

REPORT

(14.11.2018- 30.09.2019)

"JUSTICE, social, economic and political is the spirit and vision of the Constitution which WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA have solemnly given to ourselves on 26th November, 1949. It is among the aims and objects to be achieved by the Constitution. Social Justice includes Legal Justice which can be achieved by an inexpensive, expeditious and effective Judicial System easily accessible by all sections of the society irrespective of their class, creed, social or economic conditions. In order to achieve the objects set out in the Preamble of the Constitution we need to have an effective, responsive legal as well as judicial administration in the State to deliver inexpensive, speedy and quality justice accessible by all the stakeholders for which continual and productive efforts are necessary.

The High Court of Tripura was established on 23rd March, 2013 after suitable amendments in the Constitution of India and the North-Eastern Areas (Re-organisation) Act, 1971. The seat of the High Court is at Agartala, the capital of Tripura. Earlier, the State of Tripura along with the other six states of the North-East of India was under the Gauhati High Court. A Permanent Bench of the Gauhati High Court was established in Agartala in the year 1992 having territorial jurisdiction over the State of Tripura.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Karol has been appointed as the Chief Justice of High Court of Tripura on 09.11.2018 and His Lordship has taken oath on 14.11.2018 as the fourth Chief Justice of High Court of Tripura and is the second Chief Justice of Tripura High Court hailing from the State of Himachal Pradesh. His Lordship was born in Shimla on 23rd August, 1961 and is a native of Village Garli (First Heritage Village), Tehsil Dehra Gopipur, District Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. After practicing for about 21 years in various courts of India including the Supreme Court of India in Constitutional, Taxation, Corporate, Criminal and Civil matters, His Lordship was elevated as Judge of the High Court of Himachal Pradesh on 8th March, 2007.

The first Chief Justice of the High Court of Tripura was Hon'ble Mr. Justice [Deepak Gupta](#) (w.e.f. 23.3.2013 to 16.5.2016), now elevated as Judge of the Supreme Court of India. The second Chief Justice was Hon'ble Mr. Justice T. Vaiphei (w.e.f. 21.09.2016-28.02.2018) who was succeeded by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ajay Rastogi (w.e.f. 01.03.2018- 02.11.2018), now a Judge in the Supreme Court of India.

After assuming the charge of Office and Court of the Chief Justice of this High Court, His Lordship Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Karol has brought drastic changes in the State Judiciary with the active cooperation of the other Hon'ble Puisne Judges of the High Court. His Lordship has visited the whole state, interacted with the local people, lawyers and the judicial officers of the State. His Lordship introduced several administrative reforms in the field of justice delivery system. His Lordship has also played a major role in the expansion of state judiciary, development of judicial infrastructure and bridging the gap between the judiciary and the bar. The Hon'ble Chief Justice has created a history by disposal of highest number of cases in India. Immediately after taking oath His Lordship has drawn up an 'Action Plan' to ensure speedy disposal of pending cases in the District Courts as well as in the High Court. Frequent meeting and discussion with the Members of the Subordinate Judiciary and equal & even allocation of cases targeted under the Action Plan among the Judicial Officers had led to disposal of as many as 91,246 cases in the District Courts of Tripura during the ongoing tenure of His Lordship at the helm of Tripura Judiciary. As a result, there is a massive reduction of 33,890 nos. cases in the overall pendency in the District Courts of Tripura with pendency of cases as on 14.11.2018 being 60,724 and that of on 31.08.2019 being only 26,834. It has also been ensured that the oldest cases in the sessions division are properly targeted; and as of today there are only 3,753 numbers of cases (16 cases in the High Court AND 3,737 cases in the District Courts) which are older than 5 years in the State of Tripura. The majority of such pending cases are relating to the extremists who are absconding for a long period and warrants are pending against them. His Lordship has also taken ardent initiatives for execution of such long pending warrants of arrest against the fugitive accused persons in consultation with the implementing agencies of the State.

