

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HIGH POWERED
COMMITTEE HELD ON 6TH OCTOBER, 2020**

1. A meeting of the High Powered Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairperson, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority and Chairman, High Powered Committee, was held via Video Conferencing (VC) on 6th October, 2020, at 12:30 p.m. The meeting was attended by Mr. S. C. Gupta, IAS, Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim/Member, High Powered Committee; Mrs. Cheden Ladingpa, Additional Secretary (Confidential), Home Department/Member Secretary, High Powered Committee and Mr. K. L. Tenzing, Senior Superintendent of Police, District Prison, Namchi/Member, High Powered Committee. Also in attendance at the meeting were Shri S. P. Bhutia, Member Secretary, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority (SSLSA) and Mr. Sherap Tonyot, Deputy Inspector General (Prison), State Central Prison, Rongyek, East Sikkim.

2. The meeting considered the following agenda item;

- (i) *To consider the procurement of additional equipment for the purpose of VC in two Jails in Sikkim (State Central Prison, Rongyek, East Sikkim and District Prison, Boomtar, Namchi, South Sikkim) in terms of the letter of the Member (Processes) eCommittee, Supreme Court of India, dated 2nd September, 2020.*

3. Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairperson, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority and Chairman, High Powered Committee, informed that presently there are 14 (fourteen) Learned Judicial

Officers manning various Courts in Sikkim which are dealing with criminal matters in which Undertrial Prisoners (UTPs) are involved. That, if there is sufficient space in the Jails, then the VC equipment to be obtained should be equivalent to the Learned Judicial Officers holding trial in criminal cases, so that the matters can be conducted simultaneously and one Court does not have to wait for proceedings to complete in another Court.

4. The meeting was apprised of the fact that UTPs of the North District and East District are housed in the Central Prison, Rongyek, East Sikkim, and those of South Sikkim and West Sikkim are housed in District Prison, Boomtar, Namchi, South Sikkim. That, presently 3 (three) Learned Judicial Officers in the rank of District & Sessions Judge, one Chief Judicial Magistrate-cum-Civil Judge, and one Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate are posted in the East District. One Officer in the rank of District & Sessions Judge and one Officer in the rank of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate are posted in the North District. In the South District, one Officer in the rank of District & Sessions Judge, one Officer in the rank of Chief Judicial Magistrate-cum-Civil Judge and one in the rank of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate are posted. In the West District, one officer in the rank of District & Sessions Judge, one Officer in the rank of Chief Judicial Magistrate-cum-Civil Judge and two Officers in the rank of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate are posted.

5. Mr. S. C. Gupta, IAS, Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim and Member, High Powered Committee, informed the meeting that as per information given to him an additional reliable internet connection is required for both the Jails to enable better connectivity

for VC. The Chief Secretary also informed that additional infrastructure, such as, furniture and civil works will be required for the purposes of new VC systems which would be obtained.

6. Mr. Sharab Tonyot, DIG (Prison), Rongyek, East Sikkim, informed that on account of space constraints in the State Central Prison, Rongyek presently only one equipment for VC is being utilised, however additional three equipment for VC are required presently to enable VC between the UTPs and the Courts. That, additional space will be created by the Prison Authorities in the existing premises, housing the Library Room to accommodate three additional VC equipment in order to enable simultaneous functioning of the Courts.

7. Mr. K. L. Tenzing Senior Superintendent of Police, District Prison, Boomtar, Namchi, South Sikkim, informed that presently only one VC equipment is being utilised from the Jail for VC between the UTPs with Learned Judicial Officers of South and West Sikkim. That, the said VC equipment is also outdated. That, in view of this circumstance three new VC systems are required for the District Prison, Namchi.

8. The meeting was of the view that considering the requirement put forth by the Jail Authorities 3 (three) VC equipment are required for the Central Jail Rongyek, East Sikkim and 3 (three) for the District Prison, Namchi.

9. The meeting also agreed that specifications with regard to the VC systems for the State Central Prison and the District Prison,

Namchi shall be assessed by experts of the NIC, Sikkim, who shall make such assessment within two days and submit it to the Member Secretary, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority (SSLSA).

10. It was resolved that the Member Secretary, SSLSA, shall obtain the specification from the NIC experts and as well as additional requirement of furniture and civil works from the concerned Jails.

11. It was further resolved that the Member Secretary, SSLSA shall take up necessary steps immediately in coordination with the Member Secretary, High Powered Committee in light of the aforementioned discussions held at the meeting. Thereafter, the information shall be forwarded to the Registrar General, High Court of Sikkim, for information to the Member (Processes) eCommittee, Supreme Court of India.

12. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Sd/-
(Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai)
Judge, High Court of Sikkim
and Executive Chairperson,
Sikkim State Legal Services Authority,
Chairman, High Powered Committee

Sd/-
(S. C. Gupta, IAS)

Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim
Member, High Powered Committee

Sd/-
(Cheden P. Ladingpa)
Additional Secretary (Confidential),
Home Department, Government of Sikkim
Member Secretary, High Powered Committee

Sd/-
(K. L. Tenzing)
Senior Superintendent of Police,
District Prison, Namchi,
Member, High Powered Committee

Other Officers present at the meeting

Sd/-
(S. P. Bhutia)
Member Secretary,
Sikkim State Legal Services Authority

Sd/-
(Sharab Tonyot)
Deputy Inspector General (Prison),
Rongyek, East Sikkim.