

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JUDICIARY OF THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN, 1997

The Chief Justice presented the Report of the Judiciary of Bhutan for the year 1997.

1. Performance Report of the Judiciary of Bhutan for 1997

(a) Opening Balance	=	2,973
(b) Total No. of Cases registered	=	5,444
(c) Total No. of Cases decided	=	4,491
(d) Pending cases as of 31 st December 1997	=	3,926
(e) Total No. of Appeals	=	108

2. Analysis of Court Performance

Many of the Courts of Bhutan have done well. The concern expressed by His Majesty the King at the conclusion of the Thirteenth Judicial Conference and the consolidation of the Court Procedure has:

- (a) Improved the Process of Adjudication.
- (b) Enhanced the quality of adjudication.
- (c) Decreased the number of appeals.

3. Registration of the cases

- (a) The system of registration of cases has improved.
- (b) Access to Justice through user friendly Courts has been improved.
- (c) Assignment of cases to different Benches and respective Bench Clerks has enabled speedy Hearings and Trials.

4. Hearing

- (a) In average, 5 to 10 hearings are conducted for a case.
- (b) Efforts will be made to restrict the number of hearings to an average of 4 to 5 hearings for every case.
- (c) Once a case has commenced, the hearing shall be conducted uninterrupted and regularly.
- (d) The improvement in the system of Registration and Adjudication has enhanced the average daily hearing of the cases.
- (e) The Performance Report of the Dzongkhag Thrimkhangs has revealed that each Bench of the Thrimkhang can decide an average of 200 cases a year. The permissible range is between 150 to 300 cases per year.

5. Technology

In accordance with the Royal Command, all the Courts now have computers with the latest software. The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) has generously funded this project.

- (a) Computers will enhance the quality of written Judgments and other judicial documents.
- (b) Computers will help in storage and retrieval of case information and records.

6 Human Resource Development

In obedience to the Royal Command, the Human Resource Development of the Judiciary is taking a new turn. There are two methods of Human Resource Development employed by the High Court:

(i) Pre-service

- (a) There are six law graduates. Three of them have done their Masters (LL.M.) in the Netherlands
- (b) There were 3 Batches of National Legal Course students. Two batches are doing their LL.B. degree Course in India. They are doing well. The third Batch will be sent to India in June, 1998. There are 29 students in total studying law in India.
- (c) There are 3 Batches of students undergoing the Bench Clerk Course at the Royal Institute of Management.

(ii) In-service

- (a) The High Court conducted three Workshops for the Bench Clerks.
- (b) Two more workshops will be conducted.
- (c) The Workshop is funded by DANIDA.

4 Research & Development

In pursuance to the Royal Command at the conclusion of the Eleventh Judicial Conference, the Research and Development Section of the Judiciary was established. It has conducted extensive research on the following subjects:

- (a) Research on the sources of Law from the Kanjur and Tenjur, Zhabdrung's Code, etc.
- (b) Research on Court Etiquette.
- (c) Research on Buddhist Architecture for the New High Court construction.
- (d) Research for compilation of a Law Dictionary.
- (e) Research on Dzongkha Drafting, Pleading and Conveyancing including the art of corresponding.

5. Workshop for the Judges

The High Court is conducting a workshop for the Judges on Court Procedure after the Conference. It will enhance uniformity, certainty, and professionalism.

This Workshop will contribute to the Royal Command for the establishment of a good justice system that will match any legal system in the world.