

**DAILY REPORT OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR COMBATING THE  
IMPENDING THREAT OF NOVEL CORONA VIRUS**

**Date – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

- 1) Hon'ble the Chief Justice had a meeting with the Hon'ble JAD-I and JAD-II and other Senior Hon'ble Judges of the High Court regarding the required measures to be taken.
- 2) Hon'ble the Chief Justice and the Senior most Hon'ble Judges of the Court also held meeting with the Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar and the Principal Secretary, Department of Health, Government of Bihar to take stock of the situation and discussed the remedial measures to be taken. The Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar, was asked to take measures with regard to Juvenile Justice Board/ Observation Homes/Shelters Homes and all the jail premises of the State of Bihar. An oral direction was given to the Principal Health secretary, Bihar to provide hand sanitizers in adequate numbers to the High Court.
- 3) A team of 10 members from the Registry constituted to connect with a Nodal Officer, now designated in each of the District Courts, for purpose of overseeing the sensitization of the officers and staff involved in the Court premises and the sanitization of the Court Complexes and other amenities. The nodal officer was directed to be the District and Sessions Judge of the respective district.

4) A video conference was held by the Hon'ble the Chief Justice with all the District & Sessions Judges of the State of Bihar wherein the following directions were issued:

- (i) The Presiding Officers of the Court should not insist on the physical presence of the parties unless considered unavoidable.
- (ii) All the respective District & Sessions Judges and the Principal Judges, Family Courts, would take appropriate measures to regulate entry of the litigants and the general public in the Court premises in order to ensure less crowding.
- (iii) The lawyers may be requested to advise their clients not to visit the Court unless their physical presence is directed by the Court.
- (iv) For the present, this decision has been taken to be applicable till 31st March, 2020. Till such date, no adverse/default orders will be passed in the matters where parties/lawyers are found to be absent.
- (v) The learned Advocates/parties/witnesses, who may be seeking an adjournment, be accommodated. Only in exceptional circumstances, the Court may refuse to grant an adjournment.
- (vi) In criminal matters, the accused may be granted exemption from personal appearance for the time being and subject to further orders.
- (vii) The Video Conferencing may be put to maximum use for the purpose of recording of evidence and instead of physical production of under-trial prisoners from jails, facility of Video Conferencing, wherever available, be availed of.

- (viii) The District and Sessions Judges in consultation with the Prisons Authorities shall ensure that there should not be any crowding in the lock-ups and in this regard, appropriate measures be taken for sanitizing of the lock-ups and the persons placed there be sensitized.
- (ix) The hearing matters may be postponed for the present.
- (x) The Medical Dispensaries in the Court complexes be kept ready and fully equipped to tackle any emergent situation. The District Judges in coordination with District Administration should take preventive measures immediately.
- (xi) The District & Sessions Judges shall ensure that sufficient amount of sanitary items i.e. soap, sanitizers, thermal screening thermometers etc. be procured. If sufficient fund is not available, the Registrar General, Patna High Court be informed immediately.
- (xii) Dedicated/Core team to be formed (preferably District Judge be the Nodal Officer) in each district complex for monitoring the remedial steps.
- (xiii) No functions, where public gathering is expected, be organized during this period. All efforts be taken to minimize the foot-falls in Court complexes.
- (xiv) The Judge In charge of the Mediation Centre of all the District Courts shall postpone the mediation proceedings for the present.
- (xv) Yardstick prescribed for disposal of cases will not be strictly followed till 31st March, 2020.

A notice in this regard was also issued and uploaded on the Official website of the Hon'ble Court.

- 5) On reviewing the present circumstance, the Hon'ble Chief Justice was pleased to direct that the functioning of the High Court shall be restricted to only urgent matters. All matters, except Bail matters (regular/anticipatory), listed in the cause list dated 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020, shall stand over for 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2020. Only urgent matters, by order of the Motion Bench, were directed to be listed before the respective Benches. It was further directed that the number of bail matters (regular/anticipatory) listed before the respective Benches in the cause list dated 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 shall be restricted to first 25 cases only. All matters in which there is an earlier judicial order for listing in between 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2020 shall now be listed on 4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2020 before appropriate Benches. It was further directed that from Tuesday, the 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2020, the cause list will be published only for Regular bail matters and those matters which are urgent. A notice in this regard was thereafter issued and also published on the Official website of the Hon'ble Court.

## **DAILY REPORT OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR COMBATING THE IMPENDING THREAT OF NOVEL CORONA VIRUS**

**Date – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

- 1) A review meeting was held by the Hon'ble Chief Justice with the Hon'ble Senior Judges and the core team. Directions were given to the team to take a foot survey of the High Court premises to take stock of the requirements. Hon'ble The Chief Justice accompanied by the Hon'ble Senior Judges and the core team, himself visited the Court Dispensary and issued directions to the medical officer and staff present there to remain well prepared for identification of suspected case, if any.
- 2) In view of the gatherings noticed during the visit, Hon'ble The Chief Justice issued directions to keep the Gate no. 4 to remain open for vehicular traffic only from 9am to 11am and, from 3pm to 5pm. A notice was issued accordingly and an appropriate display was made on the gates.
- 3) All the canteens under the aegis of High Court administration were directed to be closed till further order in order to minimise footfalls. It was ensured that all washing areas were equipped with hand wash/ soap. It was directed that alcohol based hand sanitizers, procured by the Court administration, were to be distributed amongst all, starting from the employees engaged in cleanliness and sanitation work. A notice was issued accordingly.
- 4) Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India held a video conferencing with all the Hon'ble Chief Justices of the High Courts to ensure that the courts should not become a

contributing factor in spread of the COVID-19 and, effective remedial and preventive measures should be taken even to the extreme measure of closure of any specific court if required.

- 5) The Hon'ble Chief Justice held a meeting with all the Hon'ble Judges of the High Court to review the situation.
- 6) A video conferencing was held with all the District Judges to take stock of the situation.
- 7) After reviewing, Hon'ble The Chief Justice directed that in order to avoid congregation of lawyers in large numbers, half the strength of the High court would alternately be sitting on a particular day. Regular Bail matters under IPC & Other related acts, Cr.Appeal relating to Regular bail under SC/ST Act, and Cr.Rev. relating to Regular bail under J.J.Act, from the already listed matters, shall be listed before the Hon'ble Benches in limited numbers. Accordingly, a notice was issued and published on the Official web site of the High Court.
- 8) The team members, conducted a foot survey of the premises of the Court twice, during which, all gathered litigants were sensitised about the situation and requested to refrain from gathering in the premises.
- 9) During an informal meeting of the core team, it was resolved that for effective co-ordination with the district and to effectively over see the remedial/preventive measures being implemented in the High Court, each member would be allotted a given set of districts/ sections.

**DAILY REPORT OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR COMBATTING THE  
IMPENDING THREAT OF NOVEL CORONAVIRUS.**

**DATE: 17-03-2020**

1. The 10 officers core team visited the court premise including the Bar Chambers and ensured the sanitization as well placement of sanitizing materials.
2. As assured by the Municipal Commissioner, the cleanliness and sanitization of the High Court premise, Bihar Judicial Academy and Bihar State Legal Service Authority has been started.
3. The Gate No. 4 remain closed from 11 am and all the canteen running in the Court premises remain closed.
4. The volume of visitors has been considerably minimized in the Court Premise.
5. The staffs and officers of the Court were duly sensitized about the COVID-19 threat and its potential spreading tendency.
6. The 10 Officers Core team is continuously taking stock of the distribution and placement of sanitizing materials.
7. Hon'ble the Chief Justice has interacted with the Advocate General and other members of Bar to discuss the preventive measures being taken by the Court as well as for getting suggestions from them for further action in this regard.

8. Hon'ble the Chief Justice has instructed the Advocate General to consult the State Government and to ensure availability of Non-Contact Thermal Guns in adequate numbers as well as to co-ordinate the health department at district and sub-divisional court levels.
9. The Juvenile Justice Monitoring Committee of the High Court comprising Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ashwani Kumar Singh, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ahsannudin Amanullah & Hon'ble Mr. Justice Arvind Kumar Srivastava interacted with the Addl. Chief Secretary and Director, Social Welfare Department regarding preventive measures being taken up in the Child Care Institutions and Juvenile Justice Boards and Children Courts of the State. The JJMC has also issued various guidelines to the Stakeholders for strict compliance to prevent the menace.
10. A video conferencing with all the District Judges has been held from 3pm to 4 pm to discuss the situation in the respective judgeships. The learned District Judges apprised that besides sanitizing and awareness programmes being taken up by them, they are also taking following measures:
  - a. The litigants are being informed through the Chowkidars and staffs of the respective police station that their physical presence in their case is not necessary till further order by the Court and due to their non-appearance in their case no adverse order will be passed.
  - b. The litigants are also being informed about the aforesaid by "PUSH SMS" through CIS.



- c. Information to the general public regarding aforesaid has also been made through newspaper advertisement as well as a separate news headlines.
  - d. Steps are being taken for “chemical fogging” of the court premise.
11. Hon’ble the Chief Justice has emphasized the District Judges to ensure optimum use of Video Conferencing for remand purposes.
  12. Hon’ble the Chief Justice has directed to discontinue the use of bio-metrics and other such contact based monitoring systems in the Courts.
  13. Hon’ble the Chief Justice has expressed concern about non-functioning of metal detector installed in the High Court premises and requested the learned Advocate General to this issue with the government, so that the security of the premise be properly taken care of.
  14. In order to minimize the footfalls in the district/sub-divisional courts, Hon’ble the Chief Justice has directed to prepone the Morning Court from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
  15. Hon’ble the Chief Justice has given following directions for reaching out the litigants at the end level for awareness and other related information:
    - a. The Bihar State Legal Services Authority to take steps to telecast a message in local TV channels regarding awareness to the litigants that their physical presence is not required in the High Court & District Courts unless directed otherwise by the Courts as well as to inform the litigants that due to their non-appearance in their case, no adverse order shall be passed.

