

**WEST BENGAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

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Ref. No. 1075/WBHRC/COM/1225/15-16

Date: 02.03.17

Recommendation No 59/16-17/WBHRC/COM/1225/15-16

From: Shri Suresh Chandra Hira WBCS(Exe),  
Joint Secretary

To: The Secretary  
Social Welfare Department  
Government of West Bengal  
**BIKASH BHABAN**  
Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700091

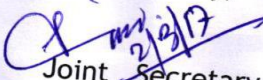
Sir,

I am directed to send herewith an authenticated copy of the enquiry report of the Superintendent of Police, WBHRC alongwith a copy of observation dated 14.02.2017 in connection with missing of two girls from **Sukanya Home** wherein recommendations of the enquiry officer have been accepted and considered as recommendations of the West Bengal Human Rights Commission for taking necessary action. The recommendations are self-explanatory.

Action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government on the recommendations may please be intimated to the Commission as early as possible.

Enclosures: As stated above.

Yours faithfully,

  
Joint Secretary

The file originated on the basis of report sent by the Supdt., Sukanya Home, Salt Lake intimating missing of two inmates, namely, Neha Chhetri and Manisha Tamang from Sukanya Home on 16-09-2015 and 22-09-2015 respectively. Reports were called for from C.P., Bidhannagar Commissionerate. These two inmates were admitted in the Home on the orders of C.W.C. After receipt of the report of C.P., Bidhannagar, the Commission further discussed the matter on 25-10-2016 in which a decision was taken to call for a status report in connection with Electronic Complex P.S. Case No.156 dt.27.11.15 u/s 363 regarding escape of the two inmates. Also A.D.G., Investigation Wing was directed to conduct an enquiry regarding circumstances of escape and also to conduct security of audit of the security system of the Home and fix up responsibility of staff for the escape.

The Supdt. of Police, W.B.S.H.R.C. has since submitted his report in which he has enquired the aspect of negligence of two security staff of Sahara Security Service who were found responsible for negligence leading to the escape of the two inmates. The names of the two staff are Samir Mitra and Sanatan Mali, both contractual staff of Sahara Security agency appointed by District Magistrate, North 24 Parganas. The S.P., WBHRC has further fixed up responsibility on one Rekha Roy, a sweeper of Sukanya Home working on contractual basis who is also working as after caregiver. She fell asleep during the escape period of the two inmates. The Superintendent of Sukanya Home should not have deputed a sweeper as an after caregiver and she should have been more watchful while distributing the duties.

In the second part of the report a security audit has been conducted suggesting certain measures for improving the security of the Home to prevent such incidents in future. The S.P. has given 19 points suggestion for such improvement which is worth considering. I am of the opinion that recommendations for improving security as suggested by S.P., HRC be sent to Principal Secretary, Women and Child Development Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal which may lead to some improvement. Regarding negligence there is no point since personnel involved are too junior and of no consequence.

May please see for views.

Sd/-  
( N. Mukherjee )  
Member  
30.1.17

Sd/-

(M.S. Dwivedy )  
Member  
30.1.17

The negligent employees should be proceeded against for the sake of discipline.

Authenticated

Sd/-

( Justice Girish Chandara Gupta )  
Chairman  
14.2.17



Joint Secretary  
Govt. of West Bengal  
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**Cover Page**

**Enquiry Report on File No. 1225/WBHRC/COM/15-16**

**Security Audit at Sukanya Home, Salt Lake**

**Authenticated**

*(Signature)*  
21/3/17  
**Joint Secretary  
Govt. of West Bengal  
W.B. Human Rights Commission**



A visit to Sukanya Home, Salt Lake was done on 15.12.16 under leadership of SP, WBHRC. The team consisted of Dy.SP, WBHRC, myself and constable Mayanka Sikder of WBHRC. Videophotography was done at all corners of the Home premises.

Prior to visit, during enquiry into File No. 1225/WBHRC/COM/15-16 a set of questions were sent to Superintendent, Sukanya Home on 27.10.16 (Annexure P-28 to 31) which included queries related to security and the conditions of the home. Superintendent, Sukanya Home sent a categorical reply on 04.11.16 vide Memo No. 414/Suk dt. 03.11.16 (Annexure P-72 to 121).

