

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM
PRESENT
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V
&
THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE K. V. JAYAKUMAR
Monday, the 31st day of August 2026 / 9th Bhadra, 1948
WP(CRL.) NO. 867 OF 2024(S)

SUO MOTU

RESPONDENTS:

1. STATE OF KERALA, REPRESENTED BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695 001.
2. THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF SECRETARY, HOME(C) DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695 001.
3. THE STATE POLICE CHIEF, STATE POLICE HEAD QUARTERS, VELLAYAMBALAM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695 010.
4. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS, PRISONS HEAD QUARTERS, POOJAPPURA, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695 012.
5. THE MEMBER SECRETARY, NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY, B BLOCK, GROUND FLOOR, ADDITIONAL BUILDING COMPLEX, SUPREME COURT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI, PIN - 110 001.
6. THE MEMBER SECRETARY, KERALA LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY, NIYAMA SAHAYA BHAVAN, HIGH COURT COMPOUND, ERNAKULAM, PIN - 682 031.
ADDITIONAL R7 IMPEADED
7. THE NIC, KERALA STATE CENTRE, CDAC BUILDING, VELLAYAMBALAM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 695033, REPRESENTED BY ITS STATE INFORMATION OFFICER.
ADDL.R7 IS SUO MOTU IMPEADED AS PER ORDER DATED 04/09/2024 IN WP(CRL.) 867/2024.

ADDITIONAL R8 IMPEADED*

8. UNION OF INDIA,
REPRESENTED BY THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,
ELECTRONICS NIKETAN, 6, CGO COMPLEX,
LODHI ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110003

*ADDL.R8 IS SUO MOTU IMPEADED AS PER ORDER DATED 30/09/2024 IN WP(CRL.) 867/2024.

This Suo motu writ petition coming again on for orders upon perusing the petition and the affidavit filed in support of WP(Crl.), this Court's order dated 13/07/2026 and the court passed the following:

MONDAY, THE 31ST DAY OF AUGUST 2026

WP (CRL.) No. 867 of 2024

SUO MOTU

VS

STATE OF KERALA & OTHERS

ADVS FOR PETITIONER/S:

NIL

ADVS FOR RESPONDENT/S:

PUBLIC PROSECUTOR, SHRI.LEO LUKOSE, O.M.SHALINA, DEPUTY SOLICITOR GENERAL OF INDIA, SHRI.SUVIN R.MENON, SENIOR PANEL COUNSEL, P.NARAYANAN, SPL. G.P. TO DGP AND ADDL. P.P. , SHRI.SAJJU.S., SENIOR G.P., DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PROSECUTION, KUM.S.KRISHNA



**RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V.,
&
K.V. JAYAKUMAR, JJ.**

WP(Crl.) No. 867 of 2024

Dated this the 31st day of August, 2026

ORDER

Raja Vijayaraghavan V, J.

This order shall be read in continuation of our previous orders.

2. Today, when the matter is taken up, Sri. Leo Lukose, the learned Standing Counsel appearing for the Kerala State Legal Services Authority (KeLSA), submitted that, in terms of the directions issued by this Court in the order dated 13.07.2026, affidavits have been filed by the Superintendent/Officer-in-Charge of the respective jails.

3. We have gone through the affidavits, and we find that certain grievances have been raised in the affidavits, which we shall advert to at a later stage.

I. Meeting of Stakeholders:

4. In our order, we had directed respondent Nos. 1 and 2 to convene a joint meeting of all the stakeholders, including representatives of the Police Department, the Prison Department, the Kerala State Legal Services Authority

(KeLSA), the National Informatics Centre (NIC), and the Information Technology Directorate of the High Court, for the purpose of formulating a comprehensive roadmap for the verification, validation, and updation of the master data relating to the various legislative entries incorporated in the e-Prisons application. We are informed that the Additional Chief Secretary (Home & Vigilance) will be holding an online meeting with all the stakeholders on 03.09.2026 to discuss the issues which have been raised. Let the meeting take place and a report be placed before this Court.