- b. For creating awareness to the public in general, the Bihar State Legal Services Authority to take steps for getting at least a half page advertisement published in all the leading newspapers(both Hindi and English) of the State.
- c. The Bihar State Legal Services Authority to take steps to broadcast a message in local FM channels so as to reach out maximum number of people.
- d. The District Legal Services Authority must engage Para Legal Volunteers to reach the litigants at village level and take steps for creating awareness in this regard.
- e. The BSLSA must take steps to monitor the condition of prisons and Child Care Institutions and take stock of the sanitization and awareness of the inmates.

## **DAILY REPORT OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR COMBATING THE IMPENDING THREAT OF NOVEL CORONA VIRUS**

**Date – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Wednesday**

- 1) The team members of the core team conducted a survey of the entire High Court premises twice. During the visit, it was noticed that there was noticeable decline in the number of persons present in the premises. A small group was noticed near the closed canteen area, which was advised by team member to disperse.
- 2) The cleanliness of the High Court premises was found to be up to the mark by the team in most areas except the area near the Criminal Miscellaneous section and, the Public Notary. This was brought to the notice of the Court Officer and he was directed to do the needful.
- 3) Soaps were found kept at all washing areas. Sanitizers were also supplied to the sections, registry and on the dais in court rooms.
- 4) Biometric attendance was still found to be operational by the team in the Digitization Center. This was brought to the notice of the Central Project Coordinator (CPC)/Registrar IT.
- 5) During the visit, it was brought to the notice of the team that 4-5 crows had suddenly fallen dead. The team failed to find any physical evidence for same but was later informed orally, that the dead crows had been taken away by the Animal Husbandry Department for conducting required tests. Further report in this regard is awaited.

- 6) The Hon'ble Chief Justice held a meeting with the Chief Secretary, Bihar and Principal Health secretary, Bihar, to review the situation and take any further required measures for prevention.
- 7) A Video Conferencing was held by Hon'ble Judges with the District Judges of Bihar, to review the situation in the Districts. Necessary directions were issued regarding remand being done only through VC from jail and avoid bringing prisoners to Courts physically.
- 8) As per the direction of the Hon'ble Chief Justice, a report was called for from all Districts in a prescribed format, about whether the prisoners were being remanded on physical production or through VC, along with reasons if the remand was not being done through VC.
- 9) Hon'ble The Chief Justice gave the following directions:
  - a. Required measures to be taken for cleaning and sanitizing the residence of the Honourable Judges.
  - b. To prepare a report regarding the feasibility of outsourcing of cleaning services in the District Courts.
  - c. A special direction was given to four members of the team to conduct an inspection of the premises of Patna Civil Court and submit a report thereafter.

## **DAILY REPORT OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR COMBATING THE IMPENDING THREAT OF NOVEL CORONA VIRUS**

**Date – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Thursday**

- 1) The Hon'ble Chief Justice, inaugurated Virtual Court from the visitors room of Patna High Court in presence of other Hon'ble Judges. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh presided over the Virtual Court in which 50 matters were taken up. Advocates appeared in 27 matters and, appropriate orders were passed therein.
- 2) Hon'ble Chief Justice had a meeting with the Principal Secretary, Forest and Environment along with the Director, Animal Husbandry Department, team of doctors from the Department and, the Municipal Commissioner, in view of the report regarding dead crows being found on the campus of the High Court. It was reported that a dead crow was first spotted on 17.3.20 just outside the gate no. 4 of the High Court. On 18.3.20, another dead crow was found near the entrance of the first administrative building and, on 19.3.20 (today) another dead crow was found between the first and second Administrative Building. The dead crows were taken away by the Animal Husbandry Department for examinations and, as submitted by the officials, a report is expected in 15 days.
- 3) The Animal Husbandry Department's team has started sanitization work in the campus.

- 4) Hon'ble The Chief Justice sent four of the team members to Patna Civil Court to prepare a survey report of the court premises during court working hours in order to take stock of the crowd situation prevailing there. Copy of the report is annexed.
- 5) Hon'ble The Chief Justice sent two of the team members to report about the number of lawyers present in various benches. Copy of the report is annexed.
- 6) Team member interacted with the various Observation Homes in Bihar to take stock of the situation there and to assess any remedial measures that may be required to be taken.
- 7) In view of the request of the Hon'ble Chief Justice to the Hon'ble Chairman, BSLSA, publication material in respect of minimising footfalls in High Court and District Courts were sent for publication in print media along with a broadcast on FM Radio. Copy of the advertisement is annexed. The broadcast is being regularly done on FM radio 93.5 at regular intervals.
- 8) The Hon'ble Chief Justice has directed for a Video Conference with the District Judges between 1 to 2pm tomorrow.