

Prisons in Britain report thousands of rapes and sexual assaults



London, August 15 (RHC)-- About 1,000 rapes and 2,336 sexual assaults were reported to have taken place in prisons since 2010, according to exclusive data obtained by the Observer from police forces in England and Wales. A notable increase in reported rapes and sexual assaults was reported in the years after 2016, clashing with the period when austerity began to rise, according to the figures obtained by The Guardian from the Observer.

In 2010, the Durham constabulary saw three reports of sexual assault, which rose eleven times in 2018 to 33 such cases. The Humberside police saw reports of sexual violence double from five to 10 between 2015 and 2018. For the Cumbria police, the rise was recorded as one in 2014 to eight in 2016.

During 2020 and 2021, when Britain was dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic, another rise was reported as the Greater Manchester police received 18 reports of rape in 2020, while the Wiltshire police, after getting only three reports in the previous seven years combined, received reports of four rapes in 2022 and three in 2020.

The latest safety in custody statistics published by the MoJ recorded 20,993 assaults during the 12 months to December 2022, which also include sexual violence. There has been “minimal research – and a worrying lack of coherent and consistently applied policies – in relation to consensual and coercive sex behind bars”, said Andrew Neilson, director of campaigns at the Howard League for Penal Reform in response to the Observer’s findings.

According to experts, the real numbers could be far higher than the ones released in the latest data. The latest figures come amid growing concern about the safety of British prisons, as it faces issues like overcrowding, staff reduction, and budget cuts.

The impact of austerity has left English prisons “unable to provide safe environments for rising prison populations,” according to research by Nasrul Ismail, a lecturer in criminology at Bristol University.

A report by UN Women UK found that 97 percent of women aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed, while only 3 percent of 18-24 year-olds had reported no harassment. The report also claimed that a further 96 percent had not reported those situations because of the belief that it would not change anything.

The majority of experts blame the abuse of easy internet access, the sexual objectification of women, the lack of moral values and education, and the rise of new sexual cultures and beliefs as the main reasons for the rise in global rape culture and fantasy.

Meanwhile, child sex abuse and pedophilia have also been reported across the UK, and in most cases, about 90 percent of them were abused by people they knew.

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