

Minutes of the meeting dated 28.05.2021 of the High-Powered Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Kumari Justice Sanju Panda, Judge, Orissa High Court and Executive Chairperson, Odisha State Legal Services Authority with regard to release of prisoners for decongestion of jails in view of spreading of Covid-19 disease, over telephonic conversation.

The Sixtieth meeting of HPC is convened through telephonic conversation by the following dignitaries:

- a. **Hon'ble Kumari Justice Sanju Panda, Judge, Orissa High Court and Executive Chairperson, Odisha State Legal Services Authority.**
 - b. **Shri Sanjeev Chopra, IAS, Principal Secretary, Home Department, Govt. of Odisha.**
 - c. **Shri Santosh Kumar Upadhyay, IPS, Director General of Prisons, Odisha.**
- I. The Member Secretary placed the following information for the period from **20.05.2021 to 26.05.2021** as received from all the DLSAs (except DLSA, Angul) consequent upon holding of Under Trial Review Committees in the districts for the aforementioned period, in view of the guidelines issued by the High-Powered Committee –

- a) **No. of UTPs identified for release on Interim Bail : 331**
- b) **No. of UTPs released on interim bail : 130**
- c) **No. of convicts identified for release on parole/
furlough : 38**
- d) **No. of Convicts released on Parole/Furlough/
Special Remission : 0/39/0**
- e) **No. of prisoners found infected by COVID- 19 : 322**
- f) **No. of prisoners recovered from COVID-19 : 331**
- g) **No. of prisoners succumbed to COVID-19 : 0**
- h) **No. of prisoners kept in quarantine wards : 1421**

II. Report regarding prisoners infected by COVID-19

Sl. No.	District	Name of Jail	No. of prisoners affected by COVID & date on which identified	Treatment	Measures taken for safety
1.	Deogarh	Special Sub-Jail, Deogarh	12 nos. On dated 26.05.2021	The said inmates have been kept in quarantine ward.	<p>i. Fire Brigade has sanitized the jail premises.</p> <p>ii. The UTRC instructs the Superintendent of Spl. Sub-Jail, Deogarh to sanitize the jail premises in regular interval in order to contain the spread of virus inside the jail.</p> <p>iii. The Committee apprises the District Administration to take all necessary steps as per Govt. norms for safety of the inmates.</p>
2.	Sundargarh	Special Jail, Rourkela	1 no. On dated 26.05.2021	The said UTP has been kept in an isolation ward.	<p>i. Complete sanitization of the Special Jail, Rourkela.</p> <p>ii. The CDMO, Sundargarh has been requested to take necessary steps for better treatment of the positive UTPs.</p> <p>iii. Steps for COVID-19 test of staff and inmates in consultation with the CDMO, Sundargarh</p>

					following Govt. guidelines.
3.	Dhenkanal	Dist. Jail, Dhenkanal	1 no. On dated 25.05.2021	The Superintendent of Dist. Jail, Dhenkanal has been directed to take effective steps in consultation with CDMO, Dhenkanal for shifting of COVID affected inmate to the COVID Care Centre for proper treatment.	The Superintendent, Dist. Jail, Dhenkanal has been directed to take appropriate steps for complete sanitization of the entire premises of the jail as well as quarantine ward/isolation wards.
4.	Bargarh	Sub-Jail, Padampur	95 nos. On dated 26.05.2021	Out of 95 prisoners few have been admitted at Covid Care Centre, Padampur and one convict has been sent to Covid Care Centre, Burla for treatment.	The whole jail premises have been sanitized.
5.	Ganjam	Circle Jail, Berhampur	1 no. On dated 25.05.2021 8 nos. On dated 27.05.2021	The UTP was sent to MKCG, Medical College & Hospital, Berhampur on 25.05.2021 through warder guards for checkup as per advice of jail medical officer, Circle Jail, Berhampur. The health condition of the said UTP is now stable. The infected inmates have been kept in the DCCC, Circle Jail, Berhampur and undergoing treatment. All the inmates are now stable.	i. Complete and full sanitization of the premises of Circle Jail, Berhampur. ii. COVID- 19 test of other UTPs who have come in contact with the affected inmate iii. Shifting of sick persons to a Nodal Medical Institution in case of emergency arises. iv. The Senior Superintendent, Circle Jail, Berhampur has been advised to keep the infected inmates in isolation so as to not contract with the other inmates till the

					expiry of the period suggested by the CDMO, Ganjam.
6.	Gajapati	Sub-Jail, Paralakhemundi	1 no. On dated 21.05.2021	The infected UTP has been kept inside the jail isolation ward and the treatment is being done inside the jail premises.	<p>i. Ensuring that all the UTPs along with all the Jails officials undergo mandatory COVID- 19 test.</p> <p>ii. Complete sanitization of the jail premises along with the rooms where the jail inmate was kept.</p> <p>iii. Contact tracing and ascertain the travel history of the prisoner.</p>
7.	Balangir	Dist. Jail, Balangir	31 nos. On dated 25.05.2021	The infected inmates are being treated inside the jail premises in isolation ward.	<p>i. The UTRC advised the Collector-cum-Dist. Magistrate, Balangir to provide necessary medical assistance to active COVID- 19 positive jail inmates in Dist. Jail, Balangir.</p> <p>ii. Steps to sanitize the entire jail premises (inside and outside) of Dist. Jail, Balangir.</p> <p>iii. In case of detection of emergency health situation due to COVID-19, the concerned inmates may be referred to Govt. Hospital for their better treatment.</p> <p>iv. The Jail authorities have been instructed to</p>

