**Hon’ble the Chief Justice of India Shri Justice N V Ramana**

**at the Conference of Telangana State Judicial Officers**

Gachibowli, Hyderabad

15 April, 2022

It gives me immense pleasure to be speaking at the inaugural session of the Conference of Telangana State Judicial Officers. I am told that this Conference is happening after a gap of 6 years. I am glad that you all have got an opportunity meet at one place and reconnect with each other.

The purpose behind organizing this Conference is to introspect about various factors governing the administration of justice and to discover ways and means to bring qualitative improvement in the system. Strengthening the subordinate Judiciary is the need of the hour.  I would like to share with you some of my thoughts in this regard.

The performance of any organization delivering any form of service, must be assessed in terms of its effectiveness in achieving its goals. The goal of the justice delivery system is to deliver timely justice, as contemplated in the Constitution.

Talking about the effectiveness of achieving the goal of justice delivery, the most crucial issue affecting the Indian judiciary, and particularly the subordinate judiciary, is the issue of pendency.

I understand that your functioning is adversely effected due to lack of infrastructure and large number of judicial vacancies. However, I assure you that I am giving my best, to address these issues on priority.

It is my firm belief that better judicial infrastructure and filling up of judicial vacancies is essential for improving access to justice. It has been my endeavour to fill up all the judicial vacancies at all levels. With cooperation from all the stakeholders we could make considerable progress on this front.

In case of Telangana, we could go a step ahead. The strength of High Court has gone up from 24 to 42. The working strength has gone up from 12 to 29. After I assumed office, so far 17 fresh appointments were made. You all know, out of those 17, 11 are from your fraternity.

In the latest round, out of the 12 recommended, 10 were already appointed. I am trying to get the remaining two names also cleared.

On the infrastructure front, you all are aware of my efforts to create statutory Judicial Infrastructure Authorities at national and State level. To deal with this and a host of other issues, I have taken initiative for hosting a joint conference of Chief Justices and Chief Ministers towards the end of this month. I hope and believe that the conference would yield desired results.

Coming back to today’s event, the greatest strength of the Indian judiciary is the faith of people in the institution. Being the Court of First Instance, it is your responsibility to ensure that the litigants remain satisfied. Litigants form an opinion on the judiciary based on the conduct of Officers / Courts in the Subordinate Judiciary. This casts a great responsibility on your shoulders.​

You have to create a congenial environment for the litigants. Often, the litigants would be under a lot of stress. You should try to make them feel at ease.

Always remember the human aspects of the dispute. Law cannot be far from equity. It is important to project the human face of the Judiciary, whenever you have scope for invoking your discretion. Make the Court proceedings accessible. Consider the socio-economic background, language, education, etc. of the parties involved and deal with them suitably.

You must sensitize yourself to different vulnerabilities of parties. Minors, women, persons belong to the weaker sections of the society, persons with disabilities, etc., might all have different requirements. Treat everyone with respect.

The role you play is highly significant in the Constitutional scheme. Apply your mind independently on the materials presented before you. For instance, the requirements of the Criminal Procedure Code are not mere formalities. They are an important check on executive actions and represent substantive rights of the accused.

The law is constantly changing. The High Courts and Supreme Court give numerous pronouncements on diverse subjects daily. Legislations are passed, and guidelines and circulars are published frequently. You must keep yourself updated. Learning in this field never stops. Only when you are aware about the changing law and precedents, you will be able to apply the same to the cases before you and ensure justice.

Beyond keeping yourself updated about the law, I also urge you all to keep abreast with the changes in other fields like science and technology. Very often, you might be confronted with novel cases relating to the same.

Most importantly, perform your judicial dutieswithout any fear. I am aware of the increasing physical attacks on judges. I am doing my utmost to prevent such occurrences. Directions were issued to improve the security of judicial officials both inside and outside Courtrooms.

I also urge all of you to take care of your health- both physical and mental. There is a lot of work and stress that we as judges must face. Take care of your family and spend time with spouse and children. However, you must take out time everyday to ensure you remain fit. Only if you are healthy, youcan continue to perform your judicial duty efficiently.  I know your financial well being is avery important factor. Only when you are free from financial worries, you will be able to give your best. Let me assure you that I have taken up the issues related to pay commission and you will soon get a good news on this front.

You must uphold the solemn oath you have taken on the Constitution. A Judge is judged not only by the quality of his judgments, but also by his character, transparency, and impeccable integrity.

In the last two years, we all have suffered immensely due to pandemic. We tried to minimize the loss of Court Hours by using modern technologies. With pandemic becoming less intense, the Constitutional Courts have been functioning with full potential.

I want you all to come out of the fear of pandemic. Please make sincere efforts to spare extra time for court, beyond regular Court Hours. I am sure, you all are going to do your bit to deal with the backlog.

Without improving internal efficiency of the system, we can not ensure effectiveness. Targeted action and effective case management can bring about a big difference.

The judicial officers have a duty to persuade the parties to choose ADR mechanisms whenever possible. This will not only ensure faster justice delivery but also will help in reduction of pendency.

The need of the hour is to enhance the usage of technology in case management system. I would encourage all judicial officers to keep themselves updated on the status of cases pending before them through the National Judicial Data Grid.

The District judiciary is the foundation of this institution. Only if the foundation is strong, the system will flourish.  It is for all of you to work in that direction and see that the flag of Judiciary flies high.

I have not hesitation in saying that the my friend of many years and Hon’ble Chief Minister of Telangana Sri K Chandrasekhar Rao garu is one of the most pro-active Chief Ministers as far as facilitating the functioning of the Judiciary is concerned. Judiciary of this State is fortunate to have the whole hearted support of Government. All of you are aware how encouraging he has been in setting up of International Arbitration and Mediation Centre which is generating employment opportunities directly and indirectly. In these times, when the employment opportunities are dwindling everywhere, it is remarkable that the Government of Telangana is doing its best to fill the vacancies in Government sector. I compliment the Chief Minister for his efforts in this direction.

You can not ask for a better well wisher than the Chief Justice of the High Court my Brother Justice Satish Chandra Sharma. He is there for you always. You can trust him to resolve all your genuine grievances in shortest possible time. I request him to expedite the process of recommending names for filling up of remaining vacancies. I urge upon him to keep in mind the social diversity while making the recommendations for elevation. Inclusivity doesn’t stop with enhanced representation of women. Every segment of the society should get due representation. Only then the society will develop a sense of belongingness with the judiciary.

My friend Shri Indrakaran Reddy garu, Minister of Law is actively collaborating with the judiciary in augmenting the facilities. I thank him for his cooperation.

With these words, I wish the conference all success.

Thank you.