BACKGROUND

The purpose of this paper is to engage our attention to what is perhaps the most critical of necessary changes – that of enhancing the managerial competence of our judicial system. Krishna Iyer, J. as regards reforms in judicial administration stated:

It is significant that while Business Management has invaded for the better of all institutions which mean business, only the Judiciary, the Legislature and Government administration have shied away from modern management technique. Judicial business Management, like other management skills, must be developed if our backward methods and archaic practices, which currently inflict enormous inconveniences, waste of time and money, delay and discontent and unscientific techniques are to quit us. Indeed, a good deal of expeditious handling is easily possible if we run out justice system like any other sophisticated, socially responsible business. Now we drift, drag and dawdle. The Judiciary must try to live in the nineties of the twentieth century!

OBSERVATION

There is an old saying that, “actions speak louder than words” therefore observation can best be done by understanding the role of Court Managers in implementing the Court Management System in Indian Judiciary

1. The roles of Court Managers are diverse, but the core lies in improving the operation of courts by freeing Judges from non-judicial duties and providing them with competent managerial infrastructures.

2. In consultation with the stakeholders of a court (including the Bar, ministerial staff, prosecutors, police, process serving agencies and court users), Court Manager prepares and update annually a 5-year court-wise Court Development Plan (CDP).

3. The Court Manager monitors the implementation of the CDP and report to superior authorities on progress statistics.
4. The Court Manager ensure that statistics on all aspects of the functioning of the Court are compiled and reported accurately and promptly in accordance with systems established by the Hon’ble High Court.

5. The Court Manager to ensure that court staff remain engaged, motivated and committed to the work.

6. Judges use their own criteria to monitor, evaluate, and motivate courtroom and other staff. They had wide discretion in how they manage, and organize their courtroom and sup-port staff. It is well known fact that Judges have to maintain psychological distance between them and other internal and external agencies. In such circumstances the Court Manager can be effectively used for manifestation and conversion of thoughts into reality and thereby the Judges can get the desired change even without getting directly involved into the affairs.

7. The Court Manager to ensure that processes and procedures of the Court (including for filing, scheduling, conduct of adjudication, access to information and documents and grievance redressal) are fully compliant with the policies and standards established by the Hon’ble High Court for court management and that they safeguard quality, ensure efficiency and timeliness, and minimise costs to litigants and to the State and this in turn will also enhance the efficiency of the system.

8. The Court Manager to ensure that case management systems are fully compliant with the policies and standards established by the Hon’ble High Court for case management and that they address the legitimate needs of each individual litigant in terms of quality, efficiency and timeliness, costs to litigants and to the state.

9. The Court Manager to ensure that the IT systems of the Court comply with standards established by the Hon’ble High Court and are fully functional. Feed the proposed national arrears grid to be set up to monitor the disposal of cases in all the Courts, as and when it is set up.

10. The Court Manager to create mechanisms for ensuring that processes and procedures of the court are compliant with the relevant statutes and the policies established by the Hon’ble High Court for case management. Suggest improvements in case management system in consultation with Presiding Officers and their staff.

11. The Court Manager to ensure that the court meets standards established by the Hon’ble High Court on access to justice, legal aid and user friendliness.

12. The Court Manager to advise on effective document management, utilities management, infrastructure management and financial systems management in the Court.
13. The Court Manager to assist Courts to establish the performance standards and create modalities for evaluation of compliance with standards and identify deficiencies. Maintain such evaluation on current basis through annual updates.

SUGGESTIONS / RECOMMENDATION

Judges are ultimately responsible for effective court management. However, the complexity of the modern court requires the delegation of administration functions and responsibilities to the Court Managers subject to the supervision and direction of the Presiding Judge. Unless Judge acknowledges the role of the Court Manager in enhancing Judicial Operation, the Court Manager will continue to face tremendous disaffection from the court staff members. The Administrative Officers and Sheristadar in the district courts being unsure about what will happen to them if they loose the trappings of the office to the Court Manager, will continue to escalate differences and conflicts between them and the Court Manager. At the end I also take an opportunity to suggest for high end court management programs so as to enhance the efficiency of the Court Managers in the core competencies of court administration as that of caseflow management, strategic planning, resources budgeting & finance, human resource management and information technology management.