The significant and noteworthy events of the Tripura Judiciary during the tenure of His Lordship Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Karol, Chief Justice of the High Court of Tripura in the different sections are as under—

DISPOSAL OF CASES: As a result of the persistent efforts of the His Lordship Hon'ble Chief Justice, as of today, the number of pending cases in the High Court as well as in the District Courts of Tripura is under a manageable limit. The number of pending cases in the District Courts when His Lordship took charge of office of the Chief Justice was 60,724 and during His Lordship's tenure, the figure has been reduced to a magical number with total number of pending cases in the District Courts of Tripura as on 31.08.2019 being only 26,834.

For further reduction in the overall pendency, a plan has been chalked out and the whole-hearted efforts are on towards implementation of the same.

INFRASTRUCTURE: New buildings have been constructed and inaugurated in the Khowai and West Tripura Judicial Districts. Newly set-up family Courts have become functional in Ambassa and Khowai Judicial Districts. Many proposals for infrastructure development in the State of Tripura have been finalized and some of the projects are under construction.

His Lordship Hon'ble Chief justice has visited the residential accommodations of the judicial officers and the staff members of the District Judiciary. Appropriate directions have been given to the concerned departments of the State for taking immediate necessary steps. Measures have also been taken for the timely completion of all the ongoing projects of Court Buildings at Kamalpur, Amarapur and Sabroom. The projects of construction of judicial quarters at Ambassa and Udaipur have got much-needed acceleration due to site visit of His Lordship Hon'ble the Chief Justice.

FILLING OF THE VACANCIES OF JUDICIAL OFFICERS: The vacancies in the Tripura Judicial Service have been filled up in an exemplary manner. During the last 10 months, 19 vacancies in the Grade-III of the Service have been filled up. 03 Grade-III officers have been promoted to Grade-II of the Service; and 01 officer is likely to be promoted to Grade-I from Grade-II of the Service within a couple of days. Recommendation has already been made to the State Government. One judicial officer has also been recruited by direct entry in the Grade-I of the Service. For the first time in the history of Tripura, Advertisement for recruitment in the Grade-I of the Service has been issued twice in a year. The recruitment process for filling up the Grade-I posts has been completed in 74 days.

FILLING OF THE VACANCIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: A Committee was formed for centralized recruitment of staff at all levels. It is proposed that vacancies at all levels should be filled up at the earliest for smooth running of the courts. Advertisement has been issued for recruitment to the posts of court managers in all the judicial districts of Tripura.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW COURTS: New courts at all the levels were set up during the tenure of His Lordship Hon'ble the Chief Justice. Considering the necessity of the judicial officer for timely delivery of justice, the sanctioned

strength of courts was reviewed and new court of Additional District Judge was set up. New family courts were established in Ambassa and Khowai Judicial Districts. Family Courts in the remaining districts viz. South Tripura, Belonia; Sepahijala, Sonamura; and North Tripura, Dharmanagar will be made functional within short time.

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS OF THE STAFF OF THE HIGH COURT AND THE DISTRICT COURTS: The importance of the administrative staff of the courts was not out of the sight of His Lordship Hon'ble the Chief justice. His Lordship is a firm believer that for achieving optimum performance level of an institution strengthening of the employer-employee relationship is a must. During the tenure of His Lordship, in total 28 numbers of officials of the High Court in different grades have been promoted. Moreover, recruitment of regular technical manpower for the newly created judicial districts is also in progress.

IMPROVEMENT OF ADR: The Hon'ble Chief justice, realizing the utility of the ADR, has taken various initiatives in this direction for extending the benefits to the litigants and saviors of the society. His Lordship believes in the killing of the sin and not the sinner. His Lordship always advocates cordial relation in the society and up-keeping of the social values. Under the great leadership of His Lordship, the judiciary of Tripura has settled considerable numbers of cases in the Lok adalat and through mediation.

