

**A brief History of events relating to the Establishment of
National Judicial Academy**

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Spread on a side of a hillock this magnificent campus on the bank of a lake in the city of Lakes i.e. Bhopal, is known as the National Judicial Academy. The idea of having National Judicial Academy was probably first conceived in the conference of Chief Justices held on September 18th and 19th in the year 1992. The Conference discussed as its item no. 4 “the setting up of a National Judicial Academy” and resolved as under.

“Resolved that Chief Justices of High Court may send their views and suggestions regarding setting up of the National Academy of Judicial Administration, to Hon’ble Mr. Justice S.C. Agarwal of Supreme Court of India, on or before 31st Oct. 1992. The Chief Justices of those High Courts under whose auspices institutions for imparting training to Judicial Officers are being run will also send curricula and other materials relating to those institutions to Hon’ble Mr. Justice S.C. Agarwal.”

Thereafter to establish and run the Academy, a society named as National Judicial Academy was formed and registered under Societies Registration Act, 1960 at Delhi. The society had a general body and a governing council consisting of the Chief Justice of India, as it’s Chairman, two senior Judges of the Supreme Court of India, the Secretary Home Govt. of India, the Secretary Expenditure Govt. of India, the Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs Govt. of India, as members and the Registrar General cum Courts Administrator of the Supreme Court of India as it’s member secretary. The next step was to select a piece of land in an appropriate town to locate the Academy by constructing a suitable building.

While the process of selecting a site for the campus was going on, at the suggestion of some Judicial Officers of Madhya Pradesh, the then Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Mr. Digvijay Singh in the year 1994 met the then Chief Justice of India Hon’ble Mr. Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah, mentioning that Bhopal has a better climate, was a eco friendly green town with several lakes and was almost in the center of the country and was also well connected through trains & roads. Shri Digvijay Singh offered that his Govt. would feel privilege in making suitable land available for housing the Academy in case the Hon’ble Supreme Court founds it suitable for the same. Hon’ble Mr. Justice Agarwal was entrusted with the job of exploring the suitability of the site which Madhya Pradesh Govt. was willing to offer. He

visited Bhopal and was shown a couple of sites, by the revenue authorities of the State Govt. of M.P. But he found that the lands suggested were not suitable. Learning about it, approached the then Secretary Law and Legislative Department of M.P. Govt. Shri N.K. Jain (later on elevated to the High Court of M.P.) and the Hon'ble Chief Minister. Both of them were surprised to learn it and assured that other suitable land would be made available. Thereafter Shri N.K. Jain personally went around the town with revenue officials and selected the present site. Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, through the good offices of the then Registrar General of the Supreme Court of India Mr. M.S.A. Siddiqui (later on elevated to High Court), was then approached and requested for one more chance. There upon the then senior most puine Judge of the Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Mr. Justice A.M. Ahmadi came to Bhopal in April 1994. he was shown the present site by the then Additional Secretary, Department of Law & Legislative Affairs of M.P. Govt. Hon'ble Mr. Justice A.M. Ahmadi reacted favorably to this site. Accordingly, he went back to Delhi and thereafter the governing body of the Academy decided to accept the offer of the Govt. of M.P. The Secretary Law and Legislative Department was accordingly informed, who in turn got the present land measuring about 60 Acres, allotted to the Academy by the Govt. of M.P.

Meanwhile the governing body selected one Mr. Kadri from Bombay as it's architect. Shri Kadri assisted by his colleagues Shri Rahul Kadri and Shri Soeb Kadri architects, at first planned out a structure for foundation stone. Accordingly, the site was developed and the structure with foundation stone was erected by the authorities of the Capital Project of Bhopal, under the State Govt. The foundation stone was then laid by Hon'ble Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah, the Chief Justice of India on. 11th Sept. 1994.

Meanwhile as Mr. M.S.A. Siddiqui was recommended for elevation. I was selected as his successor to the office of Registrar General cum Court's Administrator of the Supreme Court of India and ex-officio Member Secretary of the National Judicial Academy. The Governing Council of the Academy after negotiations with Shri Kadri, finally decided to have him as it's consultant-Architect. A sum of probably Rs. 48 crores was initially sanctioned by the Govt. of India for the project. A plan with a model of the building was submitted by Shri Kadri for approval of the Governing Council. The same was approved. It was decided that the construction of the building shall be done by contractors and the supervision of construction would be by a separate agency instead of regular agencies like (CPWD). Ultimately construction unit of Larson and Tubro was given contract for the civil work and for

1995-96. The building started taking shape. The civil work was almost complete by 1998. Thereafter for sometime the progress was arrested due to hurdles like discontinuance of work by electrical contractor etc. Ultimately the construction got completed. The campus was dedicated to the Nation by the then President of India His Excellency Mr. A. Kalam on September 5th 2002.

The first course developed for Judicial Officers from almost all the States of India, was relating to sensitization of Judicial Officers against gender bias. This was developed by the Academy in collaboration and under a project by a faculty member Ms. A. Stuart of Warwick University of Great Britain. Every year from 1996 till 1999 some officers from different states were sent to Britain for a part of training there. Hon'ble Justice K.N. Saikia, Retd. Judge, Supreme Court of India was appointed as the first Director General of the Academy. One Shri Bose, former Additional Secretary, Department of Justice was the first Registrar of the Academy. Hon'ble Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah was the first Chairman and Justice M.S.A. Siddiqui the first Member Secretary of the National Judicial Academy.

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