

The minutes of the meeting of the High Powered Committee, constituted in compliance of the order dated 23.03.2020 by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Suo Motu Writ Petition (C) No. 01/2020 in Re-Contagion of COVID-19 Virus in Prisons held on 10.09.2021 at 4.30 p.m. through virtual mode under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. Talapatra, Executive Chairman of the Tripura State Legal Services Authority to discuss the following agenda:

AGENDA

1. Discussion and decision on the issue of inclusion of Medical Professionals, Medical Social Workers, Public Health Professionals, Health Department Officials and relevant Civil Society Organizations in High Power Committee to facilitate and monitor the release of prison inmates.
2. Discussion and decision on the issue of modifying the category of prisoners to be considered for release giving priority to their health status like age and sufferings from co-morbidities.
3. Discussion and decision on the issue of ensuring that the released prisoners and their families have timely access to medical care and relief measures such as food-rations and are not denied entitlements under National and State programmes.
4. Discussion and decision on the issue of increasing budget for prison health facilities, improvement of living conditions in prisons and appointment of requisite medical and other staff for protecting life, liberty and dignity of prisoners.
5. Any other matter with permission of the Chair.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. Talapatra, Judge, High Court of Tripura and Executive Chairman, TSLSA was in the chair.

The following Members were present:

1. Mr. Apurba Roy, IAS, Secretary, Home Department (Jail), Govt. of Tripura;
2. Ms. A. Majumder, Inspector General, Prisons, Govt. of Tripura.

RESOLUTIONS

- 1. Discussion and decision on the issue of inclusion of Medical Professionals, Medical Social Workers, Public Health Professionals, Health Department Officials and relevant Civil Society Organizations in High Power Committee to facilitate and monitor the release of prison inmates.**

A District Level Committee may be constituted comprising the representatives from Medical Professionals, Medical Social Workers, Public Health Professionals, Health Department Officials and relevant Civil Society Organizations. Services of the said district level committee may be required for giving opinion to High Powered Committee about the efforts to be taken for decongestion in Jails in response to the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India & suggestions for overall development of living conditions of the prison. However, decision on this issue shall be taken after detailed discussion in the next meeting to be held on 22.09.2021 (Wednesday).

- 2. Discussion and decision on the issue of modifying the category of prisoners to be considered for release giving priority to their health status like age and sufferings from co-morbidities.**

Prisons Directorate shall prepare a list of aged prisoners and the prisoners suffering from co-morbidities of all the jails of the State of Tripura and shall submit a compiled report by the next Friday (17.09.2021) to the State Legal Services Authority for placing the same in the next meeting of High Powered Committee for discussion on this issue.

- 3. Discussion and decision on the issue of ensuring that the released prisoners and their families have timely access to medical care and relief measures such as food-rations and are not denied entitlements under National and State programmes.**

Secretary of the SW & SE Department, Govt. of Tripura; Food and Civil Supplies Department, Govt. of Tripura and the Director of Health Services, Govt. of Tripura shall be included as Invitee Members of High Powered Committee and necessary notification shall be issued by the Member Secretary, TSLSA immediately. This agenda will be discussed in detail in the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 22.09.2021 and the invitee members shall also be requested to join in the next meeting.

- 4. Discussion and decision on the issue of increasing fund allocation for prison health facilities, improvement of living conditions in prisons and appointment of requisite medical and other staff for protecting life, liberty and dignity of prisoners.**

One member Committee is constituted with Ms. A. Majumder, IG Prisons, Member, High Powered Committee to report about the areas need to be improved and the fund-estimate that will be required for such improvement or overall development of living conditions in prisons. The committee shall submit report by the next Friday i.e. on 17.09.2021 to the Member Secretary, TSLSA for placing the same in the next meeting of the High Powered Committee.


5. Any other matter with permission of the Chair.

Committee after taking into consideration the action taken report dated 10th September, 2021 submitted by the Prisons Directorate, expressed its deep concern as regards of the recommendation of High Powered Committee for releasing 136 nos. of convicts on parole. The Government has reported that as the Covid-19 second wave has ebbed no such action is required. At the same time Hon'ble the Executive Chairman, TSLSA and the Chairperson of the High Powered Committee expressed his displeasure for not having a parole committee in the State. The Committee has resolved to request the Government to constitute a parole Committee immediately to protect the rights of prisoners.

6. The Member Secretary shall ensure compliance of this resolution.

The meeting ended with thanks to the chair.

By Authority


(S. Bhattacharjee)
Member Secretary

Tripura State Legal Services Authority