**Parole**

The term parole, comes from the French meaning “word of Honor” and was first used in 1846 by the Boston penal reformer Samuel G. Howe, which refers to the practice of allowing offenders to serve the final portion of a prison sentence in the community. More specifically, Parole is defined as “the status of being released from a penal or reformatory institution in which one has served a part of his or her maximum sentence, on the condition of maintaining good behavior and remaining in the custody and under the guidance of the institution or some other agency approved by the state until a final discharge is granted.

**History of Parole**

Parole has a long history. It seems to have first appeared in a rudimentary form when the British economy declined during the latter part of the 16th century. In the Colonies, the British need cheap labor. The British Government began to release such prisoners on conditional bail who are physically able to work that they offer their services to the government. Captain Alexander Maconochie of Norfolk Island is known as the “father of Parole”. He established a system known as “mark System” where an inmate could earn early release through hard work and good behavior. Sir Walter Crofton’s “Irish system” was a refinement of Maconochie’s ideas in which an inmate can earn conditional release.

The concept of parole continued to evolve in United States with the principles of “good-time laws”. The notion of the “good-time laws are, if the inmates maintained an institutional record of hard work and good conduct, they could be released after a shorter period than that imposed by the sentencing court. This law was an attempt to reform criminals. The first good-time law was passed in New York in 1817. It provided that first-term prisoners with sentence of 5 years or less could reduce their sentences by one-fourth for good behavior. In 1869, Michigan adopted the first indeterminate sentencing law. Under its provisions, an offender could be released when his behavior showed that he could be returned to society. By the second decade of the 20th century, most states have indeterminate sentencing laws, and the nature of parole as it is understood today had become firmly established.

The term parole and probation have often been mistakenly used interchangeably but there are many differences between the two. Probation involves a sentence to community supervision as an alternative to imprisonment while parole is the conditional release after a period of imprisonment has already been served.

**Parole in Pakistan**

Like many other laws, the parole law has also colonial origin. The parole system is primarily based on The Good Conduct Prisoners Probational Release Act, 1926 and its Rules, 1927; and executive orders for implementation. Under these rules, the Executive (Home Secretary) of the province is empowered to release certain offenders on parole. The prison administration and the concerned parole officer will develop a detail report, on the application of prisoner or his family, regarding the conduct of the prisoner and send it to the executive for further actions. When the executive is satisfied that a prisoner’s track record or good conduct behind bars suggests that he or she would likely abstain from crime and would lead a useful life in the community, it may grant a license of release on the condition that the prisoner remains under the supervision of a parole officer or a “secular institution or of a person or society professing the same religion as the prisoner”. The parole officer is responsible for the look after of the parolee. He will assist him in rehabilitation. A parolee must be employed a minimum of 45 miles away from their immediate families and can meet their families by taking casual leave with the approval of the relevant parole officer. The parolee become eligible for casual leave after completion of the first six months of the parole period.

**Difference between probation and parole**

Probation and parole both serve the purpose of community rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. The main differences between them are as follows:

* Probation is given by the judiciary while parole is authorized by the executives;
* Probation refers to suspending the sentence or postponement of decision while parole is given in the last portion of the sentence after a prisoner has completed mandatory imprisonment; and
* The judiciary is responsible for probation revocation while parole revocation is made by the executive.

**Parole process in Pakistan**

The process of parole in Pakistan is as follows

**Prisoner/family/governor prison/parole officer, submit appeal**

When a prisoner spends half of his imprisonment period and having good record during the course of his imprisonment, the governor prison or parole officer submit an appeal to the parole committee for the release of the prisoner on parole. Sometimes, the prisoner himself or his family submit the appeal for his release on probation to the parole committee.

**Appeal reviewed and advised home secretary**

The parole committee, constituted by the home secretary, thoroughly review the appeal submitted for the release of the prisoner on parole and advise the home secretary. The parole committee share their views on the appeal with the home secretary.

**Home secretary on the recommendations of parole committee gives approval**

The home secretary of the province reviews the views of the parole committee and gives recommendations on the appeal on the basis of the advice of parole committee.

**Prisoner released on parole or appeal rejected**

If the recommendations of the parole committee are in favor of the release of prisoner, the home secretary gives approval of the release of prisoner on parole. In contrast, if the recommendations of parole committee are against the release of prisoner on parole, the home secretary reject the appeal of releasing the prisoner on parole and the prisoner remain in prison.

**Employed on daily wages supervised by the parole officer**

When the home secretary gives approval of the release of prisoner on parole, he is employed on daily wages with government officials i.e. judges etc. or any other suitable person. The parolee remains under the custody of the person with whom he is employed. The parole officer is responsible look after the parolee.

**Successful completion**

The parolee completes his remaining period of sentence outside the prison under the supervision of the parole officer.

**Not satisfactory change/ PO violated**

The parolee will complete his parole period. As the purpose of releasing the prisoner on parole is to bring change in the life of the parolee. If the parole officer is not satisfied from the parolee regarding satisfactory change in his life, he submits his report to the parole committee and the parolee in again imprisoned.

**License violated**

When a prisoner is released on parole, a license of release is given to him. The license contains the conditions of parole. The parolee is not supposed to violate the conditions of parole. If the parolee did not follow the conditions of parole, it means he violate the license. In this situation, the parolee is again sent to prison.