

THE NATION NEEDS 10,000 MORE COURTS [Dated: 07-03-09]

Emphasizing the need for faster justice delivery system, Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan has recently held that India needs 10,000 more courts to address the increase in number of litigations.

A. "We need at least 10,000 more courts so that we can reach a point where a case is disposed off within 2 years. And the process of appeals is completed within four years time frame," Justice Balakrishnan said, inaugurating the model e-court pilot project of the Gujarat High Court in February 09.

"It will be very difficult to execute unless the state governments come forward to establish more courts. Compared to other developed or developing countries the number of courts in India is much less, considering its huge population," he said. Country needs at least 4,000 courts at the village level, which will give the people at grass roots an opportunity to approach the judiciary, he said.

The CJI also emphasized on the use of modern technology in the justice delivery system to reach out to people.

B. He also said that the increase in the litigations is somehow connected to the education level in the states.

"In 2008, Kerala saw 30 per cent increase in litigations, while in Jharkhand which has the same population size, the increase is only 3 per cent. This does not mean that people in Jharkhand do not settle disputes, but they do not have opportunity to come to court," Justice Balakrishnan said.

He said that since in the present system it is not possible to dispose off the matter early, the Apex Court has set up mediation centers in various high courts and lower courts for settlement of cases.

C. The CJI also said that more people coming to court is a welcome thing. "This will lead to settlement of disputes in an amicable process through the court," he added.

Justice Balakrishnan inaugurated the model e-court project being implemented on pilot basis by the Gujarat High Court for the first time in the country.

The project synergizes technology with the judicial process to reduce bottlenecks in the system. The project will provide authenticated audio-video recording of court room proceedings along with multi point video conferencing facilities among

the court room, the central jail, the police commissioner's office and the forensic science laboratory.

It has been set up with financial support of the Central government and technical support of Technology, Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council, Centre for Advanced Computing and National Informatics Centre.