

Plight of prisons and inmates



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The pathetic plights of the prisons came up for a hot discussion at a [workshop](#) on [Legal](#) Aid and Prison Reforms, held at the PG Gauhati University Department of Law, recently.

Justice A K Goswami of the Gauhati High Court stressed the need to uplift pathetic Prison conditions and provide for quality legal representation to prisoners in need of legal aid, to ensure that both the parties stand at par. According to Justice Goswami, free legal aid should be conceived as a tool of empowerment of the downtrodden.

Earlier, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan stated that it was not merely aid but true service that is needed to be meted out to the needy. In this context Justice Bhuyan mentioned about the [state](#) administration being oblivious of the issues plaguing the jails in the [state](#) and of the lack of farsightedness in prison administration.

Inaugurating the [workshop](#), Dr Mridul [Hazarika](#), Vice Chancellor of Gauhati University spoke about the humane and social justice aspect of prison and [criminal](#) justice system and the need for collaboration with civil society.

[Prof](#) Subhram [Rajkhowa](#) reflected upon the international developments as well as analysing the provisions of the Model Prison Manual, Mr Gautam Baruah, Member Secretary, State [Legal](#) Services , highlighted on the role and steps taken by Assam State [Legal](#) services Authority to address the relevant issues and providing statistics pertaining to the [state](#) of affairs in Assam.

Madhurima Dhanuka from the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative focussed on prison oversight and problems faced by inmates in custody while Mr D Saikia , Superintendent Golaghat Jail mentioned of the various initiatives undertaken by authorities with a focus on measures on rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners. The [workshop](#) concluded with a valedictory address by Dr S K Nath, Registrar, Gauhati University.

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