide 6 cloth masks for use of prisoners. A cloth mask should only be used continuously for a maximum of 8 hours, after which prisoners should be allowed to wash and use it.
4. All Prisons where the mask was made must make and use their own masks for their Prisons. Prisons that have not yet started making masks should take steps to start making masks and provide masks to inmates from Central Prisons until production begins.
5. Diarrhoea, fever, and shortness of breath are seen as the main symptoms of the second wave of Covid, so prisoners with such symptoms should be examined and quarantined.
6. Situation where Prison officials have to travel to Prisons and homes, Covid protocol should be strictly adhered to in this regard.
7. Prison officials should avoid eating together. Social distance must be maintained in unavoidable situations.



Webinar on Covid -19 preventive measures



8. Prisoners should also avoid eating together. Divide them into different groups and arrange for them to dine at different times keeping a social distance. Ensure at least 3 feet distance when eating.

9. At times, when a prisoner uses a newspaper or a telephone, other prisoners should use it only after each disinfection. Plastic paper can be pasted on phone receiver ear mouth pieces for cleaning with sanitizer.

10. Preference should be given to those over 45 years of age when vaccinating prisoners. If a prisoner is infected with Covid after the first dose of the vaccine, the booster dose can be given 28 days after the onset of the disease.

11. Prisoners who are Covid positive should be given a balanced diet.

12. It should be ensured that prisoners are provided with at least 2 liters of drinking water per day.

13. Thermal scanners for monitoring the fever of inmates in Prisons and pulse oximeter for monitoring the oxygen level should be made available as required in each Prison and should be used effectively by the staff at the institution.

14. There should be a strong campaign among prisoners that vaccination should reduce the complications of the disease rather than prevent it.

15. Discourage crowding, close contact and use of closed spaces and promote social distancing, use of masks and sanitizers.

16. Institutional heads should seek the services of experts to talk to prisoners about Covid prevention.

Prison Industries during Covid - 19 pandemic

Prison industries, Plantations, Agricultural activities, etc. have been functioning profitably. Prior to Covid pandemic situation around 7500 – 8000 prisoners were languishing in various Jails in our State. We have always taken all possible measures to make optimum use of human resources at our disposal and started food making units, Cafeteria, Beauty parlour, Bakery, Fashionista in addition to existing traditional units such as Carpentry, Smithy, Weaving, Tailoring, Shoe Making etc. and other units such as Soap Making, Phenyle Making, Book Binding, Paper Bag Making etc. There are Plantations of rubber, coconut, areca nut, cashews, herbal plants, etc. and other agricultural activities in Jails. Organic vegetables are sold to public and it is in great demand. It had benefited Exchequer, public and prisoners alike. Due to the outbreak of Covid19, the majority of prisoners were sent on special leave, interim leave etc. In place of around 7500 – 8000 prisoners, only about 4500 prisoners were available in various Jails in our State as on 31.05.2021. This unexpected reduction in human resources affected the functioning of these units resulting in a loss. But, we were able to negate this loss to an extent as we had Freedom Fuel Stations functioning profitably. We had a profit of Rs.1,46,60,873 in addition to income through rent to the tune of Rs.50,25,000.

Inauguration of Prison DOG Squad at Central Prison & Correctional Home, Thiruvananthapuram



Prison DOG Squad at Central Prison & Correctional Home, Thiruvananthapuram was inaugurated by Sri. Rishi Raj Singh IPS on 11.12.2020.

Sniffer dogs are being used in various Departments for security related measures with a great degree of success. Revised Prison Rules, 2014, permits use of sniffer dogs to detect narcotic and

explosive substances. At first, sniffer dogs were assigned on duty at Viyyur and Kannur Prisons in previous years. Following this, two female labradors, Kiera and Ruby, both aged around nine months which have completed training at Kerala Police Academy at Thrissur, were deployed at Central Prison and Correctional Home, Thiruvananthapuram.



CORRECTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR ASSISTANT PRISON OFFICERS

Kerala Prisons Department conduct basic training Courses, Refresher/ Reorientation Courses and various Workshops for Prison Officers at State Institute of Correctional Administrations (SICA). Government of Kerala have vide GO(Ms) No. 61/2021/Home dated 22/02/2021 have included a Certified Course of Center for Adult, Continuing Education and Extension, University of Kerala in Counseling Skills which is to be included in the basic training.

