

ATMAN

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(The High Court of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh)

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Events organised by the Gauhati High Court from April to September, 2010

- Seminar on Access to Justice & Socio-Economic Development of North Eastern States on 17th and 18th April 2010 at ITA complex, Guwahati.
- Swearing-in ceremony of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Madan B Lokur on 24th June 2010 as the Chief Justice.
- Regional Review Committee meeting held on 26th June 2010 at Guwahati, for implementation of 13th Finance Commission Grants for improving delivery of justice.
- Seminar on Juvenile Justice held on 21st Aug. 2010 at Guwahati.
- Two-day workshop on Basic Computer Applications for Judicial Officers of Nagaland held on 21st & 22nd Aug. 2010 at Dimapur, Nagaland.
- Visit of Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India from 1st to 3rd September, 2010 to Guwahati & Shillong.
- Functioning of Holiday Court in Kamrup District, Guwahati.

From Hon'ble the Chief Justice



While it is true that judges should speak only through their judgments, yet it is equally important for society to know the efforts of the institution called the judiciary in providing timely and responsive justice. ATMAN is an attempt of the Gauhati High Court to reach out to society and highlight some of its varied activities.

The period under review has been one of positive changes, which will no doubt continue. With developments taking place in almost all fields, there is no reason why the North-East region should be left behind. This issue of ATMAN informs of the initial steps taken to improve infrastructure development in the courts and make effective use of information and communication technology – changes that will transform justice delivery in the areas under the jurisdiction of the Gauhati High Court.

Justice Madan B Lokur
The Chief Justice

Editor speaks

Only with periodic self introspection and adoption of effective corrective measures, the optimum potential of the Justice Delivery mechanism can be realised. Attention to developments of the subordinate Courts and its infrastructure is crucial as majority of the litigants experience the judiciary only through the subordinate Courts. Multifront initiative through computerization, holiday Courts, encouragement of ADR mechanism, training of Judicial Officers, empowerment of the litigants through Legal Aid and Information Technology etc. can bring significant improvement in the Court's output. With the current efforts of the Gauhati High Court in these key areas, visible improvement in rendition of Justice is expected in the 7 (seven) North Eastern States in the days ahead.



Justice Hrishikesh Roy

Launching of Access to Justice & Socio-Economic Developmental Programmes for North Eastern States held on 17th and 18th April, 2010 at ITA Complex, Machkhowa, Guwahati

"The North Eastern Region is an essential part of the Nation and contributes immensely to the process of nation building. The region has been actively associated with India's freedom movement, socio-cultural development as well as economic growth".

----- Hon'ble Justice K.G. Balakrishnan
Former Chief Justice of India

Under the aegis of the North Eastern Regional Committee for Access to Justice and Socio-Economic Developmental Programmes, NALSA and ASLSA in association with Indira Gandhi National Open University and Ministry for Development of North Eastern Region, Govt. of India, a two-day programme was conducted at ITA Center, Machkhowa, Guwahati, on 17th and 18th April, 2010 on critical issues like "Right to Education : A North Eastern Perspective", "North East and Media", "Environment and Sustainable Development", "Drug trafficking and AIDS", "Rights and Maintenance of Senior Citizens", "Terrorism and Human Rights in North East", "Human trafficking for Child Labour and Prostitution" and "Domestic Violence and Gender Equality : North East Scenario" in presence of accomplished resource persons. The idea behind the programme was to encourage awareness through academic debates and intellectual deliberation and to achieve a confluence of practical ideas and strategies for the all round development of the North Eastern Region. The programme witnessed open discussions on key issues in presence of the Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court of India and High Courts, NGO members, Social Workers and is believed to have created unprecedented sensitization.



Her Excellency the President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, delivering the inaugural speech



Her Excellency the President of India along with other dignitaries on the dais

Her Excellency the President of India, after formally launching the "Programme for access to justice and Socio-Economic Development of the North Eastern States" said that notwithstanding the progress stemming from the unhindered march of democracy since the last six decades, ensuring access to justice for the poor and weaker sections still constitute a big challenge. Asserting that the legal system should not only meet the requirements of individual justice but fulfil the broader role of being an instrument of legal empowerment for the society and the nation, the President said that a legal system structured on timely delivery, affordability and non-cumbersome procedures was best suited to provide access to justice.



