Allahabad high court has largest number of vacancies

NEW DELHI: The tussle between the Judiciary and Centre is widening with both wings fighting with each other over the draft Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for appointments of judges. The fight is directly clogging the wheels of justice and affecting the litigant the most.

With the high courts working with a strength of 621 judges and the Supreme Court with just 29 judges, fighting pendency of nearly 3.2 crore cases will be a herculean task at this stage.

According to sources, 15 high courts have forwarded names of 223 candidates to the government for appointment as judges. As per procedure, these recommendations will be forwarded to the Supreme Court collegium.

The 15 high courts include that of Delhi, Punjab and Haryana, Allahabad, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gauhati and Bombay.

The high courts are working at around 55 per cent of their total approved strength.

The Centre had earlier forwarded to the Supreme Court collegium names of 78 persons from State Judicial Services and the Bar for filling judicial vacancies.

The Centre has also put on hold appointment of 44 judges to the Allahabad High Court, referred to it by the High Court collegium in April.

As on July 1, 2016, Allahabad High Court had the largest number of vacancies, standing at 82. It is   currently working at 50 per cent of its approved strength. Besides, Chhattisgarh High Court is also working at less than 50per cent of its approved strength.

Even though Punjab and Haryana High Court has the second largest approved strength, it is working at 54 per cent of its full strength. Tripura and Sikkim High Courts are the only ones functioning with no vacancy. Manipur and Meghalaya High Courts are functioning with one vacancy each.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court collegium is also considering elevation of Justice Manjula Chellur, Justice K M Joseph and Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul to the apex court.

Justice Joseph was in news recently after a Bench headed by him had quashed President's Rule in Uttarakhand. Justice Manjula Chellur is the first woman Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court, and was the first female judge of Karnataka High Court. Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul is the Chief Justice of Madras High Court.