

## **Peshawar High Courts holds first ever District and Sessions Judges conference**

**The one day conference has hectic agenda to consider**

**Important recommendations are expected on tackling issues hampering the dispensation of justice and improving services delivery**

AS part of structural reforms and in a quest to scale up services delivery, Chief Justice Peshawar High Court Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi has chaired first ever District and Sessions Judges Conference of all districts. The Conference considered 7 thematic areas and would firm up policy recommendations. These thematic areas included issues like Capacity enhancement, improving coordination, using technology as a tool for improving services delivery and formation of Secretariat for District Judiciary.

The Chief Justice in his keynote speech highlighted major initiatives being implemented. He said the Secretariat of the District Judiciary is currently in the design phase which shall be rolled out in September, 2017. This will facilitate working as well as improve response time of District Judiciary requirements. He said Overseas exposure/foreign training is built as permanent feature. 11 Judicial Officers are going on 30th April while 6 female Judicial Officers are likely to visit UK in Sep-Oct, 2017. Far flung districts and higher rate of disposal will remaining criteria in selecting officers for overseas training

He also informed that UN agencies and multilateral donor institutions appreciate and are willing to support, technically and financially, High Court vision of structure reforms which are in the interest of public interest. Projects like Litigant Shed, Solorization and installation of Water Filtration Plants are suggested to Donors. He added that a mega computerization and digitization project is being rolled out to improve the usage of IT as a tool for decision making which will improve case flow Management. He said Public Service Commission has been requested to recruit 32 Civil Judges/Judicial Magistrates so as to ease workload in districts with high pendency. He informed the participants that in order to improve mobility supply order for 5 SUVs for mountainous districts has been placed which will facilitate internal visit and inspections by Judicial Officers. He said supply order for 25 Suzuki Swift Vehicles for senior civil Judges has also been placed. He informed the participants that against a total portfolios of 36 Projects, 06 Projects are due for completion but efforts are on to complete 9/10 Projects so as to create more space for new projects next year.

He added that the Provincial Government has agreed to provide an additional allocation of Rs. 650 Million which will enable us to fast track projects. He informed that High Court is considering constructing 5 Judicial Complexes on different locations in the Province. Priority is given to areas which are far-flung and lacking reasonable infrastructure.

He said human resource evaluation in district is not done on merit by the District Judges which has forced usto task High Court judges for the purpose. He urged the District Judges to be more focused and fairin evaluating officers within their

jurisdiction. He also directed that the District and Session should be equitable and fair in determining work load amongst their subordinate Judges. He directed the District Judges to take driving seat in the development of infrastructure. Their lead would facilitate timely completion of projects as well as ensure better quality

The Chief Justice urged them to ensure complete transparency and merit in appointment of support staff at the district. He directed the District Judges to ensure daily round of their courts premises and ensure cleanliness. The litigants who come after long travel should feel comfortable

This was followed by interactive sessions where the Districts Judges talked about challenges faced by them in their respective districts. The Chief listen to them and ordered immediate actions on some of their grievances

On transfer of cases he directed the judges to ensure immediate transfer of cases where a judicial officer is transferred. He also directed the DSJs to vacate accommodation occupied by them in their previous stations. The DSJs demanded filling up vacancies of judges transferred to other stations. He directed the DSJs to avoid participation in functions where political elites are invited by the Bar. He assured to consider empathically the issue of conferring judicial powers to offices who are currently having lesser powers

He relaxed period for vacation of house by officers posted out of Peshawar till end of Ramadan.

He said Chitral, Tank and Upper Dir will be solarized in the first go. Far flung districts are High Court priority.

The day-long session will continue till evening. It is expected that important recommendations will come out which will help in formulating policies directed mainly towards improving services delivery.