

NATIONAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY



**National Seminar for Principal District and Session Judges on Court
Administration, Management and ICT**

[P-1083]

(2nd - 4th February, 2018)

PROGRAMME REPORT

PREPARED BY

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Overview of the Seminar

The National Judicial Academy organized National Seminar for Principal District and Session Judges on Court Administration, Management and ICT from 2nd- 4th February, 2018, which was attended by 37 Principal District and Session Judges. The objective of the Seminar was to enhance the knowledge and understanding about administrative and managerial skills involved in Court Administration. The programme aimed to motivate judges for efficient use of technology to enhance administration both inside and outside the Courts. The Seminar provided a forum for participants to discuss, deliberate amongst themselves and share experiences, knowledge and best practices in exercise of jurisdiction.

Day 1

Session 1 - *Reengineering Court Process through effective use of ICT*

Session 2 - *Court and Case Management: Case flow Management for Docket Control*

Session 3 - *Stress Management*

Day 2

Session 4 – *Implementation of E-Courts Project*

Session 5 – *Digitization and Paperless Courts in India*

Session 6 - *National Judicial Data Grid*

Day 3

Session 7 – *Efficacious Resource Allocation in Courts: Optimal Utilization of Manpower, Technology, Infrastructure and Finances*

Session 8 – *Staff Management and Supervision: Role of Principal District Judges*

Session 1

Reengineering Court Process through effective use of ICT

Speakers: Justice G.C. Bharuka and Justice R. C. Chavan

On *Reengineering Court Process through effective use of ICT*, it was highlighted that technology is a powerful enabler which can empower courts which require to meet core purposes and responsibilities in times of economic crisis, low court staff and in close court locations. To harness technology for the purpose there is a need to make serious efforts to examine process re-engineering opportunities since over 5000 crores of the taxpayer's money have been spent and still the desired result has not been achieved. Courts must plan to migrate from document to content management, initiate customer management to improve accessibility, quality of justice and enhance public trust. The session concluded with suggestions from the participants on how to make court administration more efficient by electronic filing, competent staff selection and ideological shift to achieve the object of the National Action Plan.

Session 2

Court and Case Management: Case flow Management for Docket Control

Speakers: Justice G.C. Bharuka and Justice R. C. Chavan

On the theme of *Court and Case Management: Case flow Management for Docket Control*, it was pointed out by the panel that most High Courts have framed their own rules for case flow management. These rules provide a guide for the judge to develop an efficient court. The rule provide specific timelines for significant stages of a case and seek to ensure that a case is disposed off in time. While the rules act as a guide, it is for the judge to ensure that his court functions efficiently and is litigant friendly. The judge as the leader of the court must motivate his staff to function effectively and to meet the timelines prescribed in the rules. The session concluded with suggestions from the participants on how to make court administration more efficient by through court managers by making guidelines for their recruitment, scope of work, remuneration and policies.

Session 3

Stress Management

Speakers: Justice R. C. Chavan and Mr. Pawan Kumar Singh

On the subject of *Stress Management*, The speaker discussed that stress is of two kinds Eustress – positive eg, promotion, marriage, and Distress – negative eg, bereavement, loss of a job. It was emphasized that a judge himself is on trial when he is conducting a trial in the court. Judges deal with people who are stressed and this stress passes over to them, knowingly or unknowingly. It was deliberated that stress may be caused by environmental, organizational and personality-related variables. It was emphasized that Stress occurs when the pressure is greater than the resource. There are two major reasons of stress i.e. when a person perceives a situation as dangerous, difficult, or painful and two when the person does not believe that he/she has the resources to cope with a situation. Therefore the most important point is to recognize the source of negative stress. It is a way to identify the Problem and plan measures to overcome it. It was further suggested that stress management/stress control can be done through ABC Strategy, where ‘A’ is Awareness, ‘B’ is Balance and ‘C’ is Control.