Training Modules for Nine Month's Basic Training for Assistant Prison Officers are based on the Model Prison Manual prepared by BPR&D consisting of indoor/ outdoor classes, Specialized Short Term Courses and Placement. But, the subject Psychology included in this Syllabus provides only an introduction to the subject which is felt inadequate to the present needs of Kerala Prisons Department. Prisons have evolved a lot and at present, the emphasis is on correction, reformation and rehabilitation. To realize this objective, providing Counselling training to Assistant Prison Officers are highly essential and in recognition of this need Government of Kerala have included Counselling Course in this Training Course.

For effective corrections and reformation it is imperative that mental health of prisoners are taken care of adequately. For this purpose, Government of Kerala have sanctioned posts of Clinical Psychologists and Counsellor vide GO(Ms) No. 54/2021/Home dated 18/02/2021 to provide psychological support, advice for prisoners. But, as prisoners are primarily handled by Assistant Prison Officers, providing Counselling Training to this category of Officers would be helpful for earlier identification of prisoners needing psychological support and also to take up individual cases with Clinical Psychologists / Counsellor. Moreover, Assistant Prison Officers can also assist Clinical Psychologists / Counsellor which would be highly effective in major Jails like Central Prisons and Open Prisons where large numbers of prisoners are being lodged. To realize this objective, Counselling Training has to be included in the Nine Month's Basic Training Courses of Assistant Prison Officers being held at SICA, Poojappura and extension centers at Thrissur and Kannur. For this purpose, we have prepared a syllabus in consultation with Department of Psychology, University College, Kazhakoottam and it is being imparted to the present training batches at SICA, Thiruvananthapuram and Extension Centres at Viyyur and Kannur.

