

Shri P. Wilson; demand for mandatory functioning of virtual courts along with physical courts across country.

**Demand for mandatory functioning of Virtual courts along with Physical Courts across country**

SHRI P. WILSON (Tamil Nadu): Sir, the advent of COVID had forced us to conduct court proceedings virtually. Virtual courts had enabled participation from remote areas irrespective of geographical or economic constraints, eliminating the need for individuals to bear significant financial burdens in physical court sessions.

However, just as the COVID times are behind us, the virtual courts are slowly becoming a thing of the past in some tribunals such as CERC, TDSAT, NCLAT, APTEL, etc. The hon. CJI has appealed to High Courts and Tribunals for utilizing the virtual court infrastructure for which the Government had invested a huge amount of public money.

Denying a virtual hearing to a litigant would not just increase litigation cost, but also convert the court proceedings from accessible and convenient to complex and time-consuming ones. A litigant would have to bear the cost of travel, lodging and extra fees of the lawyer since most of the Tribunals are situated at Delhi.

The concept of access to justice has been etched in our Constitution. Through virtual courts, the legal process could be streamlined by reducing paperwork and automating administrative tasks. This can lead to faster case resolution and reduce backlog of cases.

Therefore, I demand from the Government to bring a comprehensive legislation mandating virtual court hearings along with physical courts in all High Courts, District judiciary and all tribunals across country which includes a code of conduct for Judges, lawyers, litigants and other stakeholders along with penal provisions for any misconduct. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention raised by the hon. Member, Shri P. Wilson: Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri Sujeet Kumar (Odisha), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Shri M. Shanmugam (Tamil Nadu), Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala), and Dr. V. Sivadasan (Kerala).

Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham; need to regulate digital education apps. Not present. Shri M. Shanmugam; need to extend the salary ceiling limit beyond Rs.21,000 for ESI coverage.