

Demand to fill up vacancies of judges to clear backlog of cases

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA (Maharashtra): Sir, as of March 31, 2009, about 50,613 cases were lying pending in the Supreme Court, 38,74,090 in the High Courts, and 2.64 crores in the District and the Session Courts. About 30 per cent pending cases are criminal in nature, which require early disposal. Presently cases are pending on an average of 15 years.

One of the main reasons of huge pendency is attributed to shortage of judges and not filling up the vacancies in various courts causing considerable delays in clearing the cases. It is said that justice delayed is justice denied. The Government, therefore, should take immediate necessary steps to fill up the vacant posts of judges in courts, consider the setting up of double shifts of courts, including mobile courts. The services of retired judges can be taken in this regard to clear the mounting backlog of cases, with a view to deliver the justice at the doorsteps of the people.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, a statement by the Minister of External Affairs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Re: Significant Developments in our Neighbourhood

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): Sir, I rise to inform the House of significant developments in our relations with three important neighbours – Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Hon. Members will recall the Prime Minister's remarks, in this House, on June 9, 2009. He had said, then, that it is in our vital interest to make peace with Pakistan. In our vision of a cooperative and harmonious sub-continent, the relationship between India and Pakistan can be a critical building block. The Prime Minister had also referred to our intention of meeting Pakistan more than half way, if its leaders have the courage, determination and statesmanship to take the high road to peace. These sentiments encapsulate our approach. We also recognize the importance and salience of continued dialogue with Pakistan. However, dialogue, addressing mutual concerns, is premised on an atmosphere free of the threat of violence. It was with this explicit premise that the Composite Dialogue Process was restarted on 2004. Despite achievements, the dialogue and our very relationship with Pakistan have come under stress recurrently because of the license which terrorist groups have had in Pakistan to carry out attacks on India.

Hon. Members are aware of the Government of Pakistan's assurances to us, at the very highest level, that it would not let territories, under its control, to be used for attacks against India. Notwithstanding these assurances, we have been repeatedly and severely hit by a series of terrorists attacks emanating from Pakistan, it is the responsibility of the Government of Pakistan to take all such steps as are necessary to address this issue and expose and take action against the conspiracies and conspirators responsible for such attacks against India.