

NATIONAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY



P-1130

NATIONAL WORKSHOP FOR PRINCIPAL DISTRICT & SESSIONS JUDGES ON COURT

ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ICT

(24th August 2018 – 26th August 2018)

PROGRAMME REPORT

PROGRAMME COORDINATORS:

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Faculty NJA

Object and Background of the Seminar:

The National Judicial Academy (NJA) organized a three day National Workshop for Principal District and Sessions Judges on Court Administration, Management and ICT from 24th - 26th August, 2018 at the NJA Bhopal. The workshop was conceived to provide forum to the participant judges to deliberate contemporary themes like re-engineering court process through technology amalgamation, relationship management between stakeholders, court management, human resource management, performance assessment, significance of court managers, and time management to strengthen court administration. The sessions also incorporated discussions on National Court Management System in court management, case management and effective use of ICT for digitization of records to improve functioning of the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG). Contemporary issues relating to connectivity and security which pose obstruction for efficient use of ICT at District Court Levels were also discussed in the workshop. The workshop also facilitated discussion on integration of technology in court administration, towards better accessibility and transparency in justice delivery

Session 1

Reengineering the Judicial Process through effective use of ICT

Speakers: Justice R. C. Chavan & Justice Ram Mohan Reddy.

Workshop was commenced by Director of The National Judicial Academy, Bhopal Justice G. Raghuram, extending a warm welcome to all the resource persons as well as to the participants followed by a brief introduction of the speakers. He then set the theme of the session and

handed over mike to Justice Ram Mohan Reddy. Justice Ram Mohan Reddy emphasized that term Re-engineering refers to Efficiently, Evolution, Assessment etc. He said that in this technology era the job of Principal District Judges is 24x7, not only in judicial aspect, but also in administrative aspect. He concluded by saying that whatever changes the future bring, we must always remember that justice must be assisted not dominated by technology. Technology do not improve the system, it is the people assisted by technology who makes justice system. Justice R. C. Chavan then expressed his views on the topic. He submitted that it is not that you have to do something extraordinary to use technology in court. He cited the example of Delhi High Court allowing service of summons through whatsapp. He said that PDJ's should take lead in integration of technology and others will definitely follow them.

Session 2

Implementing E-Courts Project at District Level

Speakers: Justice R. C. Chavan, Justice Ram Mohan Reddy & Mr. Atul Kaushik.

The theme of the session was set by Justice RM Reddy. Then, Mr. Atul Kaushik started his presentation on Implementing E-Courts Project at District Level. He said that he basically focuses on two Aspects viz. Technology and Access to Justice. He then discussed in broad the history of Computerization in Indian Trial Courts. He said that Phase I of the E-Courts Project started way back in 1999. At present we are in Phase II of the E-Courts Project. Initially the aim was to introduce computers in the courts. Then data updating on computer was started in the court. We have provided computers and supporting required hardware to all the courts and

also provided laptops to all the judicial officers. Then NIC developed CIS system and courts are now using it. He also discussed the funds allocation and the achievements of E-Courts Project Phase I and II. Lastly, he threw light upon NJDG i.e. National Judicial Data Grid and its utility to ascertain the number and types of arrears in every court of the country for better judicial monitoring and management.

Thereafter, Justice R. C. Chavan expressed his thoughts in brief about the implementation of ICT at District Level and concluded the session.

Session 3

Digitization and Paperless Courts in India

Speakers: Justice R. C. Chavan and Justice Ram Mohan Reddy.

Justice Ram Mohan Reddy commenced the session asking what do you understand by Paperless Court. He added, when we talk about paperless courts, it would be totally digitalized like petition would be filled through the soft copy, Judgment would be given in digitalized manner and also examination and evidence would be taken in the form of digitalization. But that is not possible in any of the court all over the world. That's why we can't consider it as paperless court rather we can consider it as "Less paper court" because somehow and somewhere hard copy is also involved in it. Then he discussed Integrated Court and Case Management System (ICMS). It is a Step towards using ICT to make the judiciary more accessible, equitable, transparent & speedy. ICMS consists of an Information Management system, Court Automation system and a reporting process. This system computerize, record

judicial information and monitor the progress of cases by the time the case is registered, till it is disposed of with judgement. ICMS ensures easy search, easy retrieval and grouping of judicial information, judicial record processing and the disposal of cases in a quicker and transparent manner. Further he threw light upon the E-filing process and related matters. Justice R. C. Chavan discussed the experiments at Maharashtra Judiciary in the ICT in courts. Then he suggested that CIS software has so many features, by taking recourse to which, you can reduce the use of paper in your court and achieve the goal of “Less Paper Court”.

