

able to obtain raw materials on time and market their end products.

Hence, handloom weavers in J&K witnessed involuntary unemployment, thereby leading to a decline in both their quality of life and standard of living. Due to the Duesenberry effect and less involvement of self-help groups (SHGs), there is a lack of savings. Accordingly, the handloom weavers became trapped in debt, which is, by and large, through informal credit sources such as relatives and friends. It can be observed that there is a lack of interest in the government in promoting handloom weaving and encouraging the youth towards this industry. But, it is also a fact that the failure of government schemes in J&K has many interconnected social, economic, and political factors. The main factor is that the government, instead of providing skills and jobs to the youth in general and the educated unemployed youth in particular, spends large amounts on unproductive activities.

The handloom industry in J&K is very weak because of the government's lack of support and hence it could not bear the brunt of COVID-19. Therefore, the need of the hour is to revive this industry, and the role of microfinance and SHGs is very important in this case. SHGs should be developed in J&K who would actively participate in income-generation activities. This will have a dual effect. On the one hand, it will mobilise savings, and on the other, it will reduce irregularities in investment.

Binish Qadri
SRINAGAR

India Needs a Court Management Authority

More than 4.22 crore cases are pending across Indian courts, and out of these, more than 33 lakh cases have been pending for more than 10 years. There are several reasons behind this scenario ranging from delayed process, shortage of judges, lack of judicial infrastructure, low case disposal rates, to an overall ineffective court and case management. Various efforts are being made to deal with these chronic issues at an institutional and individual level.

Delivering justice to individuals quickly and cheaply is today's overarching goal for the courts. One of the crucial elements is that modern court procedures are more heavily influenced by customs rather than by principles of productivity.

The Thirteenth Finance Commission, 2010 had allocated ₹300 crore for the appointment of "court managers" in high courts and district courts for a better management of court administration. Their suggested functions include policies and standards, planning, information statistics, case and court management, responsiveness management, legal aid and user-friendliness, human resource management, core system management, information technology system management, etc. Till date, more than 450 court managers have been appointed across the country. Some states have shown encouraging efforts in the appointment of court managers, while some have not implemented this provision in its true spirit. Court managers are facing various difficulties in terms of salary, scope of work, permanency issues, and terms and conditions, which varies from state to state.

One of the reasons for the present backlog of cases is poor judicial infrastructure. There is a sheer shortage of court complexes. In addition to this, the present complexes lack the desired amenities, which ultimately frustrate the goal of access to justice. Justice N V Ramana, former Chief Justice of India, had proposed to have a "National Judicial Infrastructure Authority," which is key for improving people's access to justice. The pendency of court cases in India and its implications of denial of basic human rights is a question of efficiency and effectiveness, given the way judicial

proceedings take place in the country. Indian courts have a large backlog of cases and it will take many years to clear it if the system does not work with efficiency.

To address such prevailing issues, we propose the following institutional changes—setting up a National Court Management Authority, a Regional Court Management Authority supported by court managers, a National Judicial Exam Commission, and a National Court Management Academy. This judicial infrastructure can be included under the umbrella of the National Court Management Authority for an overall efficient and effective management of judicial functioning. To further promote court management in India, a dedicated website, www.courtmanagement.in, was also launched with the support of court managers across the country in 2019.

Judicial authorities need to have a comprehensive mechanism to deal with overall court management and we believe that a National Court Management Authority can be an answer to this problem.

Kalpeshkumar I Gupta

VADODARA

Tripti Bhushan

SONIPAT

Erratum

In the paper titled "Is the Electronic Market the Way Forward to Overcome Market Failures in Agriculture?" (*EPW*, 8 October 2022), the author's name "Chandra Sekhara Rao N" should have read as "Chandra S R Nuthalapati" and the author note should have read as "Chandra S R Nuthalapati (raonch@gmail.com) is a professor at the Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi Enclave, North Campus, New Delhi."

The error has been corrected on the *EPW* website.

The error is regretted —Ed.

Note to Readers

Dear Readers,

We have made some changes to our online access policy.

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