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File No.2/Meeting-20/DS-NJPMC/LJCP
Dated: 23rd December, 2020

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PRESS RELEASE

Today, i.e. the 23rd of December, 2020, a Meeting of the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (NJPMC) was held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman, NJPMC in the Committee Room of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Islamabad.

On special invitation, the meeting was attended online by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Mushir Alam, Senior Puisne Judge, Supreme Court of Pakistan, and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Judge Supreme Court of Pakistan.

The meeting was also attended by the Hon'ble Members of the NJPMC including Hon'ble Chief Justice, Federal Shariat Court, Mr. Justice Muhammad Noor Meskanzai, Hon'ble Mr. Ahmed Ali M. Shaikh, Chief Justice, High Court of Sindh, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Athar Minallah, Chief Justice, Islamabad High Court, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Chief Justice, High Court of Balochistan, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Muhammad Qasim Khan, Chief Justice, Lahore High Court and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Qaisar Rashid Khan, Chief Justice, Peshawar High Court. Dr. Muhammad Raheem Awan, Secretary, Law & Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP)/National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee convened the meeting.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman, NJPMC stated that the coronavirus pandemic has affected all spheres of life, however, the judiciary stood firm and took preventive measures for safeguarding judges, lawyers and litigants, etc. Moreover, during the pandemic mostly important matters were heard, keeping in view the potential health hazards faced by judges, lawyers, litigants, witnesses, etc. and decided majority of the cases instituted during the period from 01.1.2020 to 30.11.2020. Moreover, further emphasized that the preventive measures against the spread of coronavirus may also be observed in future.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman, NJPMC pointed out that in order to curtail backlog of cases all the High Courts must take all necessary steps for timely disposal of cases and the respective Chief Justice assured that all out efforts would be made for elimination of backlog.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman, NJPMC also emphasized on filling the vacant posts at levels in the judiciary including the Special Courts, moreover, stated that efforts should be made for placing the Special Courts under administrative control of the High Courts.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Mushir Alam, Senior Puisne Judge, Supreme Court of Pakistan informed the Committee that as per NJPMC directions, the LJCP Secretariat has

prepared a PC-I for establishment of National Judicial Automation Unit (NJAU) in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, moreover, the Ministry of Law and Justice has assured full cooperation in finalization of PC-II and PC-I of the project.

It was also approved by the Committee that living conditions in jails must be improved including health and hygiene facilities for the prisoners. The Committee further emphasized that tests for infectious diseases must be carried out at the time of admission of prisoners in jails and then on periodic basis.

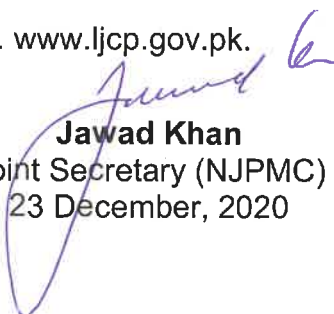
The Secretary, LJCP/NJPMC briefed the Committee about the issues related to construction of Islamabad Model Jail. It was informed that the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) approved the PC-I for construction of Islamabad Model Jail in its meeting held on 20.7.2016 at the cost of Rs. 3.9 billion and that Rs.1442.162 million has been utilized so far. The Ministry of Interior has communicated decisions of the Federal Cabinet that in case the judiciary directs to go ahead with the construction of Islamabad Model Jail then the area covered by the existing structure (approx. 20 acres) shall be utilized for the same, otherwise the structure shall be demolished and the Islamabad Model Jail may be relocated to another site outside the city. It was further briefed that the construction of Islamabad Model Jail was initiated upon the direction of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and 90 acres of land was allotted for its construction.

The Committee deliberated upon the issue and the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan desired that in order to observe the progress thereupon His Lordship would visit the construction site of Model Jail, Islamabad along with Hon'ble Chief Justice, Islamabad High Court.

The Secretary, LJCP/NJPMC also briefed the Committee that upon NJPMC direction, the LJCP Secretariat arranged two phases of training in 2019 of 118 Judicial Officers and Prosecutors at the Punjab Judicial Academy, Lahore and thereafter a total number of 193 Courts throughout Pakistan have been assigned to adjudicate GBV cases. Moreover, as per NJPMC direction, for capacity building to enforce Child Justice in Pakistan, training of 188 stakeholders including Judges and Prosecutors was coordinated at the Judicial Academies throughout Pakistan and currently seven Child Courts are operational. The Committee deliberated upon the issue and resolved that since women and juveniles are the vulnerable classes of society, therefore, the aforementioned cases must be decided within a period of two months.

The Director General, Monitoring Cell Model Courts, briefed the Committee about the performance of Model Courts and the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan directed that the MITs of all the respective High Courts should submit a comprehensive report regarding the Model Courts within two months.

This press release can be down loaded from the website, i.e. www.ljcp.gov.pk.


Jawad Khan
Joint Secretary (NJPMC)
23 December, 2020