



ABSTRACT

Home Department – Prisons and Correctional Services – Announcement for the year 2023-2024 – Setup Telephone Booth with voice and video call facility with the assistance of Public Sector Undertaking/Organisations for increasing the frequency of calls and duration (audio) for the prisoners as once in 3 days 10 times in a month and 12 minutes per call - In principle approval – Accorded.

HOME (PRISON-III) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Ms)No.570

Dated:06.11.2023

சோபகிருது, ஐப்பசிமாதம் 20.
திருவள்ளூர் ஆண்டு 2054,

Read:

1. G.O.(Ms)No.524,Home (Pri.III) Department, dated 16.09.2011.
2. G.O.(Ms)No.775, Home (Pri.III) Department, dated 27.10.2015.
3. G.O.(Ms)No.2124, Home (Pri.III) Department, dated 26.10.2018.
4. G.O.(Ms)No.656, Home (Pri.III) Department, dated 18.11.2019.
5. From the Director General of Police/Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services, Chennai, letter No.39537/PW1/ 2015, dated 25.04.2023.
6. From the Director General of Police/Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services, Chennai, letter No.39537/PW1/ 2015, dated 09.10.2023.

ORDER:

While moving the Demand Note No.24 Prisons and Correctional Services for the year 2023-2024 the Hon'ble Minister for Law, among others has made the following announcements:-

“சிறைவாசிகளின் மன அழுத்தத்தை குறைக்கவும் அவர்கள் தவறுகளை உணர்ந்து மேலும் குற்றங்களில் ஈடுபடுவதை தடுத்திடும் பொருட்டும், சிறைவாசிகள் தமது குடும்ப உறுப்பினர்கள், நண்பர்கள், வழக்குரைஞர்கள் ஆகியோரிடம் தொலைபேசி மூலம் தொடர்பு கொள்ள தற்போது வழங்கப்பட்டு வரும் தொலைபேசி வசதிக்கான (ஆடியோ) கால அளவை 3 நாட்களுக்கு ஒரு முறை மாதத்திற்கு 10 முறை ஒரு அழைப்பிற்கு 12 நிமிடங்கள் என உயர்த்தி வழங்குவதோடு, காணொளி (வீடியோ) தொலைபேசி வசதியும் ஏற்படுத்தப்படும். ”

2. In the Government Order first read above, Government have accorded sanction towards the purchase and installation of 54 numbers of Telephone Booths with accessories to all Central Prisons, Borstal School, Pudukottai, Special Prisons for Women, Puzhal, Trichy and Vellore at a cost of Rs.1.58 lakhs for provision of Telephone facilities to the prisoners in prisons. In the said Government Order certain guidelines have been prescribed to allow the prisoner to have this telephone facility. As per guidelines prescribed in the said order, prisoners are allowed to use telephones with a maximum call time of 30 minutes per month with a call duration of 10 minutes once in 10 days (one call) maximum 3 calls including any one Sunday.

3. Subsequently, in Government Order second read above, necessary amendment have been issued increasing a maximum call time of 45 minutes per month for maximum of 5 calls. Further, in Government Order third read above, amendment was issued permitting maximum call time of 45 minutes per month with a call duration 9 minutes once in 6 days one call, maximum 5 calls including any two Sundays.

4. In Government Order fourth read above, orders were issued to increase the call duration to 7 minutes for twice a week including four Sundays and to fix maximum call duration per week as 14 minutes for using the telephone facilities provided to the prisoners.

5. In pursuance of the announcement made by the Hon'ble Minister (Law) in para one above, the Director General of Police/Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services, Chennai in his letter third read above, has sent a proposal stating that at present, the prisoners are permitted to make audio calls for 7 minutes twice a week including four Sundays and maximum call duration per week fixed as 14 minutes as per Government Order fourth read above. The prisoners of all prisons are frequently requesting to extend the number of calls and time duration of the calls and also requested to provide video calling facility to them, as permitted to them during Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, it is necessary to modify the existing call time as once in 3 days, 10 times in a month and maximum duration of per call is 12 minutes.

