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Justice Ramana rues unequal access to justice

'Poor, vulnerable cannot enforce rights'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge, Justice N.V. Ramana, said on Monday that the guarantee of equal justice to all is meaningless if the poor, illiterate, vulnerable and weak sections of society cannot enforce their rights.

Justice Ramana, who is next in line to be the Chief Justice of India as per the seniority norm following incumbent Justice S.A. Bobde's retirement on April 23, said India has been, since Independence, grappling with the twin problems of poverty and access to justice.

Twin problems

"Ever since we declared ourselves to be an independent nation, we found ourselves caught between the twin problems of 'poverty' and 'access to justice'. The architects of modern India



N.V. Ramana

had debated this issue on several national and international platforms. Sadly, even after 74 years of independence, we are still discussing the same issue," Justice Ramana said on the occasion of inauguration of Front offices and Legal aid Defense Counsel Office at Delhi.

He said this is the gap in access to justice that legal aid tries to bridge. "When people cannot reach us, we should reach them..." Justice Ramana said.