INTRODUCTION

To begin with in the capacity of Court Manager, Chhattisgarh High Court I am entrusted with the responsibility to provide a glimpse of Hon’ble High Court as this will also enable me to make my words more understandable to the dignitaries having august presence in this Conference :-

The Chhattisgarh High Court (Hindi: छत्तीसगढ़ उच्च न्यायालय) is one of the new High Court in India. It was established on 1st of November 2000 as a separate High Court for newly created State of Chhattisgarh under the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2000 having its jurisdiction over the territories of the state of Chhattisgarh. The High Court of Bilaspur is the 19th High Court of India. The High Court was inaugurated by Hon’ble Mr. Justice B.N. Kirpal, Judge Supreme Court of India on 1st of November 2000 in the Presence of Mr. Arun Jaitley, Union Minister of State for Law and Justice and Company Affairs Hon’ble Mr. Justice Bhawani Singh Chief Justice of High Court of M.P. and Hon’ble Mr. Justice R.S. Garg, first Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Chhattisgarh at Bilaspur. It's new building is situated in Bilaspur at Bodri. The Court has sanctioned strength of twenty two Judges.

The fundamental requirement of a good judicial administration is accessibility, affordability and speedy justice. Mounting arrears of cases in the courts have been a cause of great concern for the litigants as well as
the State. In the present times, there has been an upsurge in the pendency of litigation in the country, especially in the district courts. The constitutional promise of Justice—social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity and fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the nation will only be realized when the justice delivery system is made within the reach of the individual in a time bound manner and within a reasonable cost. Speedy trial is a part of right to life and liberty guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. Both the Government and the Judiciary have made numerous attempts from time to time to address the challenges of judicial pendency and delay but still mammoth task remains to be done.

SCHEME OF “NATIONAL COURT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (NCMS)” FOR ENHANCING TIMELY JUSTICE.

Hon’ble Shri Justice S.H. Kapadia, Former Chief Justice of India has established comprehensive Court Management Systems for the country that will enhance quality, responsiveness and timeliness of courts. The National Court Management Systems primarily deals with policy issues. NCMS includes the following six main elements:

1. A National Framework of Court Excellence (NFCE) that will set measurable performance standards for Indian courts, addressing issues of quality, responsiveness and timeliness.
2. A system for monitoring and enhancing the performance parameters established in the NFCE on quality, responsiveness and timeliness.
3. A system of Case Management to enhance user friendliness of the Judicial System.
4. A National System of Judicial Statistics (NSJS) to provide a common national platform for recording and maintaining judicial statistics from across the country. NSJS should provide real time statistics on cases and courts that will enable systematic analysis of key factors such as quality, timeliness and efficiency of the judicial system across courts, districts/states, types of cases, stages of cases, costs of adjudication, time lines of cases, productivity and efficiency of courts, use of budgets and financial resources. It would enhance transparency and accountability.
5. A Court Development Planning System that will provide a framework for systematic five year plans for the future development of the Indian judiciary. The planning system will include individual court development plans for all the courts.

MANAGEMENT OF COURTS AND CASES

The introduction of management practices in the judiciary has been a topic of discussion for quite some times now. During this period many ideas have been mooted to tackle the enormous backlog of pending cases. While some of these ideas were implemented, others did not cross the stage of discussion and debate as the time has changed so does the role of judiciary in imparting justice, eventually role of judiciary has gone multi-
disciplinary and now it’s high time to manage Courts in a way which consequently results in efficiency and increase potential to impart justice. Some of the important benchmarks reiterated on various occasions regarding Court and case management are below mentioned: -

1. Case planning and grouping them in 3 or 4 categories for fast track, medium track and long track treatment- in other words, setting time lines.
2. Bunching of cases of a similar kind for collective treatment.
3. Annual target to be set for disposal of old cases and preparing a plan for its implementation.
4. Strict regulation of adjournments and imposition of exemplary costs for seeking it on flimsy grounds.
5. Making written arguments the basis for mainstream advocacy thereby limiting time for oral arguments.
6. Clear guidelines on exercise of judicial activism, admission of PILs, expression of personal views while hearing a matter contested in court.
7. Creation of an expert unit or secretariat in every High Court for processing cases for timely appointments, promotions and transfers based on objective criteria and methods.
8. Standard operating procedures on court and case management are the need of the hour, they would in turn aid in deciding priorities and acting on them like focusing on district courts. Gram Nyayalayas with flexible procedures work to reduce village disputes.
9. The possibility of issuing notices to parties before admitting second appeals or revision petitions should be explored. This may help in limiting the filings to cases involving substantial questions of law.
10. The Judicial Impact Assessment Report prepared at the instance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court will ensure infrastructural support for every new legislation or amendment generating additional demands on judicial time.