II. Creation of additional posts in the Central Prisons and other prisons:

5. The learned Standing Counsel would then submit that this Court had already recorded the request made by the Director General of Prisons for the creation of five additional posts in the Central Prisons and a minimum of two additional posts in the other prisons. This was to facilitate the effective updation of data and for other connected purposes. We had directed the learned Government Pleader to obtain instructions in the matter. The learned Government Pleader submits that the creation of additional posts involves a detailed procedure, particularly since it entails financial commitments on the part of the State, and therefore seeks an adjournment to obtain further instructions in this regard. We remind the State that the request made by the Director General of Prisons is essential for an effective implementation of the directions issued by the Hon'ble

Supreme Court. Unless the requisite additional personnel are provided, it would be difficult to implement the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The State is therefore expected to take a considered and expeditious decision in the matter, keeping in view the necessity of ensuring proper compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

III. Capturing of the CNR Number in the e-Prisons portal and the integration of the High Court Case Management System (HC CMS) with the iCOPS/e-Prisons application:

6. The next issue relates to the capturing of the CNR Number in the e-Prisons portal and the integration of the High Court Case Management System (HC CMS) with the iCOPS/e-Prisons application. In response, the IT Directorate has placed on record an Action Taken Report, wherein the issues relating to the integration with iCOPS and e-Prisons have been addressed. We find from the Action Taken Report that meetings have been conducted with the iCOPS technical team and that the required APIs have been received. The development work for integrating the High Court Case Management System with the iCOPS APIs is presently in progress. Upon completion of the development and testing, the information received through the APIs will be consumed and maintained in the database of the High Court Case Management System for further processing and utilisation. It is stated that, having regard to the requirements received and the progress of the development work, the integration between the High Court Case

Management System and iCOPS is expected to be completed within the next three weeks. We direct the officers of the iCOPS technical team as well as the IT Directorate to ensure that the entire process is completed within the aforesaid time frame and that the integration is made fully functional within an outer limit of four weeks.

IV. Mapping of a number of prisoners against the Jail Headquarters

Code:

7. The next issue relates to the continued mapping of a number of prisoners against the Jail Headquarters Code. In the report submitted by the IT Directorate, it is stated that, in compliance with the directions issued by this Court, the Headquarters entry has been removed from the Jail Master in the District Court Management Systems. It is further stated that it has been ensured that prisoner-related records received from the e-Prisons system are mapped only against the current prison institution. The matter has also been communicated to the Prison Headquarters so as to ensure continued compliance in this regard. We expect the concerned authorities to ensure that such records are not hereafter mapped against the Jail Headquarters Code and that the mapping remains confined to the prison institution in which the concerned prisoner is presently lodged.

V. Non-availability of 'released prisoner' or 'out prisoner' data and the consequential overwriting of prisoner status during API synchronisation:

8. The next issue relates to the non-availability of 'released prisoner' or 'out prisoner' data and the consequential overwriting of prisoner status during API synchronisation. We find that historical data relating to the accused, along with the corresponding Accused IDs, have been received from the NIC. It is stated that, in consultation with the NIC, the issue has been resolved by incorporating the details of released prisoners into the existing API. This would enable the system to retain the relevant historical information and prevent the status of prisoners from being incorrectly overwritten during subsequent synchronisation.

VI. Incorrect classification of judicial orders and deficiencies in API mapping between the District Case Management System (DCMS), the High Court Case Management System (CMS) and the e-Prisons portal.

9. The next issue relates to the incorrect classification of judicial orders and deficiencies in API mapping between the District Case Management System (DCMS), the High Court Case Management System (CMS) and the e-Prisons portal. It is stated that in order to rectify the aforesaid deficiencies, the classification of court order types and the corresponding API mapping have been completed. The system has been enhanced to support all categories of court orders made available by the NIC and that the same have been successfully incorporated into the DCMS. We expect the concerned authorities to ensure that the classification and mapping remain consistent across the respective systems so that court orders are correctly

identified and transmitted without any loss or distortion of information.

