

# Judicial Expansion in the Name of Judicial Infra

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## 'Trust Deficit And Low Priority For Judicial Infra Cause Court Delays'

### SC Judge Highlights Factors Leading To Backlog

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**New Delhi:** A trust deficit in the bureaucracy coupled with govt's low priority for judicial infrastructure are major causes of court backlogs and delays, Justice Manmohan — former Chief Justice of Delhi and now a Supreme Court judge — observed at Nyaya Nirmaan 2025.

Responding to Prime Minister's economic advisor Sanjeev Sanyal's claim that the judiciary is the "biggest obstacle" to India becoming a developed nation, Justice Manmohan spoke bluntly about Delhi's own struggles. He said that as Chief Justice, he had no courtrooms available to accommodate newly recruited judges. "Can you imagine, in a place like Delhi, there is no courtroom available to accommodate a judge? In one district, a judge was handling about 7,500 family dispute cases when the average should be around 1,500," he said, noting that although there were judges available, they could not be posted due to lack of physical court space.

Justice Manmohan recalled that four projects to revamp district courts at Shashtri Park, Karakdooma, Rohini and Rouse Avenue were started last year but are far from complete. "This is not a very high priority for the state govts. The budgetary allocations are very difficult to get. They are given at the pain of contempt. So it is an uphill task when it comes to this," he said, sharing experience as Chief Justice.

The SC judge also addressed the reason why delays occur in courts.

"Look at the govt of India. It litigates in each

and every forum and is the biggest litigant today. Have they reformed their system where every matter which starts from the civil judge is taken right up to the Supreme Court?" he wondered.

The judge highlighted that "no govt officer is spending money on litigation and every matter goes up to the SC. The officer fears he will be censured by the CVC, will have a CBI inquiry. So, the matter must be taken to the last court even if it is of Rs 500 rupees... Even if the expenditure on it is Rs 50,000."

#### JUSTICE MANMOHAN SAYS

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Lamenting that "there is no trust within the bureaucracy, the judge called it "unfortunate". But he reposed faith in mediation, again giving the example of Delhi.

"Today, in nearly about 90% of matrimonial disputes which have a colour of criminal litigation, which is 498A IPC, all matters are settled in mediation. You take up any partition suit of a Rs 1,000 crore family dispute, it will only be settled by mediation and by nothing else. We have to reimagine the system," he stressed.

CM: 53 fast-track special courts to strengthen women, children safety

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Delhi govt will establish 53 new Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) to expedite the resolution of cases related to crimes against women and children, chief minister Rekha Gupta announced on Tuesday.

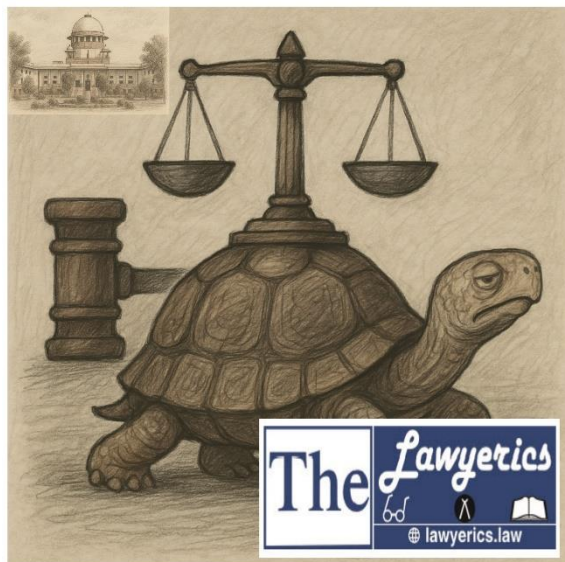
This will include converting the already functioning 16 such courts operating on a temporary or ad-hoc basis into permanent courts and setting up 37 additional ones.

Calling the initiative a significant step towards realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision that "Nari Shakti is Rashtra Shakti," Gupta said, "It's a long-term initiative to strengthen the justice delivery system."

Currently, there are over 17,000 pending cases. The need for urgent reforms was earlier discussed at a high-level task force on women's safety meeting, chaired by LG VK Saxena.

Following consultations with the high court and the law department, the proposal for 53 FTSCs was finalised. These courts will handle cases under the POCSO Act and rape-related offences (Section 376 IPC / Section 64 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita).

"Delhi govt will ensure all infrastructure, judicial officers and staff are in place. The law department has sent the proposal to the finance department, and appointments are expected to be completed soon," said CMO.



How much more judicial infra My Lord wants? Are there no other alternatives to it?

As a practising lawyer in central Delhi, I can share with you my experience in that area. There are five courts in the heart of central Delhi in area called Lutyens Zone – Supreme Court, Delhi High Court, Patiala House courts, National Green Tribunal and Central

Administrative Tribunal. At some distance away, there are Rouse Avenue courts but not very far. Earlier the Supreme Court building was confined to a triangular area enclosed by Tilak Marg, Bhagwan Das Road, Mathura Road. Now the Supreme Court complex has been extended to another new building across Mathura road. I am hearing that Bhagwan Das road might also be closed and the area may be merged with the Supreme Court Complex. So is the situation in Delhi High Court. I am hearing that residential flats of Central Government near Delhi High Court would be demolished and space provided to High Court for further expansion.

All these courts are in the area around monumental India Gate and National War Memorial. The roads around these courts are generally choked with parking of lawyers' vehicles. Parking indiscipline is quite visible around all these courts. One wonders why traffic police is allowing this to happen in the area where national symbols of our country are located. The reasons are known to those who are familiar with atmosphere in courts in Delhi.

I often wonder, to what extent the judicial infrastructure will go on expanding. More and more space would be needed so long we stick to feudalistic system of judicial administration. The system is in urgent need of simplification and modernisation. But frankly, some persons in lawyer community itself are not keen to do it. Somehow they are quite happy with the existing system.

Let us have a survey of public satisfaction of our existing judicial system. Many things will come out of it. Lawyer community need to reflect on why movies like Jolly LLB 1, 2 and 3 are successful. Why there is public appeal for these movies. It means there is some truth in them. We lawyer community need to think why there is no public outrage against Bulldozer way of controlling crime in U.P. As a matter of course, there ought to have been public outcry against it but it has gained public acceptability to a considerable extent.

The entire set of procedural laws need a change. Mediation, Conciliation, arbitration and judicial determination need to be converted into a comprehensive system where

conflict is resolved in a reasonable time and with affordable expenses. We do not need more infrastructure, rather we need simplified and modernized legal procedures in

which even the existing infrastructure would be more than sufficient at least in courts located in New Delhi. Let us do some introspection.