Also, SP, WBHRC sent a questionnaire to Superintendent, Sukanya Home on 25.11.16 through e-mail consisting of a checklist (Annexure P-54 to 59) for his general visit to Sukanya Home. The questionnaire also consisted some portions of security and building condition of the said home.

A reply of the same was submitted with attachments by Superintendent, Sukanya Home on 02.12.16 (Annexure P-237 to 277).

The reports defined that Sukanya Home, Salt Lake is having

- Land area of 4050 Sq. metres, built up area- 935 Sq. metres, playground 810 Sq. metres. There are two G+3 storied buildings (one residential and another for schooling purpose).
  - Residential building consists ground floor one dormitory for dining, 1<sup>st</sup> floor-04 rooms, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor-01 dormitory, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor-02 rooms.
  - School building consists of ground floor-one dormitory for recreational purpose, 1<sup>st</sup> floor-04 rooms used for medical, school and vocational purpose, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor- 04 rooms each under construction to be used for school, vocational training, counseling etc (Annexure P-260).
  - Staff quarter is a separate building.
- Boundary wall- 6ft. concrete wall with 2ft. iron fencing.
  - Proposals to PWD, Social Sector, North 24 Pgs. have been sent to raise the boundary wall upto 20ft. with round shaped barbed wire fencing (Annexure P-271). There are two iron gates and one boundary wall is having concertina fencing.
- CCTV is not working for a long time as similar conditions prevailed during escape of VGs on 27.11.15.
  - An estimate proposal by PWD, Bidhannagar Division (Electrical) has been sent to the respective department for repair and installation (Annexure P-270).

There are 11 security guards working round the clock at present (From "Sahara Security Service"- a Pvt. Company u/o of District Authority).

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- A letter to Director of Child Rights and Trafficking for arrangement of posting of police personnel in the Home Campus has been submitted by home authority (Annexure P-269).
- There are 103 inmates and 07 Govt. Staffs to help and aid the inmates.
- There are sodium vapor lamps in the premises but no hooter in case of emergency.
- All visitor are subjected to signature with record timing of in an out in the register maintained by security guards.
- Number of escape of inmates in 2012-Nil, 2013-1, 2014-Nil, 2015-2, 2016-1 from the home.
- Number of escape of inmate in 2012-4, 2013-3, 2014-1, 2015-1, 2016-Nil from the hospital.
- The home deals with girl children up to the age of 18 years and they are sheltered u/o of CWC situated at the said home premises.
- There is no report of natural or unnatural death in last 05 years.
- There is no generator facility.
- 02 toilets in each floor are there for the inmates.
- There is no emergency evacuation plan except fire extinguishers.
- One medial officer (Contractual) visits three days per week. One medical team visit the home fortnightly from Bidhannagar S.D. Hospital. First Aid box is present. Special diet is given under advice of doctor.
- 3 sets of purifier are present in 3 floors for enabling good quality water to inmates.
- NGOs provide counsellors for 6 days a week.
- Vocational training by NGOs on handicrafts, jewellery making, dance therapy, beautician courses etc. are provided to inmates.
- Recreational facilities like TVs, Indoor Games, Cultural Programmes, Play Ground facility are provided/organized for the inmates.
- Primary educations are provided by Govt. Staffs to the inmates (non formal school by NGO under ICDS project is also available).
- Rehabilitation like adoption, sponsorship is enabled for children if not repatriated to biological family under order of CWC. Placements through jobs are also enabled after training.

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**Visit on 15.12.16**

**A. Condition of Home:**

During visit on 15.12.16 at Sukayna Home, the condition of the home on the backside (eastern side) was observed. The pipelines with dense iron depositions have damaged building to a greater extent.

Again some of the windows of dormitories in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (Residential Building) were having broken window flanks or broken window glass panes by which the cold air gush and infect the inmates.

The building construction was very poor and the corridors of 1<sup>st</sup> floor and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (Residential Building) were having big size cracks on the wall.

