

Deccan Chronicle

25 new HC judges likely to be appointed by weekend

New Delhi: Appointment of nearly 25 new judges to various high courts is likely to be cleared by this weekend, days before the issue of delay in execution of collegium's recommendations comes up for hearing in the Supreme Court.

Sources said nearly 25 fresh appointments to at least six high courts are based on the recommendation of the Supreme Court collegium made in April-May.

There are nearly 74 recommendations under process at the government's end. Most of the recommendations are likely to fructify into appointments by the end of September, barring "a few" cases where the executive and the judiciary have "difference of opinion," they said.

Usually, the process of appointing judges takes between 60 to 75 days.

"The fresh appointments were in the pipeline and should not be linked to the next date of hearing next week," a source insisted.

The fresh appointments are to be made to the Allahabad, Calcutta, Delhi, Rajasthan and the Bombay high courts among others.

Observing that justice delivery system is "collapsing", the Supreme Court had on August 12 sent out a stern message to the Centre over non-execution of collegium's decision to transfer and appoint Chief Justices and judges in High Courts, saying it will not tolerate the "logjam" and would intervene to make it accountable.

Asking Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi to seek instructions from the Centre, a bench headed by Chief Justice T S Thakur, who also heads the five-member apex court

collegium, said, "We won't tolerate logjam in judges' appointment which is stifling its judicial work. We will fasten accountability."

Now, Rohatgi is likely to furnish a chart before the apex court to inform it on the present position of the recommendations made by the collegium.

The bench said that it may intervene on "judicial" side as the eight-month old decision of the collegium on transfer and appointment of the HC judges has not been given effect to.

"Why there is mistrust? Where's the proposal languishing? 75 names have been recommended by the Collegium but there seems to be no response. Even appointment of Chief Justices are pending.

The bench also referred to the data with regard to vacancies in various high courts including Kerala, Uttarakhand and Karnataka and said, "The vacancy in high courts has risen to 43 per cent and there are four million cases pending in the high courts. The whole system is collapsing".