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No logjam on judges' appointments, SC told

New Delhi : The Central government on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that there was no "logjam" or "blame game" in the transfer and appointment of judges to the high courts and it was on the job.

Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi told the bench of Chief Justice T.S Thakur and Justice A.M Khanwilkar that the delay was happening because the process for filing the vacancies in the High Courts which had arisen seven years back started late.

Telling the court that the process for filing the vacancies in the high courts should start six months before a vacancy actually arises, he said: "There is no blame game."

"There is no logjam in the system. It is like a race, you start early. You reach in time," he told the bench pointing out that the high courts were "pretty much delayed" in initiating the process for filling the vacancies which in cases started five years, six years, even seven years after they arose.

At this, Chief Justice Thakur said that with eight judges, Chhattisgarh High Court was functioning with one third of its sanctioned strength being vacant, reported IANS.

"It is an arduous process ... it (recommendation) come to us and after that it should go forward and not get stuck-up," said Chief Justice Thakur, wondering why there was so much delay in clearing the names sent by apex court collegium.

Rohatgi told the bench that recommendation for appointments for Allahabad, Chhattisgarh and Kerala High Courts have been cleared. He told the court that the names of three judges for Chhattisgarh High Court have been cleared.

He also submitted to the court in a sealed cover a detailed report from the central government on the status of various appointments that were forwarded to the government by the collegium.

The Attorney General said that in Allahabad High Court vacancy that arose seven years back is being sought to be filled up now. He said that recommendations were pending with the government since February.

As he sought two weeks time to report on further progress, the court directed the listening of matter on September 30.