



NALSAR UNIVERSITY
OF LAW, HYDERABAD

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN
NORWAY



Project Expun

International Colloquium on Rethinking Incarceration: Challenges in Sentencing and Administration of Imprisonment

21st February, 2026

VENUE: SAAR Law Centre, NALSAR university of Law, Hyderabad

HYBRID MODE

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

INAGURAL SESSION

09:00 am -10:00 am

Registration

10:00 am -10:10 am

Welcome & Context Setting by Prof. Dr. K.V.K. Santhy, Co - Principal Invesitago, Project Expun & Programme Convenor

10:10 am - 10:20 am

Welcome Address by Prof. Srikrishna Deva Rao, Vice Chancellor, NALSAR

SESSION I:
**THE SENTENCING DILEMMA – DISCRETION, DISPARITY, AND THE
SEARCH FOR COHERENCE IN IMPRISONMENT**

This session will focus specifically on the judicial decision to impose imprisonment and the determination of its duration. It will examine the enduring tension between judicial discretion in awarding custodial sentences and the need for principled consistency in depriving individuals of liberty. In India, concerns regarding wide disparities in terms of imprisonment, the absence of structured sentencing frameworks, reversals in serious criminal cases, and debates on the possible use of artificial intelligence in sentencing have sharpened questions about fairness in custodial punishment. In Norway, dilemmas relating to preventive detention, drug-related imprisonment, and the treatment of offenders with mental health vulnerabilities raise equally complex issues regarding the justification and extension of incarceration.

The session will engage participants around the following themes:

- Balancing Judicial Intuition and Experience with the Risk of Arbitrariness in Sentencing
- Discretion vis-à-vis Disparity in relation to Sentencing Variability
- Ensuring Consistency while Weighing Mitigating and Aggravating Circumstances
- Balancing Public Expectations with Constitutional Proportionality in Sentencing

MODERATOR: PROF. DR. V. KESAVA RAO

10.20 am -10.40 am

Hon'ble Justice N Anand Venkatesh
Judge, The High Court of Judicature at Madras

10.40 am - 11.00 am

Hon'ble Justice Gunnu Anupama Chakravarthy
Judge, The High Court of Judicature at Patna

11.00 am - 11.20 am

Hon'ble Justice Hilde Indreberg Judge (Retd.),
Supreme Court of Norway

11.20 am -11.30 am

Prof. Henriette Nilsson Tøssebro University of
Bergen, Norway

11.30 AM - 11.45 AM - TEA BREAK

SESSION II:
**OUTCOME BASED SENTENCING: RETHINKING THE IMPACT OF
IMPRISONMENT**

This session will examine the emerging need to evaluate imprisonment in India through an outcome-oriented lens. With overcrowding exceeding capacity in many states, a high proportion of undertrial prisoners, and limited rehabilitative infrastructure, custodial sentencing often produces consequences that extend far beyond the intended punishment. The discussion will interrogate whether Indian courts, while determining imprisonment, should consider the measurable social and institutional outcomes of incarceration, including recidivism, reintegration challenges, mental health deterioration, and the systemic strain on prisons.

The session will engage participants around the following themes:

- Consideration of Prison Overcrowding and Institutional Capacity in Custodial Sentencing
- Effectiveness of Short-Term Imprisonment in Achieving Deterrent and Reformative Goals
- Incorporating Empirical Data on Recidivism and Rehabilitation into Sentencing Policy
- Impact of Systemic Prison Deficiencies on the Choice between Custodial and Non-Custodial Sanctions
- Evaluating the Criminogenic Effects of Incarceration

MODERATOR: MR. CHARAN TEJ

11:45 am -12:15 pm

Hon'ble Justice Hari Haranadha Sarma
Judge, High Court of Andhra Pradesh

12:15 pm -12.30 pm

Shri. G. Venkata Krishnaiah Metropolitan Sessions
Judge (Retd.), Hyderabad

12:30 pm - 12:50 pm

Prof. Vijay Raghavan Professor Tata Institute for
Social Science, Mumbai Campus

12:50 pm - 01:00 pm

Mr. Bhavya Adhana
Advocate, Delhi High Court

1.00 PM - 2.00 PM - LUNCH

SESSION III:
CUSTODIANS OF CUSTODY: STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES AND
OPERATIONAL REALITIES

This session will examine the widening gap between statutory mandates governing prisons and the ground realities of prison administration in India. Chronic overcrowding, significant staff vacancies, infrastructural deficiencies, and the disproportionately high number of undertrial prisoners continue to strain correctional institutions. While policy narratives frequently highlight reformative programmes and modernisation initiatives, this session seeks to provide a critical reality check on these perceived achievements by assessing whether prison administration is genuinely equipped to meet the outcomes intended by incarceration.

