

Roc.No.1363/2020/RG



MOST URGENT

CIRCULAR

Sub: COVID 19 – Effective prevention of Corona Virus disease in the High Court premises – Restricted Functioning – Certain conditions issued - Regarding.

In continuation of the administrative directives of the Hon'ble Chief Justice issued vide High Court's circular dated 17.3.2020 and 18.3.2020, and in view of the emergent situation which has arisen, particularly with regard to the declaration of Chennai as one of the 75 Districts affected with a confirmed case of COVID-19, and the decision taken by the Central Government along with the Chief Secretaries of the States including the State of Tamil Nadu as announced today by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on the floor of the House, the Hon'ble the Chief Justice has imposed the following conditions as to the restricted functioning of the High Court confining only to extremely urgent matters.

Accordingly, the cause list and the functioning with effect from tomorrow i.e., 24.03.2020 shall further stand modified as follows:

- i. The Court shall have **Two Division Benches** dealing with all urgent fresh Criminal and Civil matters separately and there shall be **Five Single Benches** – Three on the Criminal Side and Two on the Civil side, the

constitution and jurisdiction whereof shall be indicated in the cause list separately.

- ii. Henceforth lawyers be requested not to operate from their Chambers and they be requested not to invite the litigants inside unless it is absolutely imperative either for their personal presence that may be required on orders of the Court or for such personal verification as per the directions of the Registry.
- iii. Lawyers be requested to limit filing as far as possible only in extremely urgent matters, which shall be for a period of three weeks from now only on the permission to be granted by the respective Courts exercising jurisdiction either on the Criminal or Civil side as per the roster to be given effect to from tomorrow.
- iv. The Registry shall also now take care that petitions/documents presented as defective may not be returned immediately and may be put in abeyance to enable the counsel for removing the defects for a period of three weeks or as per the further directions in this regard. Option be given to the counsel in matters which are extremely urgent and may require immediate presentation.

- v. The cause list henceforth, with effect from 24.3.2020, shall only be in accordance with the directions herein above. Cases already directed to be listed on any particular date within a period of three weeks from today, in case they are extremely urgent, may be mentioned before the respective Benches having the roster as indicated above, and on the mention being accepted, at the discretion of the concerned Bench, be listed accordingly.
- vi. The respective Benches can be approached for the extension of any interim orders that are continuing being time bound are to expire in the forthcoming three weeks, for which the respective Benches may pass appropriate orders so as to avoid any inconvenience.
- vii. Matters where petitions are presented and where the limitation is likely to expire, such papers may be accepted by the Registry and shall be placed before the appropriate Benches as and when the Court resumes normal functioning, subject to any further directions in this regard.
- viii. The aforesaid arrangement shall continue for a period of three weeks, subject to any orders issued earlier or modifications which may now be made.

- ix. The Registrar General shall accordingly and appropriately rotate the staff which may be required for the said purpose, as the presence of employees is also required to be curtailed in the light of the above steps taken. For this, the Registrar General shall assess the requirement and subject to such requirements, all other staff are directed to await issuance of orders by the Registrar General for their physical presence in the High Court and they shall remain alert on duty, at their residence. There shall be an exception with regard to the Protocol and the Maintenance Staff, who are required to be present on account of the nature of the duties that they have to essentially perform.
- x. The personal staff of all Hon'ble Judges, including their Personal Secretaries, Drivers, Residential Assistants, Office Assistants, etc., shall function and make themselves available subject to the directions given by the Hon'ble Judges themselves.
- xi. The restrictions with regard to entry in the High Court shall continue and the Registrar General shall ensure that appropriate facilities for the protection and convenience of the entire staff including security personnel is ensured, for which necessary arrangements may be made.

- xii. Lawyers and litigants are informed that their cooperation is essential to strictly comply with these orders for the period aforesaid subject to any further directions in this regard.

The above instructions of the Hon'ble the Chief Justice may be brought to the kind notice of the Hon'ble Administrative Judge, Madurai, for making appropriate arrangements separately, subject to the local needs of Madurai Bench and the same may be notified in the cause list to be published at Madurai.

HIGH COURT, MADRAS

Sd/- C.KUMARAPPAN

DATED : 23-03-2020

REGISTRAR GENERAL

To

01. All the Hon'ble Judges (for information).
02. All the Registrars, High Court, Madras
03. All the Officers, High Court, Madras.
04. All the Head of Sections, High Court, Madras
05. The Overseer, High Court Madras
06. The Record Keeper, AD Records.

Copy to The Additional Registrar General, Madurai Bench of Madras High Court, Madurai (for information and necessary action)

- spare 10 copies.