Session 4

National Judicial Data Grid: Role of Principal District Judges

Speakers: Justice R. C. Chavan and Justice Ram Mohan Reddy.

Justice R. C. Chavan commenced this session and emphasized that NJDG is a part of ongoing e- courts integrated mission mode project. The NJDG works as a monitoring tool to identify, manage & reduce pendency of cases. The court data is made available through the National Judicial Data Grid at E-Courts website. The Supreme Court started this with a vision to transform the Indian Judiciary by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enablement of Courts. There are certain objectives of NJDG which are as follows:-

1. The Judiciary would be able to use ICT enabled tools to improve courts and case management & performance management.
2. To make Court data available through NJDG which will enable government to plan policy measures to reduce Pendency of cases.

3. Case status information, Orders & Judgments will be made available online.

Then Justice Reddy took over and suggested that NJDG is the best tool available to the Principal District Judges to assess the performance of judicial officers working under them. It can also enable PDJs to plan strategies to reduce the pendency in their respective districts. Thereafter, both the resource persons gave demo of the working of NJDG online on screen and illustrated its use for PDJs. After answering to the queries raised by the participants, the session was concluded.

Session 5

Human Resource Management and Motivational Leadership

Speakers: Justice Ram Mohan Reddy & Justice Kurian Joseph.

Justice Kurian Joseph commenced the session by setting the theme of the session and handed over the floor to Justice Ram Mohan Reddy. Justice Reddy started session saying that 'quality in judicial system require well trained managers which should be professional, transparent & responsible in their work.' He said organizational excellence, diligence in every action, promptitude are the qualities that every PDJ should uphold and practice. He said that PDJ shall be a Role Model for all other judges in district. He should also be a role model for a staff and bar.

Thereafter, Justice Kurian Joseph took the charge and stated that all human beings are equal with respect to status, equality in status, equality in dignity, equality in providing treatment by

the state. He stated that in order to become a leader we should fit a concept permanently in our mind that we should “Always be clean with our hands and clean in our Concept.” Then he defined leader in three ways viz. a person who knows the way, a person who goes the way and a person who shows the way. Further he said that we should always seek to take collective measures to achieve something wherein who will get the credit and who will earn recognition should not matter. That’s what a team spirit and leadership is. He concluded the session quoting Mahatma Gandhi - “You should be the change that you want to see in others”.

Session 6

Staff Management & Supervision: Inspiring Commitment & Catalyzing Performance

Speakers: Justice Ram Mohan Reddy & Justice Kurian Joseph.

Justice Kurian Joseph started session stating that Principal District Judge is the administrative head of the district and the team leader of the officers in the district. So it is the duty of PDJ to operate as a Captain of the team. It is the obligation of PDJ to maintain proper judicial tempo of functioning in his district and be responsible for the efficiency in the district. Firstly, the principle district judge has to maintain punctuality and to ensure the same in other judicial officer in the district. He also needs to supervise that during court hours, all judicial officers are on the Dias. In case of any deviation district judge should personally warn the judicial officer to maintain punctuality and court timing. If there is still persistence that he is not maintaining punctuality, it became duty of the principle district judge to bring it to the notice of the High Court. He also said that management of staff in the court is very crucial. He has to do the proper

allocation of the work. Justice Reddy then expressed his views on the role of PDJ and urged all the participants that responsibility of the entire district lies on their shoulders to provide efficient results for the litigants in their district. He suggested that PDJs should take all the stakeholders into consideration while taking the policy decisions. He should be sympathetic to judicial officers and staff as well as to local bar. He concluded the session saying that PDJ should act as a catalyst in his district and should lead from the front and set an example for others.

