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- Chandigarh, March 25- In the wake of fears of infection due to the corona virus epidemic the Haryana Government has decided to reduce the pressure on jails of the state. As per directions of the Supreme Court inmates or prisoners already on parole or furlough will get an extension of four-week special parole. Similarly, prisoners who return to jail after only one parole or furlough on time in a peaceful manner will also be given six weeks of special parole.
- Giving detailed information about this, Haryana Jail Minister, Mr. Ranjit Singh said that inmates who are over 65 years of age and are not involved in more than one cases or those who are not involved in drug cases or those who have not been booked under Section 379 B or POCSO Act and those who are not convicted in cases of rape or acid attack will also be given six weeks of special parole on the basis of good behavior. Foreign prisoners are not included in this, he added.
- He further said that, inmates whose sentence is not more than seven years and no other case is pending in the court, those who owe no penalty will also be given six to eight weeks of special parole based on good behaviour. He said that, special parole will also be given to those prisoners whose maximum sentence is up to seven years and if there is a case pending in which they are out on bail and has already returned peacefully after Parole. He said that those who are convicted in cases like overdose of drugs or Section 379 B or POCSO Act, rape and acid attack will not get this benefit, he added.
- The Jail Minister said that the cases of prisoners, whose parole or furloughs cases are already pending with the District Collector or Divisional Collector will be shown leniency and will be disposed of soon. It will also be ensured that in such pending cases, a decision is taken within three to six days, he added.
- He informed that prisoners who were serving sentences of at least seven years and do not have any pending cases against them in the court and those who have one or more cases pending against them but the punishment for which is not likely to be more than seven years, and who have good behaviour in jail, will be released on bail or given interim bail of 45 to 60 days by District and Sessions Judge, Additional District and Sessions Judge or Chief Judicial Magistrate.
- Mr. Ranjit Singh said that inmates with good behavior in the jail will be given special pardon for two months by the Director General, Prisons and one month by Jail Superintendent according to their merit as per the provision described in the Punjab Jail Manual. This pardon will not be granted to prisoners who have been convicted in serious crimes, he added.
- He further said that every possible step is being taken by the department in view of the Corona epidemic and it is being ensured that the health of the prisoners in jail is taken care of. He said that as per the directions of the Supreme Court, major decisions have been taken on humanitarian grounds for prisoners and detainees so as to reduce the pressure of prisoners in jails and in any situation arrests are made by the administration as a precautionary law and order measure then there is sufficient place for them in the jails. He said that directions have already been issued by the department to all the jails of the state.
- It may be noted that the meeting was held on March 24, 2020, through video conferencing, under the chairmanship of Justice Mr. Rajeev Sharma, for deliberations for compliance of directions issued by the Supreme Court on March 23, 2020, which was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Jails, Mr. Vijai Vardhan and Director General, Prisons Mr. K. Selvaraj.