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Media Release

National Litigation Policy : Goal to Reduce Pendency Time

Law Min to MP Mr. Nathwani in RS

July 31, 2010 : The Government and its various agencies are the pre-dominant litigants in courts and tribunals in the country. The aim of National Litigation Policy is to transform Government into an efficient and responsible litigant. The underlying purpose is also to reduce Government litigation in courts so that valuable court time would be spent in resolving other pending cases. This is also to achieve the goal in the National Legal Mission to average pendency time from fifteen years to three years.

Dr. M. Veerappa Moily, the union minister of law and justice informed rajya sabha the other day in response to a fleet of questions about reducing court time from Mr. Parimal Nathwani, the rajya sabha MP. The minister also presented a statement showing pendency position in supreme court, high courts and subordinate courts of the country.

In accordance with the data submitted, as on December 31, 2009, the supreme court had 55,791 matters of which 34,976 accounted for admitted matters and balance 20,815 were regular matters. As on the same date, the total number of various court cases in different high courts of the states stood at 40,76,837 of which 32,50,291 were the civil cases while 8,26,546 were the criminal cases. The pendency position in the subordinate courts in the country is insurmountable. There were as many as 2, 72, 01, 726 total number of cases pending in the subordinate courts throughout the country. Of these, 76, 76, 077 were the civil cases whereas the number of criminal cases stood at 1, 95, 25, 649.

The data also reveal that the Allahabad high court topped the list with 9, 50, 864 total pending cases in the country. Not only that, Allahabad high court is also ahead of all other high courts in pending civil cases (6,68,029) and criminal cases (2,82,835). The Madras high court stands second in total pending cases category with 4,31,390 total cases and also in terms of pending civil cases with 3,94,508 number of civil cases. The high court of Madhya Pradesh is at second number with 62,040 criminal cases. The High Court of Mumbai is at number three with total cases of 3,38,183 and also third highest with 2,95,714 of civil cases. In terms of pending criminal cases, Rajasthan High Court is at number three with 58,407 cases.

The subordinate courts in Uttar Pradesh topped in the country with maximum number of total pending cases i.e. 54, 04, 633 as on December 2009. The State is also number one with the highest number of civil cases (12, 99, 048) and criminal cases (41, 05, 585). Maharashtra is at number two with 41, 34, 188 total number of cases in the subordinate courts and also in terms of criminal cases numbering 31,70,895. With 9,63,293 cases of civil nature pending in subordinate courts, Maharashtra is at number three in this category. The subordinate courts of West Bengal and Andaman Nicobar stand third in terms of total pending cases numbering 26,12,242 as well as in criminal cases category with 20,77,204 cases. Though the State of Gujarat secures second position in pending civil cases with 6,95,266 number of civil cases, the subordinate courts in Gujarat have fourth position in total pending cases category with 21,62,599 number of cases as on December 2009.

Mr. Nathwani's concern on different aspects of judiciary of the country is timely, if the number of cases pending in various courts of the states is any indication.

