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Maharashtra Human Rights Commission Orders ₹1 Lakh Compensation To Family Of Undertrial Prisoner Who Died By Suicide In Amravati Jail After 13 Years

The commission has directed the State to pay a compensation of Rs 1 lakh to the family of deceased under trial prisoner Salim S.K. Rafiq. The order, issued on August 13, 2025, acknowledges that while the death was determined to be a suicide, the prison authorities had a strict responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the prisoner.

Pranali Lotlikar | Updated: Saturday, August 23, 2025, 10:30 PM IST



Maharashtra Human Rights Panel Orders Compensation for Amravati Custodial Death | Representative Image

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Mumbai: The Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission (MSHRC) after a period of 13 years have granted compensation to a family of an undertrail prisoner who had committed suicide in Amravati Central Prison in 2012. The commission has directed the State to pay a compensation of Rs 1 lakh to the family of deceased under trial prisoner Salim S.K. Rafiq.

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Order Issued With Strict Liability Principle

The order, issued on August 13, 2025, acknowledges that while the death was determined to be a suicide, the prison authorities had a strict responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the prisoner.

Commission Led By Justice A.M. Badar

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The state government has been given eight weeks to pay the compensation. Failure to do so will result in an annual simple interest rate of 7% until the amount is paid in full. The commission presided over by Chairperson Justice A. M. Badar and Member Sanjay Kumar have passed the judgment.

Case History And Inquiries Into Custodial Death

The Commission in 2012 has taken a taken a cognizance of the custodial death on November 29, 2012, after receiving a wireless message from the prison superintendent. As per the order copy two separate inquiries were conducted into the death.

The first was a magisterial inquiry by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Amravati, Pravin N. Thakare, who submitted his report on July 30, 2015. The second was a judicial inquiry under sections laid down under the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) by the Judicial Magistrate First Class, which submitted its report on March 7, 2025.

Findings Of Both Inquiries

Both inquiries concluded that Salim S.K. Rafiq's death was a suicide by hanging and that there was no ill-treatment or negligence on the part of the prison administration. The post-mortem report also revealed no external injuries on the body except those associated with suicidal hanging.

Prisoner's Background

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The cause of death was determined to be asphyxia due to hanging in a person with a known case of pulmonary tuberculosis. Rafiq had been admitted to the Central Prison on October 12, 2012, and was kept in a separate cell, number 38, because he was suffering from tuberculosis. He was found hanging on November 26, 2012, with a scarf from an electric pipeline in his room.

Strict And No-Fault Liability Invoked

The commission in its orders held that though it was not a case of direct torture or negligence, but definitely;y attracted the principle of "Strict Liability" and "No Fault Liability" in cases of custodial death.

State's Responsibility In Custodial Care

The commission emphasized that the state is "vicariously liable" for any lapses that affect an individual's life while in its custody, including suicide. The commission stated that the right to life of a citizen in custody must be "jealously and scrupulously protected," and that the state's duty of care is "strict and admits of no exceptions."

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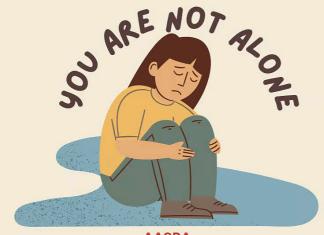
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Compensation Based On New GR

The compensation of granting Rs one lakh for the next of kin was decided based on a new Government of Maharashtra G.R. (Government Resolution) issued on April 28, 2025, which prescribes the amount for suicides committed by prisoners in custody.



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