Sjt. Tarun Gogoi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam Speaking in the programme

The Chief Minister of Assam in his speech referred to the problems confronted by the people of this region, specially the problems of insurgency, poverty, unemployment and illiteracy. He called upon the legal fraternity to ensure affordable access to justice for the litigants. The Chief Minister told that economic empowerment sensitises the masses to assert their rights. He pointed out that removal of exploitation, injustice and deprivation should be accorded top priority for developmental process to continue and emphasised that the legislature, judiciary and the citizens have a vital role to play in providing access to justice to the poor and disadvantaged sections of the society.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Altamas Kabir, Judge, Supreme Court of India gave a brief outline of the National Legal Services Act, 1987 and said that one of the important and basic objective of the Act is to reach out to those unfortunate people who have little or no access to the justice delivery system. It was also pointed out that common man needs to be educated through various processes specially the people in the tribal areas where people have limited access to justice. Apart from this, the other major area of concern is the socio-economic development of this region. His Lordship hoped that the launching of the programme on access to justice and Socio-Economic Development is just the beginning and not the end of it; it is the beginning towards achieving something that will ultimately be the end.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Altamas Kabir, Judge, Supreme Court of India addressing the gathering



Hon'ble Dr. Justice M.K. Sharma, Judge, Supreme Court of India conducting the session on Right to Education: A North Eastern Perspective

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Chief Justice (Acting) of the Gauhati High Court, in his Lordship's Welcome address pointed out that the North Eastern States are ethnically and linguistically the most diverse in the country and each State has a distinctive culture and tradition of its own. His Lordship further added that the legal and judicial scenario is equally diverse in this part of the country. The customary laws administered by local bodies at the ground level have proved effective in dispute resolution but at the same time administration of justice by the legal hierarchy of Courts has proved to be an unifying factor in the diverse region and have also achieved universal acceptability in the tribal dominated areas.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Amitava Roy, while conducting the session on Environment and sustainable development, laid emphasis amongst others on – Protection and improvement of the environment under Part IV of the Constitution. He



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Chief Justice(Acting) Gauhati High Court delivering Welcome Address



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Amitava Roy and Hon'ble Mr. Justice C.R. Sarma conducting the session on Environment and Sustainable development



Hon'ble Judges of the Gauhati High Court along with a section of audience

stressed on Preservation of the Eco-system and natural resources for the future generation. Unplanned development can't be allowed and it should be matter of concern for everyone to ensure protection of our environment.

The session on Drug Trafficking and AIDS was chaired by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hrishikesh Roy who spoke on the strategic location of the N.E. States which makes them particularly vulnerable to Drug trade and its consequential problems. The panellist stressed on a holistic effort to target the problem areas and the role of the stake holders to take up programmes for imparting training to Doctors and blood bank employees, sensitization programme for HIV patients, Targeted intervention programme and rehabilitation and care of HIV infected persons.

An important session on Rights and Maintenance of senior citizens was chaired by Hon'ble Justice A. Potsangbam, where Hon'ble Justice U.B. Saha, Judge, Gauhati High Court and Hon'ble Justice G.M. Akbar Ali, Judge, High Court of Madras were the appointed speakers. Terrorism and Human Rights in North East, chaired by Hon'ble Justice I.A. Ansari, Judge Gauhati High Court, Human trafficking for child labour and prostitution chaired by Hon'ble Justice T. Vaiphei, Judge Gauhati High Court and Domestic violence and gender equality chaired by Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Anima Hazarika, Judge Gauhati High Court also received enthusiastic response and made the two-day programme targetted at key issues of the region, a resounding success.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Hon'ble Mr. Justice M.B.K. Singh conducting the session on Drug Trafficking and AIDS

Swearing-in ceremony of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Madan B Lokur as the 54th Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, held on 24th June, 2010 at the Durbar Hall of the Raj Bhawan, Assam, Guwahati



Justice Lokur comes to Guwahati with impressive credentials having made significant contributions towards speedy dispute resolution through Alternative Disputes Redressal (ADR) mechanism, the modernisation of Courts, introduction of innovative measures like computerisation and video-conferencing of Courts and Jails. Before his appointment as Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court, Justice Lokur was the Chief Justice (Acting) of the Delhi High Court.

Regional Review Committee Meeting for implementation of 13th Finance Commission Grants for improving delivery of Justice held on 26th June, 2010 at the Assam Administrative Staff College, Khanapara, Guwahati



Dignitaries discussing in the meeting

A strong and independent justice delivery mechanism is promised by the Constitution of India to materialise the concept of a Welfare State. But without a strong infrastructural base the full potential of the Judiciary can't be achieved. Strengthening the Legal aid mechanism, preparation of infrastructural development plan for Subordinate Courts, increasing the strength of Judicial Officers, Computerisation of Courts are the areas of concern to be addressed by the 13th Finance Commission Grants. The first Regional Review Committee meeting for improving the justice delivery system was held on 26th June



Some State Officials are taking part in the Review Committee meeting at the Administrative Staff College, Guwahati



Hon'ble Judges of the Gauhati High Court along with some high officials of State Executive

2010 at Assam Administrative Staff College, Khanapara, Guwahati, where all the North Eastern States including Sikkim took part. The meeting was attended by Mr. M. Veerappa Moily, Hon'ble Union Minister for Law and Justice, Hon'ble Dr. Justice M.K. Sharma, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur, Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, Hon'ble Mr. Justice B. Ghosh, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim, Sjt. Pranab Gogoi, Hon'ble Law Minister, Assam, other Hon'ble Judges of the Gauhati High Court, High Officials from the State Executives of North Eastern States including Sikkim. The diverse initiatives promised by the 13th Finance Commission Grants for improving the justice delivery system is expected to go a long way in bringing justice to the citizen, irrespective of his position in society.