LEGAL AID: Legal services camps were organized at various districts. On the spot benefits were given to the beneficiary of various beneficial schemes. A Help Desk cum Legal Aid Clinic was inaugurated in the High Court. Tele help line will be started soon.

Legal Services Camps were organized at Gandacherra, Kailashahar. In the past few months, 30 Lok Adakats and 5 National Lok Adalats were organized. 47 remand advocates have been appointed. 16 Village Legal Care and Support Centres and 23 Literacy Clubs were established. 553 Legal Awareness Camps were organized which were attended by around 1,10,000 people.

LEGAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: His Lordship Hon'ble Chief Justice believes that the legal education and its updating is the prime necessity for maintaining the quality of the judiciary. His Lordship with constant guidance to the Members of the District Judiciary not only has focused on the quantity but also on the quality of the adjudication.

The sixth Annual Conclave of judicial officers was organized on 23rd March, 2019. Hon'ble Judges of the High Court deliberated lecture on the various legal topics.

Regional conference on Enhancing Excellence of the Judiciary Institutions: Challenges and Opportunities was organized by the National Judicial Academy in association with the High Court of Tripura and the Tripura Judicial Academy on 27-28th April, 2019. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Deepak Gupta, Hon'ble Justice Ms. Indira Bannerjee, Judges of the Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Mr. Justice A.K. Goel, Former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Karol, Chief justice of High Court of Tripura and Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. Talapatra, Judge High Court of Tripura deliberated during the conference of the different legal topics.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice G.S. Singhvi, Former justice of Supreme Court of India was invited to enlighten the judicial officers of the state on the topic- "Man has failed the constitution".

Lecture of the former Director, NALSA was organized on the Victim Compensation scheme for the newly inducted judicial officers.

TECHNOLOGICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Various initiatives have been taken under Phase-I & II of the e-courts project. BSNL MPLS connectivity through optical fiber has been established in all the 16 courts complexes of the State. In Phase-II of the project, CIS 3.1 NC Version has been implemented in Tripura and data has been successfully migrated in 12 CCs out of 16 CCs. Out of remaining 4 CCs, in 3 CCs CIS 3.1 NC version would be implemented soon. Display Board has been installed outside the court room. Procurement of servers for the courts has been completed. Directions regarding NJDG server are being complied without default. Generator sets have been installed in all the courts. Installation of solar Panels in CCS is in progress. Justice Clock has been purchased and shall be installed soon. 117 smart phones have been provided to the Process Servers and Bailiffs in the District Judiciary to track the status of the service of the processes. Initiatives for providing digital signature tokens for all the judicial officers of the State have been taken.

VIDEO CONFERENCES: All the courts within the jurisdiction of the High Court have been under the coverage of video conference. There have been frequent video conferencing sessions with the judicial officers of the State. The subordinate judiciary is given an opportunity to raise their concern, if any, though

these VC Sessions. His Lordship Hon'ble Chief Justice, during the video conferencing session, specially emphasized on the judicial ethics and conduct of the judicial officers.

EMPHASIS ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE BAR AND BENCH:

Lawyers have participated actively in all the activities carried out by the High Court from time to time. A sport meet was organized between the bar and the bench.

FOCUS OF FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES: To promote a spirit of patriotism and to uphold the unity of India, many inventive initiatives have been taken. A cultural function has been organized on the 150th Gandhi Jayanti with active participation of all the Judicial Officers of Tripura.

HUMANITY TOUCH: Under the initiative of His Lordship Hon'ble the Chief Justice, a cultural program – "AN EVENING WITH THE ANGELS" was organized in the High Court of Tripura on the occasion of Teacher's Day. Hundreds of under-privileged children within the age group of 6-15 from the Children's Home were invited on that day. Hon'ble Governor of the State was the chief guest in the said function. The Hon'ble Governor and the Hon'ble Judges of High Court shared valuable ideas in a friendly atmosphere. Games event were also organized for the children in the said function.