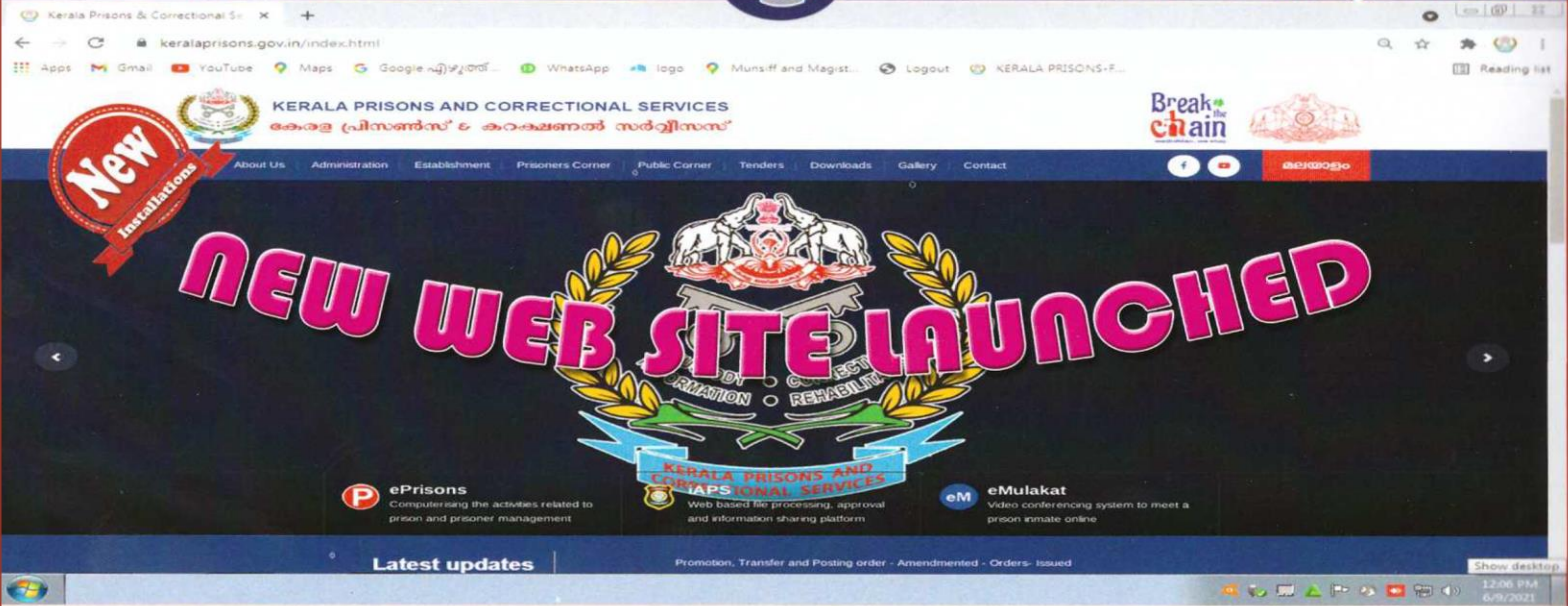


Baggage Scanners



Baggage Scanners installed in Central Prison, Viyyur

Baggage Scanners supplied by ECIL (Electronic Corporation of India Limited) were installed in 3 Central Prison & Correctional Homes, at Thiruvananthapuram, Viyyur and Kannur on March 2021 by utilizing an amount of Rs. 69 lakhs.

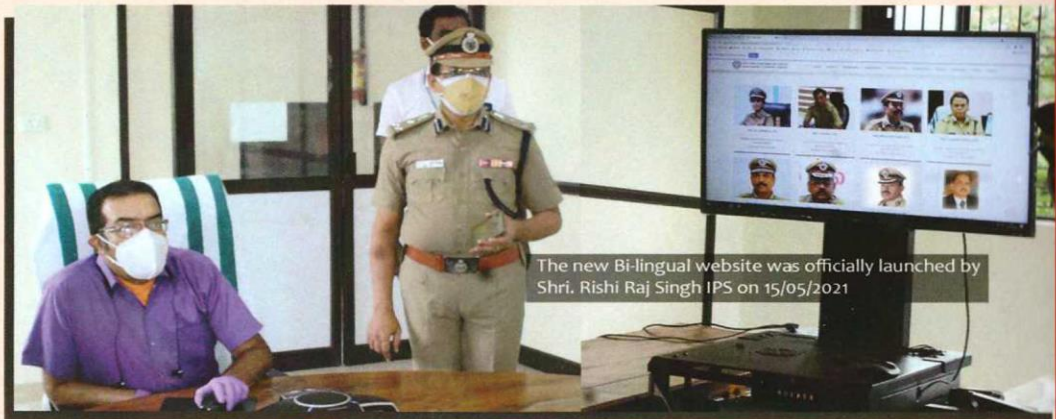


We had a website developed by National Informatic Centre (NIC), Kerala which was launched on 21st October 2009. As it was outdated we started working on a new website and it was launched on 15th May 2021 by the Director General of Prisons & Correctional Services Sri. Rishi Raj Sing IPS.

Technical Cell of Kerala Prison Department has developed a website containing all relevant informations of Jail Department which can be viewed both in English and Malayalam. Public can view this website and have access to all information regarding Jail Department. It is being updated daily by Technical Cell.

It has proven to be a relief for relatives of inmates who can easily comprehend the various assistance available for them. Moreover, public can also understand the Department