The initiatives approved by the 13th Finance Commission for improvement of justice delivery system in short are : increasing the number of Court working hours; using the existing infrastructure by holding morning/evening shift Courts; enhancing support to Lok Adalats to reduce pressure on regular Courts; providing additional fund to State Legal Services Authorities to enable them to enhance legal aid to the marginalised and empower them to access Justice, promoting the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism to resolve part of the disputes outside the Court system; enhancing capacity of Judicial Officers and Public Prosecutors through training programmes; and supporting creation of a Judicial Academy in every State to impart training. In addition, the Finance Commission also approved the creation of the post of Court Managers in every Judicial District to assist the judiciary in their administrative functions. The Finance Commission also approved the maintenance of heritage Court buildings and sanctioned a total grant of Rs. 5000 Crores towards these activities. The meeting had discussed the above issues meant to make the justice delivery system more effective. The Union Law Minister in his concluding remarks described the deliberations as informative and successful.

Seminar on Juvenile Justice held on 21st August, 2010 at Hotel Brahmaputra Ashoka, Guwahati

The Legal Assistance Forum organised a seminar on the monitoring mechanism for juvenile justice system on 21st August 2010 at Hotel Brahmaputra Ashoka, Guwahati. Hon'ble the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court Justice Madan B Lokur, Hon'ble Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Hon'ble Justice Amitava Roy, Hon'ble Justice B.K. Sharma, Director General of Police, Assam, High State Executives, social workers, officer from UNICEF etc. graced the occasion. President of the Legal Assistance Forum, Assam Chapter Sri M.K. Choudhury welcomed all the distinguished guests.

Hon'ble the Chief Justice emphasised the need to have proper infrastructure for effective implementation of the schemes of the Juvenile Justice Act. Justice Lokur suggested that the Kamrup District be taken up as a Pilot Project in the Juvenile Justice delivery system.

Hon'ble Justice Ranjan Gogoi lauded the efforts made by the Legal Assistance Forum and the UNICEF in creating the module for monitoring the Juvenile Justice system. Hon'ble Justice Amitava Roy laid stress on incorporation of the measures suggested by the Legal Assistance Forum. Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.K. Sharma urged the participants to project the practical problems faced by them while working in the field so that these issues can be tackled effectively by developing appropriate mechanism.

The Commissioner & Secy., Social Welfare Dept., Govt. of Assam, apprised the gathering on the steps taken by the Department, for effective implementation of the provisions of the scheme. He accepted the suggestion of Hon'ble the Chief



Sri Vijay Hansaria, Sr. Advocate and President, Legal Assistance Forum speaking in the seminar

Justice to take up Kamrup District as a Pilot Project to develop a model for the rest of the State to follow. The DGP, Assam spoke about the steps taken by the Police administration in tackling the problems of juvenile in conflict with law. Sri Vijay Hansaria, Sr. Advocate, Supreme Court, spoke on the objectives of the seminar and informed that the schemes under the Juvenile Justice system was not to punish but to reform and rehabilitate the juveniles and urged that this should always be kept in mind by all the Stake holders so that children find their rightful place in the society.



Hon'ble the Chief Justice, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi and D.G.P, Assam are seen in the pic.



Participants in the seminar

Two-day workshop on Basic Computer Applications for Judicial Officers of Nagaland held at CCC Room, District & Sessions Judge, Dimapur, on 21st and 22nd August, 2010



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Judge, speaking on augmenting Computer skills



A section of the participating Judicial Officers busy in the workshop on Computer Applications

The dream of a National Grid connecting all the Courts in India and the solemn objectives of e-courts project cannot be made a reality unless the Judicial Officers are trained in Computer operations. With this in mind, a two-day workshop on Basic Computer Applications for Judicial Officers of the State of Nagaland for the first time ever was held at CCC Room, District and Sessions Judge, Dimapur, Nagaland, on 21st and 22nd August, 2010. The workshop was designed for practical orientation to encourage prolific use of computers by the Judicial Officers of Nagaland.

The Resource persons and Technical experts were in attendance to make the participants understand all aspects of Computers and its usage such as law research, court management, communication, various programme in e-

courts etc. in a practical and simplified manner.

