


HIGH COURT OF SIKKIM

GUIDELINES TO THE DISTRICT COURTS

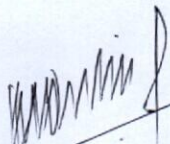
Dated 18th March 2020

In view of Office Memorandum dated 5th of March 2020 of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India by which an advisory had been issued cautioning against mass gathering to avoid the spread of COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus disease and the Government of Sikkim, in view of the rapid spread of COVID-19 Coronavirus in the country, having also issued a Notification dated 16th of March 2020, containing certain directions for strict compliance, the High Court of Sikkim is pleased to issue the following guidelines to the District Courts:

1. Entry and exit points to the Court complexes shall be restricted. Sanitizers shall be made available for the learned Advocates, visitors as well as staff at the entry point.
2. The Bar Associations and the learned Advocates may be requested to advise the litigants not to visit the Court(s) unless their presence is considered to be absolutely essential.


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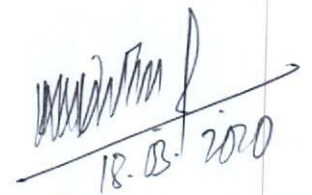
3. Bar Associations and the learned Advocates may be requested to ensure that there is no over-crowding in the Courts including in the Bar rooms.
4. The Courts shall not insist upon personal presence of the parties unless it is absolutely necessary.
5. Request for exemption from personal appearance of the accused may be considered liberally.
6. No adverse order or order dismissing cases for default shall be passed if the learned Advocate or the party is absent. Intimation, if any, by e-mail, explaining absence, may also be taken note of.
7. Dates for the cases may be spaced out to avoid too many cases being fixed on the same date.
8. Seating arrangement of staff shall be looked into to assess whether there is over-crowding in any particular room and, if required, alternative sitting arrangement may be worked out to avoid over-crowding.
9. Instead of physical production of under-trial prisoners from jails, video conferencing facility should be optimally used.


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10. Help line should be established in every Court for updating the litigants and learned Advocates about their cases.
11. A dedicated team headed by the jurisdictional District Judge be constituted in each District for taking stock of the situation on a day-to-day basis and to take such steps as may be considered appropriate and if need be, to take guidance from the High Court.
12. Functions or events where there will be a gathering of people shall not be organised.

The above guidelines are issued in larger public interest for the welfare of all stakeholders and the same shall be effective until 31st March 2020, when the situation will be reviewed.

By Order,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, followed by the date "18.03.2020" written below it.

REGISTRAR GENERAL