

INAUGURATION OF **ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION
CENTRE, CHENNAI**

&

LAYING FOUNDATION STONE FOR **CONSTRUCTION OF
ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK OF MADRAS HIGH COURT**

- 20.08.2013 -

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HON'BLE ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE

My Lord the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Hon'ble Mr. Justice F.M. Ibrahim Kalifulla, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration, Rural Development, Law, Courts & Prisons, Government of Tamil Nadu, my sister and brother Judges on the dais and off the dais, Madams Mrs. Saraswathi Sathasivam and Mrs. Amira Kalifulla, other distinguished guests from the legal fraternity, ladies and gentlemen,

A very good morning to all of you.

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be amongst this august gathering.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India has kindly consented to be with us and inaugurate the ADR Centre and lay foundation Stone for the new Administrative Block in the High Court.

The Madras High Court Mediation and Conciliation Centre was opened by the then President of India in the year 2005. The speakers before me had dwelt in detail about this new ADR centre and the benefit that the public will get out of this. As you all know Alternate Dispute Resolution system is a most beneficial system to the litigant public. It is in vogue in several countries all over the world. ADR system greatly reduces the burden on the courts as it cuts down the appeals and thus helps the Courts to handle other important matters. The benefits of ADR also include flexibility of procedure, speedier settlements, preservation of relationships, solutions tailored to parties' needs etc. etc.

Realising the necessity of having an exclusive block for ADR, Government was requested in 2011 for sanction of necessary amount for ADR Block and the Government was pleased to sanction an amount of Rs.420 Lakhs. This Building having total plinth area of 20344 sq.ft. has Ground plus three floors and has necessary infrastructure for the successful conduct of Mediation. I urge the advocates to make best use of

the new centre, not only in the interest of the parties concerned but also in the interest of the society as well.

The present building of the Madras High Court was inaugurated on 12.7.1892 and it was meant to cater only small number of Judges and staff. In 1955, the strength was 12 Judges. By the year 1984, the strength was 24. But over the years, litigations multiplied and number of Judges and staff increased. However, the extent of the Office did not increase much. Though, very near to the old building, Additional High Court Building was inaugurated on 8.2.1992 by the present Chief Minister and after creation of Madurai Bench, almost half of staff were transferred and cases were sent to Madurai Bench, yet the burden on the present structure is so heavy that there is virtually no space to transact business. Resultantly, bundles are lying in the corridors instead of their actual place i.e. Record Rooms.

After the increase in the strength to 60, new Judges were appointed but correspondingly there was no increase in the space occupied by the Office. Consequently, staff were

accommodated in mezzanine floor posing threat to their safety and security.

When the matter was taken to the Government that the High Court has proposed to construct an office building at the eastern side of the High Court Annexe Building, between the existing building and the wall abutting the shed, the Government of Tamil Nadu acted swiftly and wasted no time in sanctioning Rs.388.20 Lakhs. They also acted with the same speed when we made a request for construction of Record Rooms for storing the case bundles. I thank the Government of Tamil Nadu for their support extended to the judiciary.

I thank the organisers for having given me an opportunity to share my views with all of you. Jai Hind.