On the first day, i.e. on 21.08.2010, the importance of City Civil Courts conforonet and e-court, the language of Computers, Hardware and Software, Peripherals, Power Protection, Key board, Software operating system, Application and Data were demonstrated. On 22nd Aug. the participants were given information on how to make table, Merger of cell, Portrait and landscape, creation of folder, internet browsing and surfing, etc. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hrishikesh Roy delivered the keynote address on 21st August in the said training programme. The programme aimed at increased computer usage by the Judicial Officers of Nagaland.

Farewell to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Maibam Binoy Kumar Singh on laying down office as Judge, Gauhati High Court

Goodbyes are not forever. Goodbyes are not the end. They simply mean we will miss you until we meet again. A farewell reference by the High Court was given to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Maibam Binoy Kumar Singh on laying down office as a Judge of the Gauhati High Court on 30th August 2010.

Farewell Reference of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Maibam B.K. Singh, held on 27th August, 2010 at Imphal Bench of Gauhati High Court.



Hon'ble the Chief Justice offering a silver plaque to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Maibam B K Singh as a token of love & affection

Farewell Reference of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Maibam B.K. Singh, held on 27th August, 2010 at Imphal Bench of Gauhati High Court.



Hon'ble Justice Madan B Lokur, the Chief Justice, Hon'ble Justice A. Potsangbam along with Hon'ble Justice Maibam BK Singh

Justice Maibam BK Singh served as a District and Sessions Judge of Manipur since 14th March 1996. He was sworn as Additional Judge of the Gauhati High Court on 1st November 2004. Justice Maibam Binoy Kumar Singh will be remembered for his quiet dedication to work during his tenure of office. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Madan B Lokur, Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court was present in the Farewell Reference.

Farewell Reference of the Full Court on 07.09.2010 to Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Judge of the Gauhati High Court on his Lordship's transfer as Judge of the High Court of Punjab and Haryana, Chandigarh



Hon'ble the Chief Justice spoke on the occasion of Farewell Reference of the Bench and the Bar to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Judge and JAD, Gauhati High Court has been appointed as Judge of the High Court of Punjab and Haryana, Chandigarh. So, a Farewell Reference of the Bench and the Bar was held on 7th September, 2010 in

Court No. 1 to bid farewell to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi followed by a high tea in the Judge's Lounge. Farewell Reference was addressed in order by the President, Gauhati High Court Bar Association, Advocates Association, President High Court Bar, Kohima, Advocate Generals of Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, Additional Advocate General, Meghalaya and Govt. Counsels of the Central Govt., Tripura and Mizoram and the Hon'ble Chief Justice. The speakers remembered the yeoman contribution of Justice Gogoi for the administration justice under the Gauhati High Court. Justice Gogoi in reply thanked everyone for the assistance and co-operation received by him, in carrying out his assigned responsibility in the justice delivery system.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ranjan Gogoi & Smt. Rupanjali Gogoi receiving a flower bouquet from the Hon'ble Chief Justice on the eve of their departure to Chandigarh



Mr. Apurba Kr Sharma, President, Gauhati High Court Bar Association speaking on the occasion of Farewell Reference

Visit of Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India, Mr. Justice S.H. Kapadia to the North East from 1st to 3rd September, 2010

Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India, Mr. Justice S.H. Kapadia held two interactive discussions with judicial officers of all the seven States of the North East. The first discussion was held on 2nd September, 2010 in Guwahati and a variety of issues, including infrastructure development of the district courts and computerization issues were discussed. A similar discussion was held on 3rd September, 2010 in Shillong. New thoughts and ideas were generated to make justice delivery more effective in this region.

The discussions were also attended by Hon'ble the Chief Justice Madan B. Lokur and Hon'ble Mr. Justice I.A. Ansari.

Hon'ble Chief Justice S.H. Kapadia also interacted with the office bearers of the Gauhati High Court Bar Association and patiently heard their views and noted their suggestions.



The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, Justice S.H. Kapadia & Hon'ble Dr. Justice M.K. Sharma at Guwahati for interaction with Judicial Officers

Holiday Courts in Kamrup District launched on 29th August, 2010

While the conventional courts failed to ensure timely justice, HOLIDAY COURTS may come in a big way to provide the solution. A brainchild of Hon'ble the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur, the first HOLIDAY COURT of its kind in entire North East was held in Kamrup district on 29th August, 2010. Altogether 6617 cases were taken up in 10 booth and 4930 cases were disposed of. An amount of



Hon'ble the Chief Justice and Justice Amitava Roy speaking the Media

Rs.1, 40,380.00 was recovered as fine.

Having tested success in the first HOLIDAY COURT, the second one was held on 25th September, 2010, where 5418 cases were taken up, of which 4267 cases were disposed of and a fine of Rs. 1, 93,990.00 was recovered.

Gauhati High Court has now decided to hold HOLIDAY COURTS in different districts of Assam and other States.