Hon’ble Shri Justice Dipak Mishra, Former Chief Justice of India put up fifteen indicators which may go a long way in Courts and case management. They are as follows:

1. Since 40% of the judicial time is spent in disposing technical pleas by the courts, the possibility of delegating this should be explored thereby imposing a limit to dispose of technical pleas by all Courts.
2. A Mechanism should be in place to monitor the progress of cases from filing to disposal. Categorization of cases on the basis of urgency and priority along with grouping of cases should be done.
3. Annual targets and action plans should be set up for the subordinate judiciary to dispose off old cases. A practice of bimonthly or quarterly review to ensure transparency and accountability should also be adopted.
4. The gap between institution and the disposal of cases should be bridged so that there is not much backlog. Though we have a National Judicial Data Grid, which is excellent, but simultaneously High Courts should organize data in a synchronized manner.

5. The shortage of judges is no doubt a factor responsible for pendency but at the same time if it is found that some courts are functioning and performing better in the same conditions, the best practices can be shared.

6. Courts should be litigant friendly and have the latest accessible litigant friendly technology to smoothen the working of justice administration.

7. Emphasis to be on ADR methods, especially plea-bargaining under Sec. 265A CrPC. He advocated that under the supervision of a magistrate, assistance should be sought from students to engage in interaction with the inmates and neutrally discuss the pros and cons of their respective plea-bargaining.

8. It is advised that proactive and functional committees should be set up at the High Court level. They should meet at least once a fortnight and keep their service and reports in digitized format with all sincerity.

9. Suggested stricter guidelines for grant of adjournments especially at the trial stage and not permitting dilution of time frames specified in CPC.

10. Exploring of opening of Courts on Saturday for cases other than criminal appeals.

11. Suggested fixing of time limits and deadlines for certain categories of cases in fast track courts and adhering to the same.

12. Adoption of multi-pronged approach to effectively deal with pendency.

13. Emphasis has to be given to basics and minutest details with meticulous planning to find out helpful solution to reduce pendency.

14. Each High Court may form think tanks with Judges, lawyers and academicians to consider and explore other innovative modes and initiatives to reduce delays and pendency.

15. Our motto should be, “shaping our judicial future: inspiring change through timely and effective justice”.
IMPORTANT POINTS ON BACKLOG OF CASES

1. One of the main items which involve considerable waste of the judicial time of every trial Judge is the system of calling out all the listed cases – which are not yet ripe for final disposal – to find out whether (a) notices are served, (b) whether defects are cured, (c) whether affidavits, reply or rejoinder affidavits are filed, (d) whether notices in applications for bringing legal representatives or record are served, (e) whether parties have taken various steps necessary to be taken at various stages of the case. This part of the work, in several trial Courts, takes more than an hour of the Judge’s time. By the time regular work is taken up, the Judge loses the freshness of the morning and is already tired. This system may be dispensed with and innovative system in lieu thereof may be devised whereby this work may be delegated to a Court Manager who can take up this work in regard to the matters to be listed before the Court in the ensuing week.

2. There is normally no distinction made between simple cases, and medium or more complex cases. All of them are put in one basket and taken up according to their year and number. In this process, simpler cases which would not have taken much time get mixed up with every other type of case and linger on in the Courts for number of years. There is no reason why simpler cases should not be put on fast track as in other countries. Those cases which are not that simple can be put in a middle track and more complex cases can be put in the normal track.

3. In the last two decades, fortunately we have followed the procedure of clubbing cases which raise same issues. This has resulted in grouping cases which are similar or connected and helped in their disposal in a block. This process must be continued with vigour. It would help if, when cases are filed in the Court, they are assigned a particular number or identity according to the subject and statute involved and straightaway grouped by the computer. In fact, further sub-grouping is also possible. Formats must be devised which lawyers have to fill up at the time of filing of cases, so that it will be easy for the registry to group the cases.

