05.05.2021

Thushara Upuldeniya
Commissioner General of Prisons
Prison Department
Colombo 09.

Re : Ascertain the rights & welfare of prisoners within the prisons in prevailing Covid 19 Pandemic situation

We, Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, would like to draw your attention towards the welfare of detainees in Prisons in prevailing pandemic situation.

It is observed that Covid 19 positive cases are identified in Prisons and detainees of Angunakolapalessa Prison had voiced their objection against bringing down of Covid 19 infected prisoners to Angunakolapelessa Prison and urged the authorities to do the PCR testing of new comers of prisoners.

Also, we would like to remain you that the commotion taken place in Mahara Prison in November 2020 too, based on such circumstances.

We urge you to take necessary steps to stop the further spread of pandemic within the prisons and intimate to the Human Rights Commission about what types of measures you carry out pertaining to Covid 19 infected detainees as well.

Director General of Health Services has decided to withheld the visiting of detainees by the rule as per the instruction given dated, 02.05.2021 “Revised limits issued under Covid 19 Risk stage 3” and accordingly it is noted there should be any optimistic arrangement of communication between detainees and their relatives.

Hence we instruct to you to inform the Human Rights Commission about the actions taken by the prison department in this regard before 15.05.2021.

This notice is given under section of 11(a) (d) of Act No. 21 of 1996 Human Rights Commission.

Chairman

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka.