

Report on Academic Visit to Rongyek Jail

Dates: 03 & 05 December 2025

Faculty of Law, The ICFAI University, Sikkim

The students of LLB 5th Semester and BBA-LLB 9th Semester, Faculty of Law, The ICFAI University, Sikkim, undertook an academic visit to Rongyek Jail on 03 and 05 December 2025 as part of their experiential learning programme. Each visit was accompanied by two faculty members. The objective of this academic excursion was to provide students with practical exposure to prison administration and to enhance their understanding of correctional institutions as an essential component of the criminal justice system.

During the visit, the Jailor provided a detailed overview of the prison's inmate profile and its daily functioning. The students were informed that the highest number of convicts are incarcerated under POCSO, SADA, and NDPS cases. Rongyek Jail operates on the core principles of Reformation, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration, reflecting a humanistic approach to corrections. This session enabled students to understand crime trends in Sikkim, along with the classification of inmates based on case categories and conviction status.

The prison currently houses 244 convicts and 136 under-trial prisoners, including five female under-trial inmates, against a sanctioned capacity of 335. Separate accommodations are provided for convicts and under-trials. Transfers of convicts are permitted with the approval of the Home Department. The prison ensures safety and security through strategically placed watchtowers, and a new infrastructure block is presently under construction to enhance the existing facilities.

Rongyek Jail has a well-defined administrative and healthcare structure comprising 70 staff members, headed by the DGP, Assistant Superintendent, Medical Officer, MPHWS, and staff nurses. Basic medical care is available within the premises, with referral mechanisms for serious cases. Psychiatric visits are conducted twice a month to support inmates' mental well-being. Legal Aid facilities are also available for inmates who are unable to afford legal proceedings. Through these interactions, students gained valuable insights into the multidisciplinary nature of prison management, where administration, healthcare, and mental-health services function collaboratively.

The visit highlighted several welfare measures extended to both convicts and under-trial prisoners, including food and clothing, access to basic amenities, legal aid support, family visitation facilities, library access, and the assistance of three trained volunteers. Regular inspections by Judges from Mangan, Pakyong, and Gangtok ensure compliance with constitutional safeguards and prison rules, underscoring the judiciary's role in protecting inmate rights.

Students also observed the prison's reformatory and skill-development programmes, such as carpentry, bakery, choksi and mura making, farming, salon services, and compulsory computer courses. Proposed daily wages include ₹100 for skilled workers and ₹80 for unskilled workers. These initiatives demonstrated the emphasis on correctional rehabilitation, a significant component of modern penology aimed at reintegration into society.

This academic visit offered students a first-hand understanding of the prison as a critical institution within the criminal justice framework. They were able to observe the convergence of administrative, legal, medical, and psychological services that sustain the functioning of a correctional facility. Discussions with jail staff highlighted issues related to overcrowding, under-trial delays, mental-health care, and rehabilitation challenges. Exposure to legal aid clinics, judicial inspections, remission, and parole procedures deepened the students' understanding of judicial accountability and inmate rights.

Overall, the visit enabled students to connect their classroom learning on criminal law, penology, and constitutional rights with the practical realities of prison administration. The academic excursion to Rongyek Jail proved to be a valuable and enlightening learning experience, shaping informed and empathetic future legal professionals who understand the prison system as a dynamic and integral part of the criminal justice machinery.





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