

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FUNCTIONING OF COURTS

Panaji, April 22, 2021

Vaisakha 2, 1943

In view of the outbreak of corona virus (2019-covid) the Goa Government has issued instruction to all the Courts and Quasi- Judicial Authorities which are under the control of Government of Goa, viz. Revenue Courts, Children Court, Industrial Court, Administrative Tribunal, Labour Court, RERA, Goa Human Rights Commission, Goa State Consumer Forum, Goa State Consumer Commission, Goa State Information Commission and other quasi- Judicial authorities such as Rent Controller, Dy. Director/ Directorate of Panchayat, Mamlatdars / Jt. Mamlatdars / B.D.O. to strictly adhere to the following:

All the above courts will take up only urgent matters such as applications for urgent orders of injunctions, grant of stay and such other urgent matters only. The competent authorities of above respective Courts will decide the timing of court functioning as per the situation prevailing in their respective districts. The principal idea being to avoid congestion and occasion of close contacts. However, they should endeavor that the court working hours are not more than 3 hours in a day and the working hours of the office to be decided by respective authority accordingly. The Bar Associations would also ensure that the Bar Rooms are not crowded and should not be kept open beyond the office working hours of the respective courts. The Canteens, Cafeteria in the Court should also remain closed beyond the aforestated working hours.

The functioning of the above courts should not insist on the presence of the parties unless it is unavoidable. All the above mentioned Courts and Quasi Judicial Authorities would take appropriate measures to regulate entry of the litigants and the general public in the Court Complex to avoid crowding. The lawyers may advise their clients not to visit the Court unless their presence is directed by the Court or is unavoidable. Till the present situation persist, no adverse/default orders may be passed in matters where parties are found to be absent. Parties/Advocate/witness seeking an adjournment may be accommodated. In civil matters, wherever possible, service of Local Commissioner be availed of for the purposes of recording of evidence, after obtaining the consent of both the parties.

The facility of video conferencing, if available, may be put to optimum use for the purposes of evidence in final argument matters, as far as possible, written submissions be called upon to be submitted in Court and the time for oral arguments be reduced to the extent possible. They should ensure that sanitizers are available in all the above respective Court complexes for the visitors as well as the staff, particularly those Manning windows where there is constant public dealing. Housekeeping agency/staff be asked to ensure that highest level of hygiene is maintained in the Court complex and disinfectants are sprayed on a regular basis.

All the possible preventive and remedial measures be taken to combat the impending threat of COVID-19.

The Competent Authority of above respective Courts may issue necessary directions in order to ensure that there is no crowding in the Court complex including the Lawyers Chambers. Necessary social distancing should be maintained during the transaction of the Court business. The Department should Endeavour to allot a time slot to address any query on the part of Advocates and Litigants and adhere the time slot in consonance with the social distancing mechanism.

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