

श्री शरद यादव (बिहार): महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने जो विषय उठाया है, मैं भी अपने आपको इससे सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

डा. अनिल कुमार साहनी (बिहार): महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने जो विषय उठाया है, मैं भी अपने आपको इससे सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री रणविजय सिंह जूदेव (छत्तीसगढ़): महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने जो विषय उठाया है, मैं भी अपने आपको इससे सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: सर, मैं सबसे पहले तो माननीय सदस्य का स्वागत करता हूँ। उन्होंने बहुत अच्छा विषय उठाया है और निश्चित तौर से उनकी जो भावना हिन्दी के प्रति, भारतीय संस्कृति के प्रति और संस्कारों के प्रति है, उन्होंने इस विषय को बहुत अच्छी तरह से उठाया है, इसलिए मैं अपनी तरफ से और पूरे सदन की तरफ से उनका स्वागत करता हूँ। उन्होंने "हिन्दी भाषा" के लिए वहाँ पर जो दिक्कतें हैं, जो परेशानियाँ हैं, उनके बारे में बताया है। हम यहाँ पर केंद्र सरकार से और राज्य सरकार से सम्पर्क करके उनकी जो भी समस्याएँ हैं, उनका समाधान करवायेंगे।

श्री तपन कुमार सेन (पश्चिमी बंगाल): उनको 10 महीने से तनखाह नहीं मिली है, खाली स्वागत करने से काम नहीं चलेगा। वहाँ पर हिन्दी टीचर्स को 10 महीने से तनखाह नहीं मिल रही है। आप उनको तनखाह दिलवाइए। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You convey this matter to the Minister and Hindi Teachers issue should be sorted out.

Vacant posts of Judges in High Courts

SHRI MAJEED MEMON (Maharashtra): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, to provide inexpensive and speedy justice to the people is the solemn duty of the State under the Constitution in coordination with judiciary. People are fast losing confidence in our justice delivery system due to inordinate delays in the delivery of justice. I would like to raise an important issue pertaining to the sanctioned strength and vacancies of Judges in various High Courts across the country as on today. The backlog of cases pending in various courts, thus, is a matter of serious concern for administering justice. Non-filling up of vacancies and non-sanctioning of increased strength of Judges in various High Courts is the main cause for growing pendency. The Allahabad High Court in Uttar Pradesh is the largest High Court in the country, where approved strength of Judges is 160 while there are 75 vacancies. The cases pending are 9,25,000- plus. The Madras High Court has an approved strength of 75 Judges, whereas there are 20 existing vacancies. The Bombay High Court's strength is 94 Judges, and it has 32 vacancies. In the case of Kolkata High Court, the approved strength is 72 Judges and there are 35 vacancies. The figures in respect of other High Courts are as follows: In the case of the Punjab and Haryana High Court,

the figures are 85 and 39, in the case of Madhya Pradesh High Court, 53 and 16, in the case of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana High Court, 61 and 34, in the case of Karnataka High Court, 62 and 31 and in the case of Rajasthan High Court, 94 and 32. In totality, the strength of High Court Judges in these courts is 712 and the vacancies are almost 300, which is 42 per cent. In the Allahabad High Court alone, there are 9.25 lakh cases pending, which is over 23 per cent of the total 40 lakh pending cases in all the High Courts in the country.

The hon. Law Minister has been heard saying that we have had record appointments this year. That would not do. The number of Judges has to be proportionate to the ever-growing number of justice seekers. Why is the sanctioned strength not periodically revised accordingly, and why do Courts not work with a full strength? Will the Law Minister explain why these vacancies have not been filled up, with a sense of expediency to improve the justice delivery system, because everybody now joins the chorus of 'justice delayed is justice denied'?

I hope the Law Minister would take necessary steps for filling up vacancies in all the High Courts of the country.

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह (मध्य प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री अली अनवर अंसारी (बिहार): महोदय, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री शरद यादव (बिहार): महोदय, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री सतीश चंद्र मिश्रा (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री सुरेंद्र सिंह नागर (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को संबद्ध करता हूँ।

SHRI T. K. RANGARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI K. K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD (Kerala): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES (Karnataka): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sir, we too associate ourselves with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

Destruction of ecologically sensitive Western Ghats

SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR (Karnataka): Sir, I would like to bring to the attention of the House and the Government the serious and wanton destruction of the ecologically sensitive region of the Western Ghats, in particular, the forest land in Munnar. This area, Sir, is being destroyed through a rampant culture of encroachment and lack of law enforcement, being done in active collusion with local political leaders and elements of the State Government.

Sir, this represents a serious threat to the ecological future of the Western Ghats in all the four States of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Goa. Munnar, as you know, Sir, is one of the famous hill stations in the Western Ghats, located at 1800 meters above the sea level, and it is an eco-sensitive zone. This area is facing massive land encroachment and illegal construction by influential persons, supported by local politicians, including some elements of the ruling front in the State. The legal status of Munnar and the Cardamom Hill Reserve is 'forest', as identified by a special committee constituted by the hon. Supreme Court. There are three National Parks within this area. The land is still managed by the State Revenue Department. This area is identified as one of the bio-diversity hotspots in the Western Ghats. Pallivasal, Kannan Devan and Chinnakanal are the three villages where massive illegal encroachments and constructions are at their peak. The pristine forest lands have been encroached by individuals, after obtaining assigning certificates from the local authorities.

Sir, in 1993, the Central Government had permitted a limited use and assignment of forest land. But, even after that, more and more forest lands have been encroached and such encroachments are being regularized without prior permission from the Central Government. The National Green Tribunal had also taken the matter into its consideration in 2015 and issued strict directions to the Kerala State to curb the encroachments, restore the area and not supply electricity connections to illegal constructions. But, Sir, elements within the present Government are helping the encroachers, especially the local Left leaders, to violate the court order. I request the Central Government to kindly look into the violations of the Order of the NGT (No. 462 of 2013/SZ).

I would just conclude by saying, Sir, that even the local bureaucrats are being