

**INAUGURATION OF THE COMMON FACILITIES BLOCK
(INTEGRATED COURT COMPLEX-PHASE-II), PUDUCHERRY**

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY
HON'BLE SHRI JUSTICE SATISH K. AGNIHOTRI,
ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE**

02.03.2014 – 10.00 am

Hon'ble Mr. N. Rangasamy, Chief Minister of Pondicherry, my esteemed sister Mrs. Justice Chitra Venkataraman, my esteemed brother Mr. Justice K.K. Sasidharan, Chief Secretary, U.T of Puducherry, Mr. Murugan, Chief Judge, Puducherry, Public Secretary and other Secretaries, Chief Judicial Magistrate and other Judicial Officers, Mr. T. Murugesan, Senior Advocate and Government Pleader for Puducherry, Mr. Ranganathan, Member, Bar Council of Tamil Nadu, Mrs. Shahidha Praveenkumar, Vice President of the Puducherry Bar Association, Chief Engineer, other Government Officials, media, ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to have been given this opportunity to open the Common Facilities Block (Integrated Court Complex Phase II) at Puducherry. This is a unique territory as, I am informed, this Union Territory has five languages – Tamil in Puducherry, Telegu in Yanam and Malayalam in Mahe and English and other languages. Here people are unique. This is a territory, which has different cultures. I am told, there are two laws being followed

here –for French citizens, there is one law, French law - personal French Law; for others, customary law. Of course, Indian law is there for all.

Your Portfolio Judge, called as a parent judge, and son of your soil Judge, Malayalam speaking Judge, though part of Puducherry, brother Mr. Justice Sasidharan, have keen interest in the development of the judiciary of Puducherry. As and when occasion arises, they take one step forward to consider and to suggest something for the betterment of welfare of the judiciary.

I heard your Chief Minister is the most popular Chief Minister; very simple Chief Minister as he ought to be; Chief Minister, being the representative of public, has to be simple and one of you all. His presence here indicates his keen interest in judiciary.

I started my journey from Central India, went to North, obtained some degrees, some education, came back again to Central India and now, I am in South India. I can very well say with authority that the buildings here, not only of judicial complex but also other buildings, are really magnificent and beautiful. I had an occasion to go to Paris, France. Their cleanliness is worth appreciating. Puducherry has been a part of France and your buildings here reflect French culture. But only one thing I feel is

that you have not maintained cleanliness. I, therefore, request you to maintain cleanliness also.

So far as the judicial aspect is concerned, building alone is not sufficient. It is a magnificent and beautiful building. One gets easily attracted to this building. The important aspect is the functioning inside the Court Building. The Bench and Bar relationship is to be improved for quality dispensation of justice. You all have to work for that. There has been some aberration recently, not only in Puducherry but in other parts of country and in Chennai also, where the Bench and Bar do not act like co-partners. It is said that they are two sides of the same coin. You cannot expect proper administration of justice if there is some aberration. The members of the Bar should always feel that they have joined the profession not for earning money; they are not trade unionists; they are not labourers; but they are service providers. One more thing I would like to emphasise here. A member of the Bar should never have a feeling that by force or by shouting one can get an order, which will not be a legal or proper order. If a Judge or Judicial Officer is succumbing to this type of pressure, he does not deserve to be a judicial officer. He may be placed under suspension because he undertakes oath of fearlessness. He undertakes oath to uphold Constitutionalism; i.e. equality, fairness, non-discrimination and non-arbitrariness. You all have to imbibe this quality. Every one has right to justice.

You can take it as a fundamental right which is reflected in several provisions; right to equality, right to employment, right to education, right to food, right to life and liberty; so it all becomes a right to justice. In order to get right to justice, you have to think of equality, fairness in action and equal treatment. Before Constitutional law, every one is equal; irrespective of their status, their gender, their class and their community. Please keep this in mind.

There are certain problems Chief Minister has expressed relating to Puducherry judicial service. I was discussing with the Chief Secretary. It appears that there is no clarity; whether it is to be governed by the Union of India or there should be an independent Judicial Service. We will look into it.

The second aspect, it is said that a High Court can be created in Puducherry. All the time, it is said that cases are not much and therefore, some parts of Tamil Nadu can be taken. It cannot be done. Under the Constitution, every State, not the Union Territory, is entitled to its own High Court. Of course, two or three States can join together like Punjab & Haryana High Court, and have one High Court. Some Union Territories like Delhi, now it has become a State but earlier it was part of Lahore High Court, depending upon the number of cases, have their own High Court. Take the example of State of Goa. It is a part of

Bombay High Court. Chandigarh, a Union Territory, is a part of Punjab & Haryana. By getting a High Court, you will have better facilities and better administration of justice but there is no guarantee that you will get immediately quick justice. You will get it with the passage of time. But at present, you must ensure quality justice and equality of laws.

This is a place of Sri Aurobindo and Mother and all of you must imbibe the culture of international citizenship and should not believe in small area or small community. The concept of "Vasudhaiva kutumbukam" is to be followed. I want to see this reflection everywhere and in every walk of life.

You have given us a basket of fruits. It signifies our visit here would be fruitful. I am sure and I am very happy, with the happy feeling I am going. I am sure this Court, with all facilities, will come up well and will play a part for development of not only the judiciary but also that of U.T. of Puducherry. You all will have smiles on your faces. I compliment all of you.

Thank you.