Also it was observed that the iron grills and bars fixed on the long corridors and the living rooms (residential building), Kitchen, bathroom etc were in a rusted condition. The iron grills were affixed in the concrete walls which have more sand material in proportion to the cementing material thereby enabling the inmates to dislodge those from the wall and escape frequently. No double grilling or netting was seen during visit.

The exhaust openings of kitchen, bathrooms are also in a vulnerable condition and are needed to be reshaped and renovated.

**B. Humanitarian aspect:**

- During visit, had a talk with the inmates like Bilkis Begum (a Bangladeshi), Rubina Khatoon (Bangladeshi), Muskan Khatoon, Rani Khatoon, Durga Halder, Sahara Monda, Jannat and Naj, Babita Mondal and other who expressed different problems of returning to their native village, to go to their husband, higher education etc. Superintendent, Sukanya Home assured us necessary possible steps with permission of CWC to repatriate them or help them to be settled in future. SP, WBHRC asked Super, Sukanya Home to contact Minority Commission for higher education of Jannat and Naj.
- Also talked to Sharmistha Manna, Govt. Staff and teacher of Sukanya Home, who teaches dance therapy to the students. She said the age group of 6-14 years are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and the rehabilitation of the adult girls are made through (All Bengal Women's Union) ABWU, Eliot Road, Kolkata through vocational training and placement.
- Again talked to Babuni Palit and Ganga Debnath, both Govt. Staff of Sukanya who expressed their concern over southern side wall from which some miscreants of 215A Bus stand disturbs the inmates.

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- Superintendent, Sukanya Home assured us to heighten the wall to 20ft. with concertina fencing to isolate the inmates from miscreants. She also reported the same to local PS.
- There was a complaint regarding iron deposition of water supply. Super, Sukanya was asked to take care of such matter to avoid health hazards.
- Televisions in each floor are available for the inmates.
- A common recreational room in the ground floor was also seen.
- The dining space consisted 60 seats.
- The kitchen was also observed to be generally clean.

**C. Security Aspect:**

- During visit, the security guards Samir Chowdhury (Southern Side), Samir Mitra (Main Gate) and Subroto De (Eastern Side) of the said home were seen on duty.
- It has been observed that three permanent watch shades have been constructed for security guards on duty (Southern, Western and Eastern).
- It was observed by verifying the register of the main gate that only visitor's movement and identity are registered and not the insiders. ?
- North-Eastern corner is surrounded by trees which could be used by the escapees. These are need to be trimmed.
- The boundary walls in all direction are very low in height only 6ft and added 2ft iron fencing which should be increased. Superintendent has already taken initiative of that.
- The iron gates are only 5<sup>th</sup> in height which are needed to be augmented for at least 15 to 20 ft. along with concertina fencing.
- Spare ladders (iron and aluminum made) were seen outside the premises kept at the eastern side boundary which also could help escapes to flee away.
- The Eastern side (backside) is bounded by Red Cross premises. There is a broken vehicle and rubbish accumulation in the eastern side which aids the inmates to plan for escape through eastern side. Moreover, this is a health hazard due to dirt and rubbish accumulation.
- In the south eastern corner, a huge stack of rubbish was found which should be cleared immediately in order to reduce the possibility of escape from southern side and health hazards. Superintendent, Sukanya Home assured that they have informed Nabadiganta Unnayan Bhaban several times but to no effect. She was asked to make serious steps regarding this.

