

Speech of Hon'ble Mr. Justice, Madan B. Lokur, Judge  
Supreme Court of India

I welcome all present here :

I am very happy to be once again here in the Tis Hazari Court Complex and I am very happy to inaugurate VWDC. I think it is a great achievement. Similar two complexes have already been in Karkardooma Court Complex and Saket Court Complex. It is a wonderful place which I have today. There is also extreme shortage of space but inspite of that it is wonderful. I would like to share one experience with all of you that about 8 years ago, when I was leaving my chamber in Delhi High Court, I got a e-mail and I had been surprised that a girl with her father who was a labourer visited seven times for recording her statement under Section 164 but statement of that girl could not be recorded due to adjournment given. In e-mail request was made, if it is possible, it may be ensured that the statement of her daughter be recorded on next date so that another adjournment may not be given. I immediately rang up Hon'ble Chief Justice and told that I have received e-mail and I would like to take up this e-mail as a petition on next day. Hon'ble Chief Justice telephonically gave his consent. I asked the Registrar and I told him that matter be listed on next day at item No. 1. On next day, matter was listed before the judicial bench hearing criminal cases and passed

a direction requiring the Magistrate to ensure that the statement of the girl to be recorded on the next date of hearing. Ultimately, her statement could be recorded on eight date. Her father was a daily wager and he used to loose his daily wages and he lost his wages for eight times. The second instant is that when I visited Shilong about 9 years ago, the District Judge there told me that the procedure for witness to get the transport expenses, diet money on next day. I was surprised to see that in this way witness who deposes his statement, has to come again for claiming diet money on other day. The third instance is of Tis Hazari Courts where I found that for the witness it was very difficult to get diet money. I am not talking about vulnerable witnesses but many other witnesses who come there and for them also it is a complicated problem or the amount is too low. Hon'ble Justice S.N. Dhingra, the then Ld. District Judge setup some one counter for payment of diet money for witnesses. I hope it is still working. The reason why I am mentioning these instances is that we are not treating the witnesses well. As Hon'ble Ms. Justice G. Rohini said that witnesses are the eyes and ears of justice delivery system. Witnesses have no stake in the case. So far as, the vulnerable witnesses are concerned, the position has improved over the last 10-20 years, there was a time when witnesses were being intimidated. The camera proceedings, there was a progress made and today we have reached where we have wonderful room, modern technology and the statement of the witnesses can be recorded and this is not only with regard to the female witnesses who are victims of

sexual offence but for the male who are victim of sexual offence. Vulnerable male female children who have made witnesses can get the benefit of the complex that you have started here. The complex has been created without any financial or additional resources. Without taking any space and the idea is to utilise what little what they have. It is really wonderful. I can also say that a couple of month ago when I went to Benglore where judges who visited Delhi praised the idea and the programme functioning in Karkardoma and they hoped that this idea will spread all over the India.