

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA  
PRISONS DEPARTMENT

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NOTIFICATION

Dated Shillong, the <sup>14</sup> 18 March, 2020.

No.PDS.23/2020/44 - The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the recent COVID- 19 (Corona Virus) Disease outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and a Global Pandemic due to its rapid transmission and spread around the globe.

Recent evaluation of COVID – 19 affected countries has shown that delay in enforcing social distancing restrictions has led to increase in the number of cases and deaths in those countries.

Considering the situation where the number of cases have been gradually rising in the country, the Government of Meghalaya, for preventing any possible transmission and outbreak of COVID-19 among the inhabitants / citizens of the State, has already come up with restrictions and advisories vide Notification No. Health.68/2020/31 dated 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 inter alia including measures of social distancing by mandating closure of all educational institutions, place of mass gatherings such as cinema halls, gymnasium, major sports events, swimming pools, amusement parks and similar mass gatherings and cancelling all fairs, festivals, exhibitions, conferences, seminars, workshops, public meetings, trainings etc.

Hon'ble Supreme Court has passed an order dated 16.03.2020 in Suo Moto Writ (Civil) No.1 of 2020 titled as In Re: Contagion of COVID 19 Virus in Prisons, wherein it has been observed that since prisons and juvenile homes in India are overcrowded, the studies have shown that due to lack of advised social distancing, they are vulnerable for spread of the virus and has directed the State Governments to ensure that preventive measures of identification, isolation and treatment of suspected cases shall be implemented forthwith.

Considering the above, it has been decided by the competent authority to put in place preventive measure for identification, isolation and treatment of suspected cases to ensure social distancing in prisons and Juvenile Homes of State of Meghalaya as follows:-

1. All prisoners lodged in the prisons and all inmates of Juvenile Homes in the State of Meghalaya, including the Under Trials, shall be checked by the existing medical officers for any symptoms of COVID – 19 infection.
2. Isolation cells in all prisons / juvenile homes across the State of Meghalaya shall be set-up immediately to keep the suspected cases quarantined.
3. The suspected cases should immediately be tested for any possible infection of COVID- 19 by getting their samples tested from North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), Shillong, which is one of the COVID – 19 testing facilities designated by Government of India, in accordance with protocol set by the NEIGRIHMS, Shillong in this regard.
4. All new inmates shall be checked for any symptoms by the medical officer of concerned Prison / Juvenile Homes before being allowed entry to normal wards and shall be kept in isolation wards if any symptom is exhibited.

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5. No visitors shall be allowed in District Jails till 31.03.2020 unless unavoidable in which case the visitors would be screened for symptoms of COVID – 19 infection before being allowed entry.

The final decision about the entry of visitors in the District Jails shall be taken by the Inspector General of Prisons, Meghalaya on a case - to - case basis.

6. Hand sanitizers/Soap shall be kept at the entry for mandatory hand sanitization by all persons, including jail staff and officers, inmates, visitors etc., entering the Jail / Juvenile Home premises on each occasion of entry.
7. Distance of at least one meter shall be maintained between the visitor and inmates during all visits and there will not be any physical contact allowed between the visitor and the inmate.
8. Medical officers and other medical support staff dealing with the suspected cases shall be provided with personal protection equipment.
9. Medical officers along with the Jailors/Warders should ensure awareness of social distancing measures and good practices to avoid infection and spread of COVID – 19 amongst prison inmates.
10. All other relevant restrictions and advisories issued by the Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of Meghalaya on 16.03.2020 shall also be followed.

The Inspector General of Prisons, Meghalaya shall take steps to ensure strict compliance of the aforesaid directives and report compliance within 48 hours of issuance of these directives to the office of undersigned. They shall also ensure regular meetings with medical officers for any additional measures required.

  
P. Bakshi, IAS.,

Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya,  
Prisons Department.

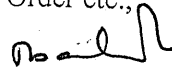
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Dated Shillong, the 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2020.

Memo.No.PDS.23/2020/44-A,  
Copy to :-

1. The Private Secretary to the Chief Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya for kind information of the Chief Secretary.
2. The P.A. to the Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya, Health & Family Welfare Department for kind information of the Secretary.
3. The Joint Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya, Prisons Department for information.
4. The Inspector General of Prisons, Meghalaya, Shillong for information.
5. The Deputy Director General, NIC, Meghalaya, Shillong.
6. The Director of Health Services (MI), Meghalaya, Shillong for information.
7. The Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya, Law Department.
8. The Medical & Health Officer, Shillong / Jowai / Tura / Williamnagar / Nongpoh District Jails.

By Order etc.,



Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya,  
Prisons Department.

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