					provide immediate medical facilities regularly to the sick prisoners and the UTPs/Convicts.
8.	Khurda	Special Jail, Bhubaneswar	21 nos. On dated 20.05.2021 151 nos. On dated 23.05.2021	The Superintendent, Special Jail, Bhubaneswar instructed to take steps for issuance of requisition to CDMO, Khurda for deputing medical team for regular treatment of the affected UTPs till they are cured.	i. Sanitization of entire jail premises. ii. To increase number of quarantine wards as per requirement. iii. RT-PCR test has been conducted for all the prisoners in phased manner.

In view of the rapid rise of COVID-19 infection in the community at present and also basing on the report of UTRC, Bargarh and UTRC, Khurda regarding 95 prisoners and 172 prisoners respectively being found COVID positive, the HPC directs the UTRC, Bargarh and UTRC, Khurda to remain more vigilant and to take steps for scaling down the rapid surge in infection in jails, ensure proper testing, treatment facilities for COVID positive prisoners, carry out sanitization on regular intervals and monitor the health of all the prisoners/staff who were exposed.

III. Reports submitted by Directorate of Prisons and Correctional Services, Odisha

- i. The IG of Prisons & CS, Odisha vide memo No. 9660 dated 24.05.2021 intimated the OSLSA that the directions of HPC in its meeting dated 15.05.2021 have been communicated to the Superintendent of Sambalpur/Baripada/Dhenkanal/Sundargarh/Phulbani/Balasore/Kendrapara/Athagharh/G.Udayagiri/Nimapara/Jajpur-Road/Padampur jail stating therein that the DG of Prisons & DCS, Odisha has granted Special Parole/Furlough for a period of 90 days each in favour of the convicts of the said jails who are found eligible for release on Special Parole/Furlough in order to tide over the pandemic subject to condition that they have

surrendered in time to jails from last leave and not adversely reported thereafter inside jails or from local police. Usual Codal Procedures or records, sureties etc. has been followed along with COVID guidelines. During return, they have been advised to obtain Covid test report for safety of other inmates.

- ii. The DG of Prisons & DCS, Odisha vide its L. No. 9788 dated 26.05.2021 intimated OSLSA that in order to check spread of corona inside the jails of Odisha, an amount of Rs. 15000/- and Rs. 25000/- have been provided to each Sub-Jail and District/Circle Jails respectively for procurement of essential items like Medicines, kits etc. towards sanitization, cleaning and disinfection of Wards of Prisons and premises, the Chief Fire Officer, Odisha, Cuttack has been requested to sanitize all 87 jails of the State periodically with the help of local fire station staff and to issue required amount of sodium hypochlorite solution for regular disinfection. 47 nos. of convicted prisoners have been allowed to be released on Special Parole/Furlough for a period of 90 days each in pursuance of order dated 07.05.2021 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court as well as decision taken by HPC on 15.05.2021. The DG of Prisons has further intimated that total 717 prisoners have been released during May 2021 and all jails are taking up testing and isolation of COVID positive patients in the jails. One regular MBBS doctor has been posted at Special Jail, Bhubaneswar by Health & Family Welfare Department and one Senior Medical Officer of Circle Jail, Cuttack at Choudwar has been designated as Nodal Medical Officer for all jails to advise preventive medicines and other medical precautions for safety and protection of inmates through regular video conferencing.
- iii. As per the letter received from the IG of Prisons & CS, Odisha vide No. 9805 dated 27.05.2021 the Directorate intimated that against the scheduled capacity of 19824, the prison population in the State had gone upto 20150 as on 01.05.2021. As per various measures taken by the HPC towards decongestion, the prison population has drastically come down to 18580 as on 26.05.2021. Around 816 nos. of prisoners have been detected with COVID symptoms during May 2021, out of which 420 have already recovered till 26.05.2021 and rest prisoners are undergoing treatment. 658 nos. of

prisoners have been shifted from over-congested jails with permission of trying Courts. Emphasis has been laid on regular sanitization, cleaning and disinfection of prisons with the help of Fire Department. He further intimated that, local CDMOs and Sub-Collectors have been looking after healthcare of prisoners periodically, Nodal Medical Officer of Prisons Directorate has been guiding the Jail Superintendents on healthcare related issues and situation of affected jails is being monitored through regular video-conferencing by Prisons Directorate.

Taking note of the above facts, the HPC reiterates that all the stakeholders should ensure timely treatment of prisoners and look after the health condition of all the prisoners without lapses so as to avoid the spread of infection in the jails during the unprecedented situation caused due to the second wave of COVID pandemic in the State.

The Chairperson, HPC has also taken note of the fact that UTRC Angul has not been able to submit its reports for two consecutive weeks regarding condition of prisoners in jails as the District Court complex has been declared as containment zone. In the context, keeping in mind the safety of prisoners in the various jails of the district, the Chairman, HPC instructs the UTRC Angul to explore the possibility of holding the weekly UTRC meeting through electronic modes and submit the reports accordingly.

By Order

**Sd/-
Member Secretary
OSLSA**