Session 7

Court and Case Management: Case Flow Management for Docket Control

Speakers: Justice Ram Mohan Reddy & Justice Kurian Joseph.

Justice Kurian Joseph started session stating that an Independent and efficient judicial system is one of the basic structures of our Constitution. Our judiciary is accused of causing inordinate delays and creating the arrears. Here the role of PDJ becomes most important for mechanizing effective courts management system. He said that it is the duty of PDJ to see that proper allocation of work is done. For the purpose of this task he can take the help of the Court Managers and/or other senior judges. He should see that cases are doing effective progress.

Justice Reddy then took over and said that when we talk about Case Flow Management Rules, they are vital for the Subordinate court as well as for the High court. Under these rules, time limits should be fixed for every step whether it would be service of summon, recording of evidence of witness, Costs, Calling for cases, Adjournments etc. Everything came under such

rules. He further suggested that PDJs should fix the time limit for each kind of matter and should see that the timeline is followed.

Session 8

Performance Assessment of Judicial Officers: Ensuring Objectivity

Speakers: Prof. Geeta Oberoi & Justice Kurian Joseph.

Prof. Geeta Oberoi started the session with her PPT on the topic. She said that judiciary specially and society as a whole can benefitted greatly from the collection of accurate performance data of the judges. Benefits include job enrichment and individual development through improved assignment practices, insights and refined judicial education programs. She said that there is no uniformity in the standards of performance evaluation for Magistrates in India. All 24 High Courts have their own criteria to evaluate the performance of the judges/magistrates. In some states, magistrates have to provide 10 judgements for performance evaluation and in some other states, only two are sufficient. Rather, in one state i.e. Rajasthan, no judgement needs to be provided and only certificate by PDJ as to integrity of magistrate suffices the purpose. So we should try to have some uniformity in performance assessment of judicial officers. Justice Kurian Joseph supported her view and at the end, Additional Director of NJA summed up the session by conveying vote of thanks to all the resource persons and participants.

Session 9

Remedial Steps for Combating Delay and Making the Court Litigant Friendly

Speakers: Justice Anjana Prakash.

At the outset of this session, Justice Anjana Prakash divided all 35 participants into 7 teams five PDJs each. They were asked to identify the causes of delay in their districts and suggest the measures to tackle it and also to make the courts more litigant friendly. The common causes of delay and arrears identified from all the discussions were, lack of cooperation from Bar, Non service of summons/warrants, frequent transfers of judges/magistrates, inefficient and inadequate staff etc. During the discussions it was suggested by Justice Anjana Prakash that participants should share their best practices to tackle these problems. It was suggested that in each district there should be one summons/warrants monitoring committee created, summons/warrants should be also sent by mail and also by post/courier. Proper trainings should be arranged for staff members. Unnecessary adjournments should be curbed/avoided. Unnecessary arguments should be curtailed. Regarding service of summons/warrants, help from the local police heads can be taken and they can be asked to monitor the service of processes. She further suggested that effective use of Video Conferencing facilities, proper and equitable allocation of work etc. should also be utilized as a measures to curb the delay in the courts. The session was concluded by Justice Anjana Prakash saying that as PDJs you can play a very important role in combating the delay and arrears in the courts.

Session 10

Bar, Bench Relations and Role of Principal District Judges

Speakers: Justice Anjana Prakash & Justice K. Chandru.

Justice K. Chandru commenced the session saying that Bar and Bench conflicts have become routine matters in the courts. The Bar has become so aggressive that they are not allowing the courts to function. Boycotting the courts is the routine news now a days. In such scenario, role of PDJ gains much importance. He said that, punctuality should be maintained by judges as well as advocates. Proper listing of cases & no discrimination on the basis of Advocate and senior advocate is a norm that should be followed by PDJs. PDJs should conduct a Bar & Bench meeting every month in the routine manner so that the conflict, if any, would get solved in that meeting and also the administration of justice would be done in proper manner.

Justice Anjana Prakash then suggested that Bar should be taken into confidence and judges/judicial officers should also be taken into confidence for avoiding the bar bench conflicts.

Finally the session as well as workshop was summed up by conveying the vote of thanks to all the resource persons & participants for making this entire workshop successful.