

Government of Punjab  
Department of Jails  
(Home-7 Branch)

To

- 1 All District & Sessions Judges in Punjab
- 2 All Deputy Commissioners of Districts in Punjab
- 3 All CPs/ SSPs of Punjab
- 4 All CMOs In Punjab
- 5 All Superintendents of Jails in Punjab.

Memo no. 12/16/2020-2H7/

Dated Chandigarh

Respected Sir/Ma'am

**Sub: Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of High Powered Committee held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Dr. Justice S. Muralidhar, Judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh and Executive Chairman, Punjab State Legal Services Authority Chandigarh at 16:00 hrs on 26-11-2020.**

Kindly refer to Govt. of Punjab memo no. 12/16/2020-2H7/708-719 dated 26-3-2020, 2-5-2020, 7-8-2020 and dated 20-11-2020.

2. A meeting of the High Powered Committee constituted in pursuance of the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in SMWP (C) no. 1/2020 (RE: Contagion of COVID-19), was held on 26.11.2020. The objective of the meeting was to review the implementation of the recommendations of the previous meetings and to consider steps to be taken for safety of jails and jail inmates in the present situation of COVID-19.
3. The minutes of the meeting are hereby forwarded to the all concerned for strict compliance of the recommendations contained therein.

Encls: As above.

- Sd -  
Special Secretary, Jails

Endst No. 12/16/2020-2H7/1455-1461

Dated Chandigarh 27/11/2020

A copy of the minutes of meeting is forwarded to the following for information and further necessary action

- 1 Chief Secretary, Government of Punjab
- 2 Additional Chief Secretary, Home Affairs and Justice, Government of Punjab
- 3 Principal Secretary Health and family welfare, Government of Punjab
- 4 Director General of Police, Punjab
- 5 Additional Director General of Police, Prisons, Punjab
- 6 Registrar General Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh
- 7 Member Secretary, PULSA for information of Hon'ble Executive Chairperson PULSA

Encls: As above

Special Secretary, Jails

**Sub: Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of High Powered Committee held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Dr. Justice S. Muralidhar, Judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court Chandigarh and Executive Chairman, Punjab State Legal Services Authority Chandigarh at 16:00 hrs on 26.11.2020.**

The meeting was attended by the following officers/members of the High Powered Committee:

1. Mr. R. VenkatRatnam, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary to Government of Punjab, Department of Jails, Punjab.
2. Mr. Praveen K. Sinha, IPS, Additional Director General of Police, Prisons, Punjab.
3. Mr. Arun Gupta, Member Secretary, PULSA.

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE HIGH POWERED COMMITTEE (HPC):**

2. At the very outset, ACS, Jails and ADGP, Prisons briefed the Chair that this meeting was necessitated due to the rising cases of COVID-19 in the State of Punjab and the Punjab Government's decision to impose night curfew and certain other curbs across the State of Punjab from December 1, 2020. Given the present assessment of the Government and the steps taken towards imposition of COVID related curbs, the HPC decided to re-visit the following decisions mentioned at paras (5) and (7) of the Minutes of 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of HPC dt. 18.11.2020:

- (i) Return of convicts released on parole in a phased manner from 01.12.2020 onwards.
- (ii) Resumption of limited physical *mulaqat* for convicts and under-trial prisoners from 15.12.2020.

**DECISIONS TAKEN:**

3. **Return of convicts released on parole and Resumption of limited physical mulaqat:** The ramifications of the decisions taken in 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the HPC qua the decision of the Punjab Govt. to impose fresh COVID-related curbs were deliberated upon in detail. It was decided that in view of the changed situation as a result of rising cases of Covid-19 in the State of Punjab, the decisions taken regarding 'return of convicts on parole' and 'resumption of limited mulaqat' as set out in paras (5) and (7) of the minutes of 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of HPC dt. 18.11.2020 shall be **kept in abeyance** till a



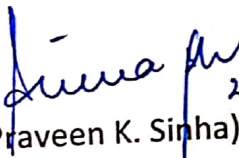
further decision in this regard is taken in the next meeting of the HPC to be held in January, 2021.


4. **Return of convicts released on parole from Open Jail, Nabha:** The ADGP, Prisons brought to the notice of the HPC that the functioning of Open Jail, Nabha has come to a stand-still as all the inmates have been released on parole. It was mentioned that there are certain contractual obligations, like supply of fodder to the animal husbandry department in addition to the agricultural activities in the jail that are suffering as a result of the lack of inmates. Also, due to the open nature of this jail, proper social distancing and ventilation can be maintained even if a majority of the prison inmates return. After due deliberations, the HPC decided that except as stated in para 3 above and as indicated hereinafter, the extension of parole of the convicts released in the months from January to April 2020 from Open Jail Nabha be discontinued and they be directed to report back to Open Jail Nabha in a phased manner from 05-12-2020 onwards as may be decided by the authority. However, the parole of the following categories of convicts be continued for the time being:


- Those aged with 60 years or above as on 30.11.2020;
- Prisoners continuing to suffer from co-morbidities like chronic diseases or pre-existing conditions as indicated in previous recommendations of the HPC, subject to an appropriate certificate of a govt. medical officer, regarding the current medical status of the prisoners.

**(Action: Concerned District Magistrates; Superintendent Open Jail Nabha)**

The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.

  
(Praveen K. Sinha), IPS  
Addl. Director General of Police,  
Prisons, Punjab, Chandigarh.

  
(R. Venkat Ratnam), IAS  
Addl. Chief Secretary,  
Jails, Punjab, Chandigarh.

  
(Dr. Justice S. Muralidhar)  
Chairperson,  
State Legal Services Authority