Session 4

Implementation of E-Courts Project

Speakers: Justice S.G. Gokani, Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva and Justice P.Naveen Rao

On the theme of *Implementation of E-Courts Project*, the panel gave a brief introduction of both the phases of the E- Courts Project. Thereafter, the panel highlighted certain security and connectivity issues and stated that until and unless these are not resolved no meaningful purpose can be achieved. It was suggested that merely providing hardwares will not serve any good as scanning of records is also a significant aspect and the principal district judges have an important role in implementing the phases. The session was concluded by realizing the need for ideological change as no policy formulation in itself can achieve the objective.

Session 5

Digitization and Paperless Courts in India

Speakers: Justice S.G. Gokani, Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva and Justice P.Naveen Rao

On the theme of *Digitization and Paperless Courts in India*, the panel highlighted that scanning is a sub-sect of digitization. Scanning old records and putting them into the system reduces the chances of misplacing of records. It was also observed that through electronic transmission .i.e. sharing of papers by e-power, reduction in case files, we are saving manpower. Computerisation of work flow management serves better in courts. The panel also highlighted the significance of video conferencing in cases where person appearance can be dispensed with, for example, Section 138 NI Act, family members in 498 A IPC, etc.

Session 6

National Judicial Data Grid

Speakers: Justice S. Talapatra and Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva

On *National Judicial Data Grid*, the speaker highlighted the key points of e-court project, discussing various phases of the project and the extent of its implementation in different district courts. The sessions also involved discussions among participants relating to record management and the level of digitalization. The speaker through a live demo showed the participants that the status of any case even at the Taluka level can be accessed and even the number of adjournments that has been granted by a particular court can also be seen.

Session 7

Efficacious Resource Allocation in Courts: Optimal Utilization of Manpower, Technology, Infrastructure and Finances

Speakers: Justice S. Talapatra and Justice Rohit Arya

On the topic of *Efficacious Resource Allocation in Courts: Optimal Utilization of Manpower, Technology, Infrastructure and Finances*, It was discussed that judiciary is a type of organization

which depends on individual contribution and to improve its performance management of human resource is an importance task. This mainly involves selection, recruitment and reassignment of workforce through job design, remuneration, training, promotion, performance review and discipline. It was suggested that court systems require effective leadership and management practices to respond to issues such as public trust and confidence, court and community collaboration, timeliness and consistency. Improving judicial infrastructure involves improvement of processual, technical and legal systems. Case and Court management will be part of processual dimensions of Model Court while the technical aspects include deployment of audio-video facilities in the courtroom, digitization of records, introduction of e-filing, electronic delivery of summons and notices etc. On the legal side, examination of the current rules of procedure of each court and suggestions for amendments for standardisation, if any, may be required. The session also deliberated on issues relating to planning of budget, how to efficiently utilize the available financial resource, and how to improve the day to day working with the available infrastructure.

Session 8

Staff Management and Supervision: Role of Principal District Judges

Speakers: Justice S. Talapatra and Justice Rohit Arya and Mr. Talwant Singh

On the theme of *Staff Management and Supervision: Role of Principal District Judges*, it was emphasised that in order to develop an efficient judicial system, four aspects are to be taken into consideration - accountability, performance from all stakeholders, efficiency and effectiveness. To achieve these 4 aspects of an efficient judicial system, leadership from the judges is a necessity. The lack of clarity and uniformity in the role and responsibilities of court managers has proved to be an issue as the expertise of court managers has not been utilised to its full extent by the courts. To have good coordination, we have to drop the idea of superiority and at the same time good way of communication is required to deal with the staff. It is also necessary that important work must be communicated to a person through whom it is going to be executed. Decentralisation of power, teamwork and leadership by the judge are necessary to have an efficient system at the court.

Prominent Suggestions by Participants (Principal District Judges)

- Court managers having knowledge of managerial skills as well as computer software can contribute to make the judicial system user friendly by creating applications for litigants and also can create software to streamline the judicial process.
- Inefficiency of staff members is one of the main challenges, but the problem of inefficiency can be removed by adopting efficient recruitment process. Immediately after recruitment, there must be training programmes to enhance their knowledge, efficiency, and communication skills.
- Hardware is in abundance; ideological shift is required to develop an ecosystem of digitization.
- The NJA as well as other State Judicial Academies should provide the reading materials in e-format and should lead the way in the process of digitization.