   Government pleaders’ offices may also be asked to store information in their registers or computers, stating under which statute each case falls or as to the point it raises and the Government lawyers can be frequently asked to come out with the list of cases which belong to the same category. Cases raising the same point, when they start in any Court, must be first listed for early hearing and disposed of before the flood actually invades the Court. The tendency to allow such batch-cases to accumulate into hundreds should be deprecated.

4. It is necessary to identify best practices for Court Management and how to guard against malpractices. Computerization is the riposte.
5. For Case Management, various aspects may require to be looked into, such as: a. Settling issues, b. Encouraging parties to resort to ADR, c. Extensive use of Order X of Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 in civil matters to narrow down issues, d. Fixing time schedules for specific steps.

6. Procedure for assigning cases to specialized Courts need resolution. Computerization of Procedures be done. Procedures be so computerized that the moment a case crosses a particular stage, the website shows and computer sets the next stage.

7. Extensive use of video conferencing facilities be done, including use of free video-conferencing software available on the Internet.

8. Matters of ADR are stress-less. Throughout the country, various Lok Adalats and Literacy Campaigns in all the three tiers are being held under the guidance of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and State Legal Services Authorities. Hon’ble Judges of Supreme Court of India, High Courts and Members of Subordinate Judiciary have been actively participating in this regard.


10. There is need of having 5-year Development Plans for Courts for effective management. Judge-Case Ratio and Staff-Case Ratio needs to be worked out. “Court Management Committees” are required to be made at High Court levels. “Performance Index for Judicial Officers” needs to be settled.

11. Sufficient number of Public Prosecutors is necessary. Timely recruitment and promotions of Judicial Officers and Staff are necessary for effective Court Management. For convenience of litigants, “Public Relation Officers” are required to be appointed.

12. “In-House Information Technology Departments” are required for taking advantage of technology.

13. Principles required to be adopted for effective Court Management and Case Management need to be identified.

14. It is necessary to settle Policies regarding having common nomenclature for different types of matters in the High Courts as well as Subordinate Courts.

**Following Best Practices are adopted in the District and Subordinate Courts of the State of Chhattisgarh for the Speedy Disposal of Old Pending Cases, Under Trial Cases, Bail Matters, Cases in which Interim Orders have been passed and Special Category Cases:**

1. While complying with all the previous directions issued with cut-off dates for the speedy disposal of old pending cases, District and Subordinate Courts of the State of Chhattisgarh are to make their own's specific plan to achieve the target of disposal of cases pending over 10 years by 30.04.2018 and
30.06.2018 as fixed for respective districts, and similarly, to achieve the target of disposal of cases pending between 05 to 10 years by 30.09.2018 and 30.11.2018 as fixed for respective districts. Besides, bail applications are to be decided within one week, and sessions under trial cases and magisterial under trial cases are to be disposed of within two years and six months, respectively.

2. List be prepared by all the District and Subordinate Courts of cases pending over 10 years, pending between 05 to 10 years, cases falling under Prevention of Corruption Act, under trial cases, bail matters, cases in which interim orders have been passed and cases pertaining to crime against women, children, differently-abled persons, senior citizens and marginalized sections of society. This list be reviewed every month by every Presiding Officer, assessment be made with regard to progress of disposal of these cases, and further strategies be made to eliminate hurdles, if any.

3. Each Presiding Officer is to identify the types of old pending cases (whether it is main case, miscellaneous judicial case, execution, etc.), and he/she is to find out the exact reason for the delay in every such old pending case.

4. Order Sheets in all the old pending cases be recorded by the Presiding Officers themselves.

5. Wherever it is practicable the complicated cases can be assigned to the senior and more experienced Judicial Officers.

6. The cases in which proceedings have been stayed by the High Court or other Appellate or Revisional Court, proceedings would not be adjourned in a routine manner giving long date, but on every date the Presiding Officer would check the status of the proceeding of the case. This may easily be done online.

7. All types of cases as indicated in the Action Plan (sent vide Memo No. 5671/D&A/2017, Dated 05th July, 2017) and the Special Category Cases (sent vide Memo No. 5672/D&A/2017, Dated 05th July, 2017) are to be taken on priority, assigning nearest possible hearing dates and avoiding all adjournments sought on insufficient and frivolous grounds.

