

INAUGURATION OF 'ARBITRATION CENTRE' AND LAUNCH OF THE PUBLICATION 'COURTS OF UTTAR PRADESH' BY HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA ON 17.02.2024 AT 10 AM AT THE CONVENTION CENTRE OF THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT ALLAHABAD

My Lord the Chief Justice of India,

My esteemed brother Judges of the Supreme Court,

Shri Justice Arun Bhansali, Chief Justice of High Court of Allahabad,

My other brother and sister colleagues of the High Court,

Justice Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh and Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya, Chief Justice of Bombay High Court

Shri Justice D.B. Bhosale, former Chief Justice of this Court

Presidents of both the Bar Associations

My Dear friends at the Bar

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is almost after 3 years, since I left for Jammu & Kashmir, that I am participating in any official function of the Allahabad High Court. I am happy to be part of this august gathering and to be in the midst of my former colleagues, both at the Bar and the Bench.

It is a proud moment for me as well as for all those connected with the Allahabad High Court as we are having within our midst our

own earlier Chief Justice Dr. D.Y. Chandrachud to inaugurate the Arbitration Centre, to release the book “Courts of Uttar Pradesh” and to inaugurate the Judges’ Library. I think he is visiting Allahabad for the first time since he left for Delhi in 2016 after successfully hoisting the Sesquicentennial Celebrations of this Court.

I am overwhelmed to note that once a Chief always a Chief has proved to be true for me. I am glad our Chief Guest was my Chief Justice while I was here and now, he is my Chief in the Supreme Court of India. I feel blessed working under his guidance.

It fills me with pride today to see the Allahabad High Court celebrate watershed initiatives so to be a more integral part of our evolving and technologically equipped justice delivery system.

Arbitration has been prevalent in India right from the Vedic era. It has been referred to in the “Brihadaranayaka Upanishad” where Rishi Yajnavalkya had referred to various bodies of arbitration, commonly known as Panchayats. The disputes were referred to a small group of wise men known as Panchayats for resolution.

The Privy Council in the case of *Vytla Sitanna vs. Marivada Viranna*, AIR 1934 PC 105, recognised such arbitration bodies and observed as under:

‘that not only is [a panchayat] quick and inexpensive but it is also in accordance to customary law and goes with the morality’

In the present day, arbitration is a very powerful tool for dispute resolution as we cannot expect every kind of dispute to be adjudicated by our Courts. The inauguration of the Arbitration Center at the Allahabad High Court is of great importance and would go a long way in resolving disputes in a time bound period. I congratulate the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court and his entire team for taking this initiative in setting up the Arbitration Center. I hope and trust that the Center for Arbitration would be of great assistance in resolving disputes and that it would provide a service base to the arbitrators as well as avoid the arbitral process from becoming adversarial and time-taking or to be an adjudication fora.

There are 169 District and Outlying Courts in Uttar Pradesh, still the Courts are overburdened, therefore, establishing an Arbitration Centre will not only help the Courts, but would also empower people to raise their grievances and get them resolved in a more systematic and simpler manner. Arbitration is also one of the greatest assets for the Indian Judiciary as it helps in creating an

approach towards dispute resolution that is more litigant friendly and less mechanical in nature. It enables the Indian Judiciary to touch the grassroots of our society by providing inexpensive and fast dispute resolution system, indicating the march of the judiciary and the Country in the right direction of dispensing social, economic and political justice.

Reflecting on my days as a High Court judge, I also remember how the Judges' Library was lying in a precarious condition for over ten years. There was no space for keeping the books and the corridors had to be encroached upon and enclosed to make a stop-gap part of the library. At times, some rare books got spoiled during rains. Thus, it was the need of the hour to have a proper space for the library. During the sesquicentennial celebrations, the Chief Justice's library was replenished but the library of the Judges' continued to be in shambles. I am glad that now the cargo of knowledge would be properly laid and placed in the right place, safely and securely. I congratulate the Library Committee, the Judges' of the High Court and the Registry for their efforts in getting the new library for the Judges.

My father inspired me in many ways. One of the ways was to instill in me the practice of visiting libraries. The first thing he made me do when our family shifted to Allahabad was to become lifetime member of the Central Library and the Government Library. He always believed that library is a birth place for new thoughts and to widen the horizon of vision. He had his own rich library of valuable books both of Hindi and English literature. Until recently, I had succeeded in managing his library known as the “Mithal Library” but in recent past due to my permanent shifting to Allahabad and the disposal of my ancestral house “Ram Batika”, I had to dismantle and close the said library by donating the books to local School Libraries. I am proud that my son had picked up his grandfather’s interest in libraries and has established a law library “Narendralaya” in his name just in front of the High Court which is open for free to all members of the Bar.

It is a great honour for the High Court to have the Arbitration Centre and the library inaugurated by the Chief Justice of India who is virtually a part of this Institution and considers it to be his parent High Court side by side the High Court of Bombay. I thank him for doing the honour and for releasing the coffee table book ‘Courts of Uttar Pradesh’.

The book 'Courts of Uttar Pradesh' is very close to my heart. I had taken keen interest in promoting the idea of bringing out this kind of a book highlighting the heritage of District Courts specially those which were established long back. Many of the District Courts in Uttar Pradesh have great historical background such as the present District Court of Agra where the High Court of Allahabad first sat in the Year 1866. The importance of this Book can also be gauged from the fact that it promotes the achievements of the district judiciary which ordinarily goes unsung. This book would immortalize the work of not only the District Courts but the judiciary as a whole. It will be a unique and valuable collection for any library.

I hope and trust that every one would be immensely benefited by the Arbitration Centre, Library and the book 'Courts of Uttar Pradesh'.

I expect to have similar invitations to visit my parent High Court in future.

"इस अंजुमन में आना है बार बार"

Thank you, Jai Hind.