

## INCARCERATION TO CONTRIBUTION

### Abstract

*The fact that the Government of Delhi has decided to purchase 10,000 dual desks from the carpentry unit in the Tihar Jail itself for approximately ₹8 crores demonstrates a long-term and successful model of production in correctional facilities that benefits public education. With a total of 36 factory units staffed by close to 4,000 convicts, all working successfully to provide furniture for approximately 2,000 government and municipal schools, as well as other organizations located in the city of Delhi, among others, this program serves a dual purpose. This includes the economic value of acquiring good-quality yet low-cost furniture, as well as the socially redeeming quality that provides a vocational education related to working skills given to those convicts. Additionally, a portion also goes towards a Victim's Welfare Fund.*

### What is the Plan?

Government of Delhi has approved a plan to build 10,000 dual desks from the carpentry unit of Tihar Jail. Total cost inclusive of GST, transportation and related charges has been fixed around Rs. 8 Cr for the plan.

This is not the first time Tihar jail has supplied furniture to schools. The unit manufactures school dual desks, office furniture, and household furniture which are supplied to schools under the Directorate of Education, Government of Delhi. Many deliveries have been made to Industrial Training Institutes, polytechnic colleges and other government and private organizations.

These desks are part of a long-term supply agreement, indicating that the supply to schools is an established and ongoing practice. Additionally, tables, chairs, and desks made by the carpentry unit are sent to approximately 2,000 schools across Delhi run by the Delhi government and municipal bodies.

### How did it start

This isn't the first time Tihar jail is providing furniture and other products manufactured from the cell. There's a total of 36 factory units that run from India's largest and most crowded Tihar Jail. The first ever factory unit to be set up here was of paper unit which delivered to government offices, the six lower courts and the Delhi High Court. From thereon, the other units were set up and today, around 4000 prisoners work in shifts in these 36 factory units, generating turnover of about 35 Crore Rupees.

Apart from the elderly, unwell, or those who opt out, prisoners at Tihar earn daily wages based on skill level, with skilled workers paid up to Rs. 321 a day. Twenty-five percent of each prisoner's wages is contributed to a Victim's Welfare Fund that supports families or victims affected by their crimes.

## Benefits of this Plan

### 1. Skill development and rehabilitation of prisoners

The carpentry units at Tihar Jail provide inmates with hands-on vocational training. Working on large-scale, real orders like school desks helps prisoners acquire employable skills that can support their reintegration into society after release.

### 2. Cost-effective procurement for the government

Manufacturing desks in-house through prison units lowers costs compared to private procurement. The ₹8 crore plan includes GST, transport, and logistics, offering schools durable furniture at a controlled and predictable cost.

### 3. Consistent supply for public education infrastructure

Since this is part of a long-term supply arrangement, government schools receive a steady and reliable supply of desks which helps address classroom infrastructure gaps across nearly 2,000 government and municipal schools.

### 4. Reduction in recidivism risk

Engagement in structured work, skill-building, and responsibility has been shown to reduce repeat offending. Employment during incarceration creates discipline, routine, and purpose, which are critical factors in preventing reoffending.

### 5. Social value through public-good linkage

Furniture made by inmates directly supports public schools, ITIs, and colleges, creating a meaningful connection between rehabilitation efforts and social development.

Instead of remaining idle, prison resources are used productively. The 36 factory units transform Tihar into a self-sustaining ecosystem that contributes economically rather than remaining a financial burden on the state.