

# "Central tribunal a viable alternative"

## Judge wants its cover expanded

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**NEW DELHI:** The Central Administrative Tribunal was a "viable substitute" to High Courts and its jurisdiction in service matters needed to be expanded to cover more undertakings, Supreme Court judge Dalveer Bhandari said here on Sunday.

Inaugurating the fourth Conference of CAT, Justice Bhandari observed that compared to High Courts, CAT's disposal rate of cases was "very good." In the first 20 years of its existence, it disposed of 4.51 lakh of the 4.75 lakh cases.

The tribunal planned to further reduce the disposal time by adopting automation, computerisation and modernisation, CAT Chairman V.K. Bali said.

While Minister for Parliamentary Affairs P.K. Bansal lauded the tribunal as an "effective alternative adjudication system," Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions V. Narayanasamy said the government was committed to providing all possible support to the CAT for which all issues relating to the tribunal were put on "fast track."

The government had reviewed the system to check

- CAT's disposal rate of cases "very good"

- Tribunal judges are unsung heroes, says J.S. Verma

delays in filling up vacancies, which were earlier the major cause for delays in disposal of cases. Process had been initiated for filling up 2,012 vacancies, he added.

Describing CAT judges as the "unsung heroes of the justice delivery system," the former Chief Justice, J.S. Verma, felt there was no justification in having a different retirement age for CAT judges vis-à-vis High Court or Supreme Court judges.

The conference deliberated on measures to arrest pendency of cases and to improve the working conditions. On the occasion, the former Attorney-General of India, Soli Sorabjee, spoke on 'Administrative Law' under the 'Rajiv Gandhi Lecture Series.'

CAT was set up in 1985 for adjudicating complaints and service matters relating to employees of the Central government and notified public sector undertakings and organisations.