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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
6143	13.04.2021	13.04.2021	Delhi	Hindustan Times English Newspaper 13th April, 2021/Page No. 03
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Tihar on high alert after 52 inmates test positive for Covid-19, Delhi</b>			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- West Delhi, SSU-Delhi			

Delhi's Tihar jail is on high alert after at least 52 inmates have tested Covid-19 positive, of which 35 are admitted in three different hospitals, senior prison officers said, adding that seven jail officers, including the prison doctor, have also contracted the infection.

Until April 6, the jail had only 19 Covid positive prisoners and no jail staff was affected by the viral disease. Prison officers said the infection has spread swiftly as the administration was trying to create isolation spaces inside the country's most populated prison complex. Currently, the jail has over 20,000 inmates, double its capacity of a little over 10,000.

A prison officer who did not wish to be named said, "Three prisoners were critical and had to be admitted to Lok Nayak Hospital; 32 prisoners have been admitted as a precautionary measure at two different hospitals; 17 others are in self isolation in the jail. The seven jail employees are isolating outside."

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**Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.**

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,  
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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A second officer who also spoke on the condition of anonymity said with the jail packed to double its capacity, it was getting difficult to find spaces for prisoners to isolate and ensure social distancing. "Today, more than 20,000 prisoners are in Tihar. The sanctioned capacity is only 10,026. In the last one week, more than 40 cases have been reported. We are finding ways to ensure social distancing, but it is a challenge. We fear the infection will spread more quickly than last time."

Tihar's director general Sandeep Goel said most of the prisoners were hospitalised as a precautionary measure. "We are creating isolation spaces within the prison. The bi-weekly visit by families from outside has been suspended. Prisoners are being produced in courts only virtually," he said.

Experts such as former Tihar law officer Sunil Gupta and advocate Ajay Verma last week suggested that the administration should not take any chances and release prisoners who have maintained a good conduct and surrendered well on time after being released at the start of the pandemic last year.

Gupta had also suggested that the state government may use school buildings, which have open spaces as temporary prisons.

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