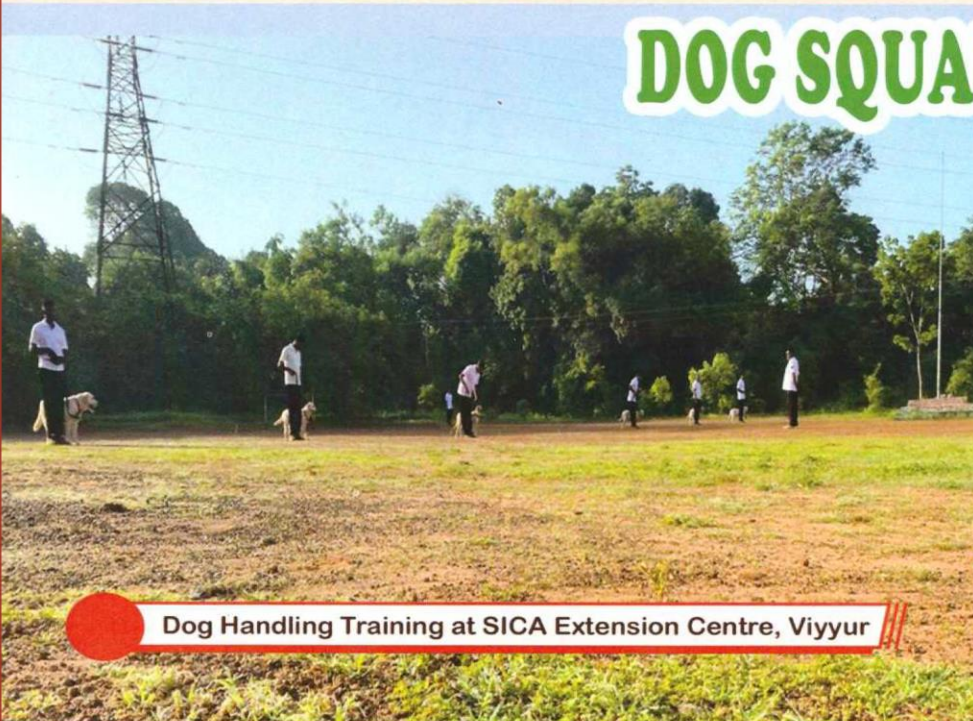
better and get to know the activities going on in Jails, which are beneficial to public, inmates and Government alike.



The new Bi-lingual website was officially launched by Shri. Rishi Raj Singh IPS on 15/05/2021

DG Prisons, Kerala Launching new web site

DOG SQUAD



Dog Handling Training at SICA Extension Centre, Viyyur

We are constantly looking at improving Jail security and as part of it, Dog Squad has been formed and attached with some of the major Jails. In order to expand its services to other Jails, steps were taken to procure 6 dogs of good breeds for use at High Security Jail Viyyur, Central Jail, Thavanur and Women's Prison, Thiruvananthapuram and handlers were appointed. We took a decision to impart training utilizing available infrastructure and services of our Personnel at SICA Extension Center, Viyyur under the full supervision of the Director, DIG (SZ) & Director, SICA. Syllabus and scheme required for training was collected from the training section of the Police Academy and implemented. Superintendent, High Security Prison, Viyyur was entrusted with responsibility to supervise Dogs Training Division at the SICA Training.

Miyawaki

way for a greener future

Miyawaki is a technic pioneered by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki that helps build dense native forests. It ensures plant growth is 10 times faster and the resulting plantation is 30 times denser than usual. It involves planting dozens of native species in the same area and becomes maintenance-free after the first three years.

There are six steps in Miyawaki method in afforestation viz;

1. Determination of the soil texture and quantity biomass (perforator, Water retainer, organic fertilizers, mulch, etc)
2. Selection of tree species for plantation.
3. Design the forest
4. Preparation of the area
5. Planting of trees
6. Maintenance of forest for the first 3 years

The minimum width of the project areas should be 3-4 metres. It can be developed in ½ cent land.

Government has decided to create urban groves on the model of Miyawaki forests in 2 to 5 cents available in various Government institutions under Haritha Kerala Mission. The purpose is to plant mixed species of trees so that green lungs can be created in such institutions where poor environmental conditions exists or to create better environment conditions as well as study sites for visitors, students and general public.

During October, 2019 the Department of Prisons instructed all the Superintendent of Jails where fallow lands are available to develop Miyawaki model forest in 2 – 5 cents of land and directed to name it as “Gandhi Smrithi Vanam” as part of observance of 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, father of our Nation.



Sri. D. Sathyaraj
Joint Superintendent
Central Prison & Correctional Home, Thiruvananthapuram
then Superintendent,
District Jail, Thiruvananthapuram

The Superintendent, District Jail, Thiruvananthapuram had taken up the pilot project to develop Miyawaki model forest in 20 cents of land available in front of District Jail in Poojappura Prison complex.

The land identified for the forest had been set aside for waste management for years together. On 2nd October, 2019 inmates and Staff started preparing the swampy land for planting trees. The District Jail Superintendent approached Kerala Bio-diversity Board (KSBB) and the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanical Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), Palode for saplings and technical support.

Mahatma Gandhi Memorial, a small garden, small pool and water fall have been created inside the designated Miyawaki forest.