8. The Presiding Officers are to handle tactfully the delaying tactics of the parties.

9. In all the Summons/Warrants issued in old pending criminal cases “URGENT - Old Pending Case” be written on the top of the Summons/Warrant. High level officers of the agency responsible for serving Summons/Warrants be directed to take seriously the service of such Summons/Warrants.

10. The District Judges and the Chief Judicial Magistrates are to ensure rationalized equitable distribution of the old pending cases within their respective jurisdictions. This rationalized equitable distribution should not be just equal distribution of old cases, but the stage and nature of cases should also be taken
into consideration. The report of the exercise for rationalized equitable distribution of cases be sent to the High Court.

11. The District Judges / Chief Judicial Magistrates are to hold meeting with those Judicial Officers who are posted at the district headquarter at least once in a month to take up all the issues and challenges related to speedy disposal of old pending cases and other priority cases and applications. Details of meetings be prepared and kept for perusal as and when it may be required by the Hon'ble Portfolio Judges of concerning districts or the Hon'ble Chairman, Committee for Delay & Arrears Matters.

12. It is to be ensured that faster disposal should not cause injustice to the litigating parties and quality must not be compromised in any condition.

13. Wherever there are trainee Judicial Officers who have not yet been assigned Boards, they may be attached to Courts having high pendency for assistance as a part of their training.

14. Writ petitions which are pending above 20 years, above 15 years but less than 20 years and above 10 years but less than 15 years form a class in itself. Those writ petitions have been classified on the basis of the subjects. These all cases are listed subject-wise with a list having caption “Old cases” before the Bench as per roster with a note that these cases will continue in that list till disposal.

15. As per guidelines of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the sittings of regular Special Benches have been constituted on Saturdays for hearing the Criminal matters wherein legal-aid has been provided.

16. The National Lok Adalats are held on regular intervals wherein priority is also being given on old cases.

17. The provision of mention slip and urgent hearing applications procedure is prevalent in the High Court so that urgent matter can be listed on top priority basis.

18. During the vacation period all endeavors are being taken to increase the sittings of Benches so that pendency can be reduced to a great extent.

19. During the vacation period and holidays, physical verification of pending records are taking place so that the list of bunch cases can be traced out for early listing and disposal of such cases by Court.

20. Report of Held-up cases collected from Subordinate Judiciary is being listed before Hon'ble Benches on top priority basis.

21. Criminal Appeals in which accused persons are in custody for more than 3 years, 5 years and 10 years have been classified separately and priority is being given on listing of such cases.
22. The High Court vide Notification dated 30.01.2018 has created permanent cadre of Court Managers in the High Court and Sub-ordinate Courts to ensure that case Management System are fully complied with the policy and standard established by the High Court for case management.

**ACTION PLAN REGARDING DISPOSAL OF 10 YEAR AND 5-10 YEAR OLD CASES PENDING IN THE STATE OF CHHATTISGARH.**

1. **ACTION PLAN AT THE HIGH COURT LEVEL**

   (i) The Hon'ble Chairman of the High Court Delay & Arrears Committee via Video Conference takes month-wise review as to disposal of cases.

   (ii) The problems and difficulties being faced by the District & Subordinate Courts in achieving the targets is being called from the District Judges and are taken up on priority basis.

   (iii) Vacant posts of Judicial Officers were filled up in the stations where it was necessary for the disposal of five plus cases.

   (iv) Similarly, Additional Number of Judicial Officers were posted wherever it was required to achieve the targets.

   (v) Additional Number of Special Courts were notified for the trial of large number of cases pending under Electricity Act and Prevention of Corruption Act.

   (vi) A Software/Entry Module has been developed for sharing the documents and informations related to held up cases between the High Court and the Trial Courts.

2. **ACTION PLAN AT THE DISTRICT COURTS LEVEL**

   (i) Five Plus cases were distributed rationally and equally as far as possible.

   (ii) Stickers have been affixed on the old pending cases for easy identification.

   (iii) District Judges held weekly meetings with their Subordinate Judicial Officers for review of matters relating to delay and arrears.

   (iv) Judicial Officers giving higher output were appreciated and others were encouraged for better performance.

   (v) A Police Officer has been made Nodal Officer for ensuring service of Summons and Warrants issued in old cases.