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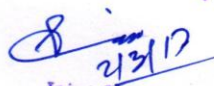
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- Though solar lamps were seen at the proximity of gates and boundary walls, CCTV at the main gate was seen damaged and no CCTV was working. Superintendent was again cautioned to take personal initiative for installation of night vision CCTVs with round the clock monitoring.
- The inner walls of the building and the grill/iron bars on the corridor and window were attached to poor concrete construction where rusted iron bars were fixed with sandy proportioned cementing material of the wall which could be dislodged easily by the escapees as it happened earlier. Similar conditions were observed in the kitchen and bathroom windows. Exhaust opening constructions were also found in poor condition. Superintendent was cautioned and asked to renovate and made double grilling arrangement along with netting facilities so as to prevent such escapes.
- 07 govt. staff for 103 inmates is insufficient for their care and watch / ward. Superintendent, Sukanya Home said that 22 temporary staff have been allotted recently by the department which will be inducted soon (Annexure P-265).
- Superintendent was also asked not to depute casual workers for inmates as some inmates expressed annoyance for their behavior and some of their negligence helped inmates escape easily in earlier occasions.
- Fire extinguishers were seen in every building, but no evacuation plan was seen.
- No police guards were seen to be deployed. Super, Sukanya has written letter to the concerned department (Annexure P-269). Persuasions are needed to make it a reality.
- There is one Asstt. Superintendent, Putul Acharya in the said home who also resides there. Super was asked to make a consolidated watch and daily monitoring /vigil and report system through Asst. Super, so that the security guards do not sleep or be casual at night in their duties. Augmentations of strength of security guards are also needed. Home staffs are also to be subjected to monitoring and daily report.
- Both the front gates are obstructed by vehicle ruins (heaped) in between for which the security guards expressed their annoyance. They failed to have clear visibility of other gates. Superintendent was asked to take quick action to remove such remnants for security purpose.

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**Suggestions to ameliorate the security condition of Sukanya Home**

1. Repairing and renovation of corridor grills and window bars/grills are to be done with additional iron grills to be constructed to the existing ones. Extra netting arrangements by riveting may decrease the chance of dislodging by the inmates. The broken window panes and flanks are to be reinstalled.
2. Persuasions with the PWD officials are needed so as to facilitate quick work of heightening the boundary walls of the home in all directions (20 ft. approx) along with additional concertina fencing.
3. North-eastern trees are to be pruned/trimmed so that inmates do not get the chance of escape easily by climbing such trees.
4. Spare ladders (used for maintenance) are to be shunned lying unattended so that inmates do not use it for escape purpose.
5. Vehicle ruins in the eastern side and western side are to be removed quickly in order to avoid scaling of inmates for escape, prevent obstruction for the security guards and also to prevent health hazards.
6. The rubbish accumulation in the south eastern corner of the boundary and the eastern side are to be removed immediately to prevent escape of inmates through heaped rubbish. It will also prevent health hazards.
7. CCTV coverage is to be corrected and re-installed in augmented numbers in the strategic positions of corridors and as well the outside boundary walls along with night vision facility to maintain 24 hrs. monitoring /vigil over inmates, security guards, staff, outsider and unnatural movements etc. Monitoring for 24 hrs are to be facilitated.
8. More illumination other than solar vapor lamps are to be installed during night to have a clear vision.
9. Training and sensitization of home staff as well as security guards should be done so that they do not become casual in their duties.
10. The iron gates (two) in front side are to be heightened with concertina fencing (15 to 20ft approx) to reduce possibility of escape.
11. Psychiatrist, whole time doctors, ambulances, counselors are to be inducted for all the inmates. Special care should be taken for hostile and vulnerable children.
12. Visitor's and insiders/staff movement should be registered time to time round the clock from security point of view.

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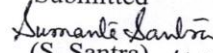


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13. No. of staff and security guards should be augmented to enable proper management for inmates.
14. A consolidated evacuation plan with training by civil defence should be enabled for staff and security guards on regular basis.
15. Police guard posting should be adopted quickly to enable fixing responsibility of security.
16. Daily report monitoring by Superintendent and Asst. Superintendent is solicited on the movements, duty, events, behavior etc of staff and security of Sukanya Home.
17. Casual workers should not be deputed as caregivers, helpers etc for inmates as no responsibility can be fixed on them.
18. Iron deposition on water tanks can be avoided by constructing special deep boring tube wells and installing manual water purifiers at every room in addition to the existing arrangements for preventing health hazards of inmates.
19. Isolation rooms/wards should be created for patients infected with disease.

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Submitted  
  
(S. Santra) 16.12.16.  
Inspector of Police,  
WBHRC