The concept, design and construction etc. are executed exclusively by Staff and prisoners of District Jail. An open well was also dug adjacent to it. The forest is protected by fencing using iron wires and climbers.

1000 odd sapling of diverse trees, creepers, medicinal plants and other flora available in Kerala and 50 saplings of bamboo of 25 different varieties have been planted in the forest.

The Gandhi Smrithivanam (Miyawaki model forest) has been inaugurated by Sri. Rishi Raj Sing IPS, DGP & CS on World Environmental Day (05/06/2020).

The Gandhi Smrithi Vanam project is first of it's kind in the history of Kerala Prisons.



Starting stage of Miyawaki forest at District Jail, Thiruvananthapuram



Present Miyawaki forest at District Jail, Thiruvananthapuram



COVID-19 CLUSTERING AND SURVIVAL DISTRICT JAIL - ERNAKULAM



Dr. P. Vijayan
Superintendent,
District Jail, Ernakulam



Dr. Binu D. Shenoi
Medical Officer
District Jail, Ernakulam

The District Jail, Ernakulam was established in the year 2010. Spanning over an area of 6 acres, the Jail has an administrative block and 3 blocks of Prison cells, a major A block comprising of 9 cells and two minor blocks B and C having 4 and 5 cells respectively. The total inmate capacity is 96 prisoners (84 males and 12 female) the current strength being 147 prisoners (143 males and 4 females).

Kerala's epidemic curve had been on a declining trend in February – March and the graph began to rise again by the end of March 2021. By mid April when the case graph began registering 11 to 12k cases daily it was clear that clamping down covid protocols alone was not going to result in effective containment. There were also fear that the disease transmission in the State could be driven by the new virus variants in circulation in the country.

A similar stage was foreseen in jail and adherence to strict covid-19 protocols was advocated. All the staff and inmates were advised to wear face masks and use sanitizer frequently. Staff were also advised to wear face shield and gloves during their duty hours. Inmates were advised to prevent crowding during their daily life activities.

In spite of the afore mentioned precautions 8 inmates reported fever and generalised body aches on 17th April evening. They were immediately isolated to a common cell and symptomatic treatment was started. The very next day their Rapid Antigen Test was conducted which came out to be positive for COVID-19. Also two inmates who reported fever were tested in the afternoon and by 18th April 2021 evening there were 10 COVID-19 positive cases.

To tackle COVID - 19 situation following steps were taken at District Jail, Ernakulam.

1. All positive cases were isolated and symptomatic treatment was started.
2. Situation was informed to the District Surveillance Unit (DSU). A mass RTPCR for all the inmates, staff and their family members was planned on 19th April 2021.
3. Freedom food factory services were temporarily shut down till further notice.
4. Jail kitchen was shut down and alternate arrangements for diet made with the consent of Hon'ble Jail DGP.
5. All interviews were suspended till further notice.
6. Intake of fresh inmates was withheld till the cluster of cases subside.
7. Shuffling of inmates amongst cells was withheld.
8. Phone facility for inmates was initially withheld but later reinstated adhering to strict COVID protocols.
9. Layer duty system was advised for the staff without affecting the administration and security of the jail.

10. All activities in Jail were reduced to an essential minimum.

A mass RTPCR was conducted by the mobile unit of DSU on 19th April 2021.

There was 48 positive RTPCR out of 253 PCR and cluster was confirmed on 21st April 2021. It was practically not possible to shift all the positive cases to a First Line Treatment Centre. So the positive cases were managed in the District Jail itself as follows.

1. All positive cases detected on first PCR isolated to 2 large cells of A Block and 3 smaller cells of C Block.
2. Two inmates who were having Cardio vascular and gastro intestinal comorbidities were shifted to CFLTC North Paravoor.
3. Daily follow up of positive inmates by Jail Doctor where in their Oxygen saturation and temperature were recorded. Positive cases reporting symptoms were treated with oral medication.
4. All inmates and staff tested negative during first PCR were identified as high risk contacts and a second PCR was planned for them after one week.
5. Inmates and staff who developed symptoms after first PCR were subjected to Rapid Antigen Testing and if found positive were kept in isolation in Prison and their homes respectively.
6. Regular updates were made to the concerned Urban Primary Health Centre as well as the District administration and their advice was followed accordingly.

