

## **The Pioneer**

### **15 Lakh cases pending, 150 Judge posts vacant**

Even as the State Government claims to have taken steps towards quick disposal of various cases lying in different courts, huge vacancies in judge posts stand on the way of lessening the number of pending cases.

According to data, around 15 lakh cases are now lying pending and 150 judge posts are vacant in different courts across the State.

As many as 1.70 lakh cases are pending in the Orissa High Court, out of which over 40,000 are criminal cases..

Of the pending cases in the High Court, 42,723 are 10 years' old, 38,739 are of 5-10 years, 41,749 of 2-5 years and 46,242 cases are of 2 years old.

Over 81,000 cases are waiting to be disposed for the last five years, sources said.

Out of 27 sanctioned posts, eight are now lying vacant in the High Court.

Similarly, over 10 lakh cases, including 3 lakh criminal cases, are pending in the lower courts where 120 judge posts are lying vacant.

This apart, around 60,000 cases are pending in State Administrative Tribunal (SAT). While only four judges are on job in the SAT, three of them are about to be retire within a year. Two posts, Chairman and a Member Judge, are laying vacant in the Tribunal.

The State Government is not taking any initiative to fill up the posts as it has already decided to abolish the SAT.

Besides, over three lakh cases are pending in the courts of Tehsil, Sub-Collector, Additional District Magistrate (ADM), District Magistrate and Collector, RDC, Commissioner Consolidation, Settlement Commissioner and Board of Revenue offices.

Due to shortage of officers in these offices, numbers of revenue cases are unlikely to be lessened.