   (vi) Meetings were organized with the Bar Association to cooperate in speedy disposal of old pending cases.
USE OF TECHNOLOGY-A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO ADDRESS DELAY AND TO DELIVER SPEEDY JUSTICE

A well-functioning judicial system is required to keep up with the demands of modern democratic society. It is unquestionable that technology can play an influential role in ensuring that the relationship between citizens and the government is strong and communicative. However, it is important to ask under what conditions may it be beneficial to implement technology’s use. Inferring from last week’s seminar, proposals and rationale behind potential reforms were made from an economic perspective; how ICT can be used to see that cases are filed and judgments are delivered more quickly to improve efficiency and rationalize resources. Whether technology will be appropriated to facilitate a more equitable justice system is unknown, but it is certain that such will require a coherent national reform strategy with long-term political backing. Short-term technological fixes may improve India's judicial efficiency in the short term, but may, however, overshadow opportunities to bring about a more transparent and accountable system in the long-term.

Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Indian Judiciary and in Indian Courts needs rejuvenation. The successful use of e-governance for Indian e-judiciary model requires a techno-legal e-court framework. We need ICT Training and e-courts training for Indian Judicial System as soon as possible. Further, electronic courts in India must also be supported by active use of online dispute resolution (ODR) in India to reduce backlog of cases. Legal enablement of ICT systems in India is need of the hour.

Establishment of E-Courts in India is an important aspect of judicial and legal reforms in India. E-Courts in India cannot be established till we have experts who can manage this ambitious e-governance pilot project. Similarly, we also need to train judges and lawyers regarding not only e-courts but also for laws like cyber law and telecommunication laws.

The backlog of cases is increasing day by day affecting the outcome of various cases. There is an emergent need of judicial and legal reforms in India so that courts in India can meet the expectations of the 21st Century. This has to be done by maintaining a stance that preserves the courts reputation and supports the courts critical role in maintaining public confidence in the protection afforded to them by the law.

However, if the courts have to keep in step and play their part in restoring public confidence in the legal system then they must find new ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations. Information and Communication technology (ICT) can be a panacea for the overburdened judicial system of India. We can effectively use ICT for establishment of E-Courts in India so that E-Judiciary in India can be a reality.
The establishment of E-Courts in India requires certain prerequisites. These are:

(1) **E-Courts Policy:** Setting Policy for various aspects of E-Courts is the first and foremost requirement. In the absence of a well-defined and pre decided framework, no direction can be given to the E-Courts scheme of India.

(2) **Connectivity:** Creating an interconnected system across all court levels is an important aspect of E-courts. The District Courts in India must be connected with High Courts and Supreme Court for better, timely and effective disposal of cases.

(3) **Simplicity And User Friendly:** E-Court mechanism must be not only simple but also be user friendly. The litigants must find the e-Courts facilities in India very easy to adopt.

(4) **Scope:** In India we consider mere computerisation as establishment of E-Courts. In reality, E-Courts is much broader than mere computerisation and filing facilities.

(5) **Authentication:** Authentication plays an important role in fixing attribution and legal responsibility. There must be a “Technology Neutral Mechanism” to authenticate various stages of E-Courts usages.

(6) **Integrity:** E-Courts must ensure integration among court and justice systems.

(7) **Security:** Security of E-Courts Infrastructure and System is of paramount importance. A system must be put in place that provides secure access to case information for appropriate parties.

(8) **Data Keeping:** All the information regarding use of E-Courts facilities must be duly recorded and stored. These include maintaining proper records of e-file minute entries, notification/service, summons, warrants, bail orders, etc for ready and subsequent references.

(9) **Payment Gateway:** A secure, efficient and fully operational payment gateway must be established so that various payments and fees regarding court cases can be made online.

(10) **Absence of Monopoly:** The E-Courts Project must not be given to a single vendor. Instead the E-Court Committee of India must adopt a multiple vendor approach.

The e-Courts project was conceptualized on the basis of the National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of information and communication technology (ICT) in the Indian Judiciary–2005 submitted by e-Committee (Supreme Court of India), with a vision to transform the Indian Judiciary by ICT enablement of Courts. In other words, e-Court project is all about providing ICT enablement of courts to make justice delivery system affordable and cost-effective. The e-Courts
Integrated Mission Mode Project (Phase-I) is one of the national e-Governance projects being implemented in High Courts and district/subordinate Courts of the Country.