VII. Integration of the CMS and filing modules with the e-Prisons Legal Aid Portal.

10. The next issue relates to the integration of the CMS and filing modules with the e-Prisons Legal Aid Portal. In the Action Taken Report, it is stated that the required CMS APIs have already been shared by the IT Directorate with the e-Prisons technical team. The e-Prisons application provides a facility for capturing the CNR Number. It is stated that a minor enhancement is required at the e-Prisons end to enable the corresponding CMS Party ID to be mapped. Unless the Party ID is included in the existing API, the High Court Case Management System will not be able to consume the information and establish a seamless linkage between the prison records and the corresponding case records in respect of all pending cases. The inclusion of the Party ID is therefore essential for establishing an effective and reliable linkage between the prisoner and the corresponding case. Only upon such linkage being established will it be possible to facilitate effective tracking of court orders, prisoner status and other case-related information through the integrated system. Since the Party ID is required for all pending matters in the CMS, the proposed arrangement is intended only as a temporary measure to facilitate the entry of the CNR Number and Party ID in respect of pending cases.

11. It is further stated that, in the event of any delay in the development of the required temporary module by the NIC, the IT Directorate of the High Court

can develop an interface for all jails, enabling them to directly update the CNR Number and Party ID against the concerned pending cases. If such an interface is developed, the required information can be captured at the prison level and made readily available for seamless integration with the corresponding pending case records. It is also stated that, in respect of new cases, a provision can be incorporated to capture the Prisoner ID at the time of filing of the case, wherever applicable. The Prisoner ID so captured can thereafter be mapped with the corresponding CMS Party ID at the initial stage of registration of the case itself. Such a mechanism would establish a permanent linkage between the case records and the e-Prisons system from the very inception of the case. It would, in turn, facilitate the seamless exchange of information and effective tracking of prisoner-related details, court orders, release status and other case-related communications throughout the life cycle of the case.

12. From the Action Taken Report, we find that the IT Directorate of the High Court has agreed to develop an interface for all the jails so that the integration of the CMS with the e-Prisons module can be carried out. However, it is for the NIC to develop the requisite module to ensure that the same is reflected in the Legal Aid Portal of the KeLSA. We expect the NIC to develop the said module as expeditiously as possible, so that KeLSA is able to seamlessly view the relevant information in the "Appeal Against Conviction" module. The IT Directorate of the High Court shall also proceed with the necessary work and integrate the High Court CMS with e-Prisons. The object of the exercise is to ensure that the different

systems function as an integrated mechanism and that information already available with one authority is not required to be entered or obtained separately by another authority. We therefore expect the NIC as well as the High Court IT Directorate to expedite the work and ensure that the entire process is completed within a period of four weeks.

VIII. Evaluation of the performance of the portal by KeLSA and the issues noticed:

13. One of the issues highlighted before us by the learned Standing Counsel appearing for the KeLSA is that KeLSA has undertaken an evaluation of the portal and has found that, as on 29.08.2026, the portal reflects a list of 341 inmates who have been granted bail but have not been released within seven days. However, KeLSA has noted that court orders have been uploaded only in respect of 60 of those inmates. It is further stated that, in respect of inmates who had preferred applications for bail which were rejected, the number reflected in the portal is 113, out of which orders have been uploaded only in respect of 70 inmates. The figures placed before us indicate a substantial gap between the cases reflected in the portal and the corresponding court orders available in the system. Such a discrepancy requires to be examined immediately, since the availability of the court order is essential for monitoring the status of prisoners and for taking appropriate consequential action.