6. The Director General of Police/Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services has also stated that during Covid-19 pandemic, various measures are taken to curtail the spread of virus. Among one, prisoners' interview has been suspended and in lieu of prisoners' interview, in addition to the regular telephone facility provided to them, prisoners were also allowed to contact their family through video calls with the help of 58 android mobile phones, purchased by the Department of Prisons and Correctional Services for this purpose. Considering the normalcy restored in the State, video calling facility was stopped and the prisoners' interview has been resumed with effect from 14.01.2021

subject to certain precautionary measures. However, the prisoners of all jails are frequently requesting to introduce the video calling facility, as provided to them during Covid.19 pandemic. Providing a video calling facility to prisoners may maintain meaningful connections with their family members, which can have a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Video calling may also improve prison security by reducing the need for in- person visits, which can be a significant source of contraband articles getting into prisons and therefore requested the Government to increase number of calls from 8 to 10 per month (once in 3 days) and the maximum call time from 56 minutes to 120 minutes (12 minutes per call duration) per month provided to the prisoners to whom already telephone facility has been provided in all Central Prisons, Special Prisons for Women and Borstal School Pudukottai and also proposed to introduce the video calling facility to prisoners stated that the expenditure for the calls made by the prisoners is deducted from the prisoners' cash property of the prisoner concerned and hence, there will be no financial expenditure to the Government in implementing the above announcement.

7. The Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services in his letter sixth read above, has proposed to implement the audio/Video calls scheme through a reputed Public Sector Organisation, such as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel, Etc at zero cost investment by the Government as infrastructure facility will be provided by them. He has also stated that no agreement with any Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) is made, as discussions/deliberations are underway with Public Sector Undertaking regarding the modalities of setting up of Telephone booths in prisons. Further, Public Sector Undertakings (PSU) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) RailTel and KELTRON have presented Power Point Presentations about their products on 27.09.2023.

8. The Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services has therefore requested the Government to agree with the proposal in principle to set up Telephone Booth facility with voice and video call inside the prison with the assistance of Public Sector Undertaking / Organizations, and to give permission accordingly. On approval of the same by the Government necessary agreement will be entered into with the Public Sector Undertaking and also requested to the Government to increase voice call duration and to introduce video call facility as announced by the Hon'ble Minister (Law) in the Assembly on 11.04.2023.

9. The Government after careful examination of the proposal of the Director General of Police/Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services, Chennai, have decided to accept it in principle. Accordingly, permission is accorded to set up Telephone Booth facility with voice and video call inside the prison with the assistance of Public Sector Undertaking / Organizations and also to increase number of calls from 8 to 10 per month once in 3 days and the maximum call time from 56 minutes to 120 minutes (12 minutes per call duration) per month provided to the prisoners to whom already telephone facility has been provided in all Central Prisons, Special Prisons for Women and Borstal School Pudukottai.

10. This order issues with the concurrence of the Finance Department vide its U.O.No.2846/Home-II/2023, dated: 20.05.2023.

(BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR)

**P. AMUDHA
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT**

To

The Director General of Police/ Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services, Chennai-8.

All Deputy Inspector General of Prisons (Range).

The Superintendent of Prison of all Central Prisons, Special Prisons for Women and Borstal School, Pudukottai.

The Accountant General (Audit), Chennai-18.

The Accountant General, Chennai-18.

The Pay and Accounts Officer (East), Chennai -8.


Copy to:-

The Finance (Home-II/BGI/BG.II/W&M-1) Department, Chennai-9

The Personal Assistant, Hon'ble Minister (Law), Chennai-9

Stock file /Spare Copy.

//FORWARDED BY ORDER//


6/11/2023
SECTION OFFICER
6.11.2023