

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HIGH POWERED COMMITTEE FOR THE
RELEASE OF PRISONERS ON BAIL/ PAROLE CHAIRED BY HIS LORDSHIP
HON'BLE EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN, MASLSA HELD ON 31ST MARCH 2020, AT
THE ARBITRATION ROOM, ADR BUILDING, LAMPHEL COURT COMPLEX**

In pursuance of the direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, a High Powered Committee was constituted to oversee the release of prisoners on bail/ parole as a measure to avoid congestion/ overcrowding in jails in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. A meeting of the High Powered Committee was held on 31st March 2020 at 11.30 am, at the Arbitration Room, ADR Building, Lamphel Court Complex, with his Lordship Hon'ble Mr. Justice Kh. Nobin Singh, Executive Chairman, Manipur State Legal Services Authority in the chair.

The following were present in the meeting :

1. Suresh Babu, Chief Secretary (Home), Government of Manipur
2. P. DOUNGEL, Additional Director of Police (Prisons) , Manipur
3. Golmei Gaiphulshillu, Member Secretary, MASLSA.
4. K. Radhashyam Singh, Special Secretary (Home), Govt of Manipur
5. Ojesh Mutum, Addl. Member Secretary, MASLSA.
6. K. Nirojit, Secretary, Imphal West DLSA.
7. Dr. Th. Charanjeet Singh, Deputy Secretary (Home), Government of Manipur
8. Sorokhaibam Sadananda, Deputy Member Secretary, MASLSA.

The Jail Authorities have placed before the High Powered Committee, the details as to the number of prisoners in the two jails of Manipur; the categorization of the inmates depending upon the offences committed/ alleged to have been committed and the period for which they have been confined in the jails.

It has been placed by the ADGP (Prisons) that a separate wing is being provided in both the jails of Manipur Central Jail, Sajiwa and Central Jail, Imphal having a capacity of 90 inmates and 10 inmates respectively as quarantine/ isolation rooms. As of now, 47 inmates are being kept isolated at Sajiwa Jail and 3 inmates at Central Jail, Imphal. They are being kept for 14 days from the date of admission to prison. As such, he stated that there is no overcrowding in the jails and they are well maintained as of now.

The ADGP (Prisons) also stated that as per the space provided for each prisoner under the Manipur Jail Manual, 2018, Sajiwa Central Jail have a capacity of 845 prisoners and Imphal Central Jail have a capacity of 250 prisoners. At present, 790 prisoners and 50 prisoners are lodged in the jails respectively. Hence, it is submitted that there is no congestion/ overcrowding in these jails as of now. It has also been submitted that the state police have been very co-operative in taking the necessary precautions also.

After detailed deliberations and upon consideration of all aspects including the situation prevailing in the state, it has been unanimously resolved by the Committee that at present, there is no need for releasing any prisoners on parole/ bail for our state as-

- (a) There is no congestion/ overcrowding in jails*
- (b) Prisoners inside the jails have been screened for the symptoms typical of flu, fever etc.,*
- (c) No new prisoner is introduced in the jail without medical screening*
- (d) All new prisoners are being kept in the isolation wing for 14 days. Only when they are confirmed that they are well, these prisoners will be transferred to other sections.*
- (e) In case suspected case arises, the prisoners will be taken to Government Quarantine facilities and kept under proper security.*

However, on due consideration of the prevailing situation, it has also been resolved that the State Home Department shall take the necessary steps to temporarily designate/notify certain place (s) as "quarantine prisons". This has been necessitated by the fact that in case the number of new prisoners increases above the aforementioned capacities

i.e. capacity of 90 and 10 respectively for Manipur Central Jail, Sajiwa and Manipur Central Jail, Imphal, it will result in overcrowding and congestion in the jails.

It has also been resolved that the Director General of Police, Manipur shall issue necessary directions to strictly comply with the provisions of CrPC relating to arrest and detention and of availing bail in bailable offences, so as to avoid unnecessary arrests and detention. Further, the Director General of Police is to issue such directions for compliance of health advisories by the police personnel, including proper medical check up of the accused, before production before the Court/ Magistrate.

It has also been resolved that the concerned Magistrates/ Judges shall ensure that the accused produced before them shall be medically screened for COVID-19 before they are sent to judicial custody/or the above said quarantine prison as the case may be.

It has also been resolved that the High Power Committee will convene its meeting again as and when the need arises, and with the change of circumstances.

A copy of this Resolution be also sent to

- (a) The Director General of Police for issuing such necessary directions
- (b) All the Courts/ Magistrates for information and compliance
- (c) State Home Department and Jail Authorities for information

The meeting thus concluded with the permission from the chair.

Sd/-
(P. Doungel)
ADGP (Prisons)

Sd/-
(Suresh Babu)
Chief Secretary (Home)

Sd/-
(Justice Kh. Nobin Singh)
Executive Chairman, MASLSA