

## **CJI RAMANA OVER MEDIA REPORTS ON COLLEGIUM**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Chief Justice of India N. V. Ramana on Wednesday expressed his anguish and concerns over certain speculations and reports in the media regarding the Collegium recommendations for the appointment of Supreme Court judges, even before the selection process was finalised.

Justice Ramana expressed his concern regarding the matter during the farewell meet of Justice Navin Sinha, on his superannuation in the ceremonial bench, which also comprised of Justices Surya Kant and Aniruddha Bose. Justice Ramana said, “You are all aware we need to appoint judges to this court. The process is ongoing. Meetings will be held and decisions will be taken. The process of appointment of judges is sacrosanct and has certain dignity attached to it. My media friends must understand and recognise the sanctity of this process.

“As an Institution, we hold the freedom of media and the rights of individuals in high esteem. Today’s reflections in some sections of the media, pending the process, even before formalising the resolution is counter-productive. There were instances of deserving career progression of bright talents getting marred because of such irresponsible reporting and speculation. This is very unfortunate and I am extremely upset about it,” he added. The CJI further said, “I must also place on record tremendous amount of maturity and responsibility displayed by majority of the senior journalists and media houses in showing restraint and not speculating on such a serious matter. Such professional journalists and ethical media are the real strength of the Supreme Court in particular and democracy in general. You are part of our system. I expect all the stakeholders to uphold the integrity and dignity of this institution. “I am sure Brother Sinha will forgive for deviating a bit on this

solemn occasion. He will understand my anguish. I firmly believe that the nation will continue to draw benefit of Brother Sinha's rich experience. I look forward to his continued contributions in the legal field. On behalf of all my Brother and Sister Judges, I wish him all the best for his future endeavours," he added. "I am grateful that senior journalists have not speculated such a process. Such journalists are the strength of our democracy. I am deeply disappointed," he said.

The remarks were made by the CJI while sitting on a ceremonial Bench along with Justice Navin Sinha who is retiring as Supreme Court judge today. Various news outlets had reported today that the Collegium had recommended 9 names for elevation to Supreme Court. Bar & Bench had reported that while Collegium had recommended nine names, the minutes of the meeting of the Collegium were yet to be signed by the Collegium judges.

During the e-farewell, Justice Ramana said, "Brother Sinha's knowledge and wisdom are writ large in all his judgments. However, the qualities I most admire in him are his humility and simplicity. He never makes anyone feel less or unworthy. These attributes were clear in the way Brother Sinha always conducted his Court. He was always well prepared for Court and knew the contents of every file. Yet, he gave people a patient hearing, be they juniors or seniors. For young advocates, I am sure arguing before Brother Sinha must have been a wonderful experience.

In December 2020, while delivering a special address in an event organised by NITI Ayog and Patna High Court for advancing access to justice through Online Dispute Resolution, in the context of post-pandemic world, Justice Sinha had very aptly stated that it is essential to ensure all stakeholders are trained and prepared for this new normal. "We will be successful in ensuring justice delivery for all by taking a collaborative route as the way forward," added Rai.

He said, “Justice Sinha is also credited with championing the computerisation of Patna, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan High Courts. During his tenure, Chhattisgarh High Court became the second in the country to introduce payment of court fee electronically. Subsequently, the e-Court fees centre at Jaipur was also inaugurated by him, making Rajasthan High Court the fourth in the country to provide e-stamp facility.”