14. The learned Standing Counsel has suggested that KeLSA shall prepare

a list of the Prisoner IDs in respect of which the corresponding court orders have not been uploaded and share the same with the NIC as well as the IT Directorate. He submits that the IT Directorate can ascertain from the DCMS whether the relevant orders have in fact been uploaded therein, while the NIC can examine whether there is any technical lapse in the transmission or synchronisation of the data, or whether the issue is attributable to the non-uploading of the orders at the source. Let the requisite information be shared by KeLSA within three days from today so that the necessary steps can be taken by the IT Directorate as well as the NIC without any further delay. Let a report identifying the nature and cause of the issue be placed before this Court on the next posting date.

IX. Suggestions by Jail Superintendents:

15. The learned Government Pleader pointed out that almost all the Jail Superintendents have stated that it would be desirable to incorporate a separate module in the e-Prisons system for identifying and monitoring inmates who continue to remain in prison on account of non-payment of fine amounts. As the system presently stands, the e-Prisons module available for viewing by the Prisons Department does not provide a facility to identify and monitor such inmates separately. The absence of such a facility makes it difficult to ascertain the number of inmates who continue to remain in custody solely on account of non-payment of fine and to monitor their status effectively.

16. It is further stated that court orders relating to inmates who are

physically outside the prison premises, such as inmates who have been admitted to hospitals, produced before courts or taken out under custody escort, are presently not received through the system. Since such inmates continue to be reflected in the active jail entry records, it would be beneficial if the court orders relating to them are also made available through the system. This would ensure that the status reflected in the system corresponds more accurately with the actual status of the inmate and would facilitate proper monitoring by the concerned authorities.

17. We find that the suggestion made by the Superintendent, Central Prison and Correctional Home, Thiruvananthapuram, is reasonable and merits consideration. The same shall therefore be incorporated by the NIC and the IT Directorate so as to enable effective identification and monitoring of inmates who remain in custody on account of non-payment of fine amounts, as well as the availability of relevant court orders relating to inmates who are temporarily outside the prison premises for the purposes referred to above.

18. It is further stated that, on account of the non-updation of data by the concerned police authorities through the ICJS platform, delays are being experienced in the recording of the admission of inmates. Timely updation of such data is essential for ensuring the seamless flow of information within the e-Prisons system and for avoiding delays at the subsequent stages of the admission and monitoring process. It is therefore for the State Police Chief to issue necessary directions to the concerned police authorities to ensure that the requisite data is

updated promptly and that there is no avoidable delay in transmitting the information through the ICJS platform.

19. Another issue brought to our notice is that the e-Prisons software is experiencing significant performance issues, particularly while uploading the personal details of inmates, resulting in considerable delays in data entry. Similar difficulties are experienced while uploading the details of visitors attending prisoner interviews, thereby making it difficult for the prison authorities to complete the registration process within a reasonable time. It is also stated that the generation of reports becomes difficult, and at times impossible, as the system becomes unresponsive while the relevant data is being loaded.

20. It is further stated that technical issues reported by the prison authorities are not being resolved promptly and that the response from the NIC is frequently delayed. Such technical and performance-related issues directly affect the day-to-day functioning of the prison administration and the timely maintenance and retrieval of essential prisoner-related data. We therefore expect the NIC to examine these issues on priority and take effective steps to improve the performance and responsiveness of the e-Prisons system, besides ensuring that technical complaints raised by the prison authorities are attended to and resolved within a reasonable time.

21. One of the issues highlighted by the learned Senior Government Pleader relates to the non-availability of data concerning convicts who have not

preferred an appeal against their conviction. It is submitted that the present module does not enable the prison authorities to identify those prisoners who have not preferred an appeal against the finding of guilt. The availability of such information is important for enabling the concerned authorities, including the legal aid authorities, to identify cases where an appeal may require consideration and to ensure that no eligible prisoner is deprived of the opportunity to avail himself of the appropriate legal remedy.

22. These aspects also require to be examined by the NIC, and necessary modifications may be made to the system so as to enable the prison authorities to readily identify and monitor prisoners who have not preferred an appeal against their conviction.

Post on 30.09.2026.

Sd/-

**RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V,
JUDGE**

Sd/-

**K.V. JAYAKUMAR,
JUDGE**

APM