The discussion will interrogate whether the existing custodial infrastructure meaningfully supports the objectives articulated by courts at the time of sentencing, or whether structural limitations dilute, distort, or defeat those intended outcomes.

The session will engage participants around the following themes:

- Evaluating reform initiatives: perception versus measurable correctional outcomes
- Infrastructure limitations and their influence on the effectiveness of custodial sentences
- The role of prison officers in translating judicial sentencing goals into operational reality

MODERATOR: DR. M.R.AHMED

02.00 pm -02:10 pm

Dr. M.R.Ahmed
IG of Prisons(Retd), Unified Andhra Pradesh

02:10 pm -02.30 pm

Dr. Soumya Mishra
Director General (Prisons and Corrections
Services), Telengana

02:30 pm - 02:50 pm

Shri. Anjani Kumar
DGP (Retd.), Telengana

02:50 pm - 03:10 pm

Mr. Per Sigurd Våge
Prison Governor and Regional Director,
Correctional Services Region West , Norway

03.10 pm -03.30 pm

Prof. Dr. Rita Haverkamp
Principal committee member Professor of Crime
Prevention and Risk Management, University of
Tübingen, Germany

3.30 PM - 3.45 PM - TEA BREAK

SESSION IV:
**CONFINEMENT AND CONSCIOUSNESS: EFFECTIVENESS AND LIMITS OF
COGNITIVE INTERVENTIONS IN PRISONS**

This session examines the role of cognitive interventions in meaningfully advancing the reformative goals of imprisonment within the correctional system. Programmes such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), de-addiction counselling, anger management, educational initiatives, and restorative practices are increasingly used to promote attitudinal change and reduce recidivism. They are premised on the belief that criminal behaviour can be reshaped through structured psychological engagement. However, their effectiveness must be assessed against structural realities such as overcrowding, staff shortages, limited professional expertise, and the absence of systematic outcome measurement. The session will critically evaluate whether cognitive interventions produce measurable behavioural transformation or merely create a perception of reform within a constrained custodial environment.

The session will engage participants around the following themes:

- The reformative objective of imprisonment and cognitive approaches
- Measuring effectiveness: recidivism and reintegration outcomes
- Cognitive dissonance and behavioural change in prisons
- Structural and institutional limits of reformative programming
- Sustainability of cognitive transformation post-release

SESSION IV:
CONFINEMENT AND CONSCIOUSNESS: EFFECTIVENESS AND LIMITS OF
COGNITIVE INTERVENTIONS IN PRISONS

MODERATOR - DR. HEMANGINI CHANDRA SHARMA

03:45pm - 04.05pm

Ms. Catherine Amelia Appleton
Senior Research Fellow, Centre of Research and
Education in Security, Prisons and Forensic
Psychiatry at St Olavs University Hospital,
Norway
&
Mr. Ayan Gupta DPhil Student, University of
Oxford

04:05 pm -04.30 pm

Dr. Beena Chintalapuri
Professor of Psychology (Retd.), Osmania
University. Director, Unnati program
&
Mr. Vaibhav Rajput

04:25 pm - 04:45 pm

Dr. V. George Reddy
Neuropsychiatrist, Hyderabad

04:45PM - 05.30.PM - INTERACTION WITH PRISON OFFICERS

MODERATOR - DR. GADE MALLIKARJUN

PANELIST

Dr. Soumya Mishra
Director General (Prisons and Corrections Services),
Telengana
Dr. M.R.Ahmed
IG of Prisons(Retd), Unified Andhra Pradesh
Shri. Anjani Kumar
DGP (Retd.), Telengana