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title: Need to expedite the appointment of judges in courts.

SHRI M. UDHAYA KUMAR (DINDIGUL): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, *vanakkam*.

As a lawyer by profession, I am privy to the meandering process of judicial dispensation in lower courts with the total backlog of the judiciary standing at a whopping approximately 3.25 crore cases. Incensed by this alarming scenario in courts, threatening erosion of public confidence in, and credibility of, the judicial system, the highest court in the country moved forward in baby steps by conducting an internal study on the issue of pendency of cases. There are more than 60,000 cases pending in the Supreme court, 45 lakhs in High Courts and the trial courts account for 2.75 crore cases. So, it is high time for the Government to get cracking by providing more funds to modernize the system as also to fill up the large number of vacancies of judges in various High Courts, presently 43 per cent of the total strength.

After the process of appointment of judges suffered for a while due to the controversial National Judicial Appointment Commission Act, which was later struck down by the courts, the Supreme Court Collegium System is reported to have been at work again by going ahead with recommendation for appointment of judges to various high courts. The situation has been compounded by the fact that the Government has become a compulsive litigant in higher courts preferring appeals on cases with questionable merit.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The next hon. Member is Shri Rajendra Agrawal.

SHRI M. UDHAYA KUMAR: Implementing the long-pending judicial reforms apart, we need to address the need for fast-tracking the judicial process through a slew of measures like resorting to out of courtroom attempts and fine tuning the traditional courts functioning under *Panchayats*.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please sit down. I have already called the next Member to speak.

SHRI M. UDHAYA KUMAR: I urge upon the Government to pay adequate and immediate attention to speed up the process of judicial dispensation to provide long needed relief to the common litigant.