The e-Courts Integrated Mission Mode Project (Phase-II) has been approved by e-Committee of Supreme Court of India in January 2014 for further enhancement of ICT enablement of Courts with broad objective of:

1. Computerization of more than 8000 new courts, legal service authority offices and state judicial academies with strengthened hardware.
2. Connecting all the Courts in the country to the National Judicial Data Grid though WAN and additional redundant connectivity to enable integration with the proposed interoperable criminal justice system.
3. Citizen centric facilities such as centralised filling centres and touch screen-based kiosks be based at each Court complex.
4. Creating a robust Court management system through digitization, document management, Judicial knowledge management and learning management.
5. Facilitating better performance in courts through change management and process re-engineering as well as improvement in process servicing through hand-held devices.

**STEPS TAKEN BY THE HON’BLE HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH DURING THE YEAR 2017-2018 TO ESTABLISH A ROBUST ICT SYSTEM**

1. Software for the identification of held-up cases has been developed.
2. SMS Module for Advocates and Litigants in regard to sending the information of organizing Lok Adalat has been prepared.
3. Software for sending the True Copy of orders of this High Court to the concerning through e-mail for the use in the Judicial Branch of this High Court has been prepared.
4. Software for the Cashless transaction fee for issuance of the Certified copies in Copying Section of this High Court has been developed.
5. Mobile Application in Android has been developed for providing facility like display board information, cause list, Web copy of Order/Judgment and Case status to the Advocates and Litigants.
6. Software for Copying Section of this High Court, Delivery and SMS Module and generating Various new Reports has been developed and implemented.
7. The scanning and digitization of records of High Court has been started.
8. Software for recruitment process of various post like District Judge Entry level (Software for selection and appointment cell), class-III and class-IV (software for recruitment cell) have been
developed.

9. Website for Juvenile Justice System has been developed and linked with official website of this High Court.

10. Web Page for Hon'ble Judges Library of this High Court has been developed and linked in the Home Page of Official Website of this High Court.

11. Three Display System for showing the running in regard to application submitted by the Advocates/Litigants have been installed at counters of Copying Section of this High Court.

12. CIS 1.0 has been installed at High Court of Chhattisgarh and 3.0 has been installed at all District & Subordinate Courts of the State.

13. Software for sending link of final orders/Judgements passed by the Hon'ble High Court in Appeals / Revisions / Writs through SMS to the Presiding Officers of Subordinate Courts, who has passed the Judgements/Order, so that he/she can have direct access to the Judgment/Order of the High Court and also same will be helpful/beneficial to improve/assessment his work.

14. Software for sending SMS on daily basis to the District & Sessions Judges of the State with respect to information about the Courts, working under their control, which had not uploaded the data of their respective courts on NJDG and showing as undated case on NJDG.

15. Following Hardware for smooth functioning of Courts have been purchase and installed at Courts of the State:

a) 324 Nos. Of Desktops for new/uncovered courts having own building under the Phase-II of e-Court Project.

b) 340 Nos. Of Network Laser Printers and 340 Nos, of MFD Network Printers functional courts under the Phase-II of e-Court Project.

c) 90 No.s of Touch Based Information KIOSK Machines for District & Sessions Subordinate Courts of the State under the e-Courts Mission Mode Project.

d) 340 Nos. Of Display Boards with Thin Client and extra Monitors with splitters for the use in the functional courts.

e) Laptop and Laser Printers have been provided to all Judicial Officers of the State under the e-Court Mission Mode Project.

f) UPS for Server Rooms and also for each Courts of all District & Subordinate Courts have been provided.

g) DG Sets having capacity 15 KVA at all the District & Subordinate Courts of the State have been provided under the e-Courts Project.

h) Desktops based Video Conferencing at District & Subordinate Courts have been provided under e-Courts Project.
i) USB based external Hard-disk drive have been provided at all District & Subordinate Courts of the State for keeping day to day backup of data of their respective Courts.

j) Installation and Maintenance of LAN at District & Subordinate Courts under e-Courts Project” (under process).

k) Purchasing of 66 Nos. Of Tower Servers for the 33 Nos. Of Taluka Courts of the State under the e-Courts Project (under process).