Current Situation in District Jail Ernakulam

Currently there are no active cases in Ernakulam District Jail. The Jail activities are slowly getting back to normal. The freedom food counters and its out sourcing activities have restarted and Jail kitchen has also started functioning. We have also started admitting fresh inmates from other Jails. However some restrictions are still implemented and strict COVID-19 protocols are maintained. The fresh inmates even if asymptomatic are kept in quarantine for 17 days before they are allowed to mingle with others. The interview has not yet started. The habits of using double face mask, face shield, gloves and frequent use of sanitizer and prevention of over crowding is continued.

Vaccination

All the inmates of District Jail has been registered for COVID-19 vaccination. As per Government of India guidelines the next dose of COVID-19 vaccines for positive cases is following 3 months of completion of their isolation. Accordingly we have vaccinated 15 of our inmates who were negative on both PCR tests.



Obituary



P.P. BABURAJ
Superintendent
Spl. Sub Jail, Ponkunnam
[23.05.1966 - 12.04.2020]



K.R. SURESHKUMAR
Deputy Superintendent
District Jail, TVPM.
[25.05.1966 - 13.11.2020]



M. SREENIVASAN
Asst. Superintendent Gr-II
District Jail, Hosdurg, Kasaragod
[09.03.1971 - 09.04.2021]



P. VISWAN
Asst. Superintendent Gr-II
Spl. Sub Jail, Kottarakkara
[28.05.1965 - 08.05.2021]



K.K. RAVEENDRAN
Deputy Prison Officer
Central Prison & CH, TVPM.
[23.04.1965 - 21.01.2021]



C. BALAN
Deputy Prison Officer
District Jail, Mananthavady
[30.05.1970 - 18.07.2020]



SHAJI. A
Deputy Prison Officer
Spl. Sub Jail, Thalassery
[10.05.1975 - 31.05.2020]

Obituary



Award winners of President's Correctional Service Medals on Prison Personnel on the occasion of Republic Day, 2021.

Distinguished Service



M.V.THOMAS
Superintendent (Rtd)
Spl. Sub Jail, Devikulam



J.SAJI KUMAR
Asst. Supdt. Gr-II
Spl. Sub Jail, Noyyattinkara



SAM THANKAYYAN
DIG (Central Zone)
Viyyur, Thrissur



T.K.JANARDHANAN NAMBIYAR
Superintendent
Spl. Sub Jail, Kannur



K.ANTONY
Asst. Superintendent Gr-II
Central Prison & Correctional Home, Tvpm.

Meritorious Service

Award winners of Chief Minister's Prison Medal 2020



V.JAYAKUMAR
Joint Superintendent
Open Prison, Cheemeni



S.SAJEEV
Joint Superintendent
Central Prison, Tvpm.



K.AJITH
Asst. Superintendent Gr-II
Central Prison, Kannur



P.T.SANTHOSH
Asst. Superintendent Gr-II
Central Prison, Tvpm.



V.V.UNNIKRISHNAN
Gate Keeper
District Jail, Tvpm.



S.R.RAJEEV
Deputy Prison Officer
District Jail, Tvpm.



M.U.DEVASI
Deputy Prison Officer (Rtd)



C.R.SHIJU
Deputy Prison Officer
Borstal School, Ernakulam



K.J.JOHNSON
Deputy Prison Officer
Spl. Sub Jail, Irinjakkuda



M.MUJEEB RAHMAN
Deputy Prison Officer
Spl. Sub Jail, Chittoor



S.SUDHEER
Deputy Prison Officer
Open Prison, Nettekutheri



C.ANESH
Deputy Prison Officer (NC)
Open Prison, Cheemeni

New Superintendents of Central Prison / Open Prisons



T.SUDHEER
Superintendent
Central Prison, Thavanur



ROMEO JOHN
Superintendent
Central Prison, Kannur



R.SAJAN
Superintendent
Open Prison, Cheemeni

Freedom fuel filling stations



Poojappura, Tvpm



Viyyur, Thrissur



Pallikkunnu, Kannur



Cheemeni, Kasaragod

We ensure good quality and correct quantity of fuel to public.



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