

## **PROJECT OF DIGITIZATION OF JUDICIAL RECORDS IN SUBORDINATE COURTS LAUNCHED**

With a vision to curtail use and handling of huge volume of physical files and to save valuable space occupied in Judicial Record Rooms, Chief Justice of Punjab & Haryana High Court, Justice Krishna Murari, has today launched project of digitization of judicial records in Subordinate Courts at 11 pilot sites in the States of Punjab, Haryana and U.T. Chandigarh, through video conferencing.

The project is covered under Phase II of the eCourts Project of Supreme Court of India and is getting financial support under 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission set up by Government of India whereby funds to the tune of `25.00 Crores and `24.00 Crores have been allocated for the States of Punjab and Haryana, respectively.

Computer Committee of High Court of Punjab & Haryana under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal has shortlisted 11 Sessions Divisions namely Ambala, Rohtak, Panipat, Kurukshetra, Hissar, Kaithal and Faridabad in the State of Haryana, Rupnagar, Patiala, S.B.S. Nagar in the State of Punjab and U.T. Chandigarh as pilot sites for this project.

While launching the project, the Chief Justice interacted with the District & Sessions Judges of these Sessions Divisions through video conferencing and laid emphasis on successful implementation of the project. On this occasion, Chairman of the Computer Committee, Justice Rajesh Bindal as well as the Members of the Committee, Justice Surinder Gupta, Justice Arun Palli and Justice B.S. Walia were also present.

Files of the pending cases as well as disposed of cases in which weeding process has been completed will be covered in the process of scanning and digitization. The process of digitization would ensure easy retrieval and preservation/archival of the case record in digitized / soft form. Valuable space would be available at prime location in the subordinate Courts. About 4 lacs sq. ft. of total area occupied by Judicial Records will be reclaimed. Manpower engaged for handling files would be saved.

Under the guidance of Computer Committee, the weeding process has been going on in all the Subordinate Courts for about last two years at a very large scale so that scanning process could be on fast track.

All the Subordinate Courts have already been provided digital signatures and presently digitally signed judgments and orders are being uploaded on National Judicial Data Grid on daily basis. Digitization of judicial record will ensure availability of e-services like e-Copy, e-Inspection, e-Diary etc. in the Subordinate Courts as are being presently provided in High Court.

Earlier in August, 2018, the High Court launched bouquet of I.T. initiatives for ease of litigants and lawyers. e-Payment of High Court Services, Android based Mobile Application, Online Grievance & Feedback System, Surety Information Management System, Infrastructure Web Application, Crystal Reports Software and e-Notices module were some of the major I.T. initiatives recently taken by the High Court.

In September 2018, in a meeting held with the Members of Bar, Justice Rajesh Bindal sensitized the Advocates regarding some more IT initiatives taken by the High Court, like new printing parameters on both sides of paper to save paper, visitors counter on High Court Website, e-Copy & e-Inspection, supply of certified copy of High Court orders in District Courts, Case Status/ certified copy of orders at Common Service Centres, dedicated website link of Indian Judiciary for NRIs. Since the introduction of visitors counter on High Court website i.e. from 30.01.2018 onwards, about 3.96 crore visitors have accessed the High Court website and the daily average of the visitors is about 1.47 lacs.