Address of Mr. Justice Mohammad Azam Khan, Hon'able Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Azad Jammu & Kashmir on the Eve of the Inauguration Ceremony of the Official Website of the Supreme Court AJK, on 5th June, 2014

My brother Judges of the Supreme Court of Azad Jammu & Kashmir,

My Brother Judges of the Azad Jammu & Kashmir High Court,

The respected Minister of Azad Government of the State of Jammu & Kashmir, and Chairman of Information Technology Board, Mr. Muhammad Matloob Inklabi,

The Advocate General and Additional Advocate Generals,

The Vice Chairman and the Members of the AJK Bar Council,

The President , Office Bearers and the Members of the AJK Supreme Court Bar Association,

The President, Office Bearers and the Members of the Central Bar Association, Muzaffarabad

The Presidents and Office Bearers of All the District and Tehsil Bar Associations of AJK

The Secretary and Officers of AJK Information Technology Board,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Aslaam o Alaikum!

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all here in the Supreme Court to join us on this momentous event. Today, in the Judicial history of our State, we have achieved another milestone and progressed in line with the development of Information Technology-the launching of the web site of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Supreme Court, that is www.ajksupremecourt.gok.pk. Indeed, it is a matter of immense pleasure for all of us, especially for the judiciary

and the legal fraternity of AJ&K. The computers and other related equipments were introduced in Supreme Court about fifteen years ago. Almost the same is the case with the AJ&K High Court and the lower Judiciary. There has always been felt need of improvement, in respect of equipments, their usage, and to achieve pace with the developments going around us. But due to financial constraints and non-availability of technical expertise, nothing substantial could be achieved.

Despite the financial constraints the Azad Government of the state of Jammu & Kashmir has allocated the fund for automation of Supreme Court and through its concerted efforts it has become successful in starting and establishing “Automation of Judicial System & Connectivity of Supreme Court Offices at Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot and Mirpur”. The launching of the website of the Supreme Court AJ&K is the first step of the project; the rest is yet to be achieved.

According to one source " Information technology means and deals with the use of electronic computers, mobile and wireless devices and computer software to convert, store, protect, process, transmit and securely retrieve information.

The invention of the computers and subsequently transformation of it into information technology has turned the world into a global village, it has made possible the audio and video communication on tremendous speed in real-time manner on just one click away, it has turned the businesses, management and governance very cost-effective and transparent, , it has reduced the time-consumption in everyday tasks of the individuals and the institutions, it has become a ocean of information, knowledge and education, it has helped the communities in provision of education, health and basic services and has assisted in increasing the awareness, it has made possible the provision of businesses , private and public services for 24/7 throughout the year, it has reduced the reliance on human-contact decreasing the exploitation of the individuals by service providing humans.

In short we name any segment of life; the significant impact of information technology would be visible on it.

In the modern world the scope of the concept of “Access to justice “has become somewhat wider. On one side the dissemination of Information has crossed the speed of light in technological context and on other side, in the constitutional context, the right to information has become a fundament right of the citizens. Keeping in pace with the new concepts of constitutional jurisprudence and technological advancements, the fusion of both has become imperative to augment the “Access to Justice”. The development and launching of the web site of the Supreme Court is also such step in making advancements in legal and judicial information technology but the same is not the last.

The website would not only be beneficial for the judiciary and the legal fraternity but also be useful for the litigants and the general public. It will help in making efficient and

expediting the judicial service management of the Supreme Court. It will help the legal fraternity to have online access to the latest and important judgements of this Court. The legal practitioners of this Court and the litigants shall have access to the cause-lists, which will be displayed regularly on the website. It will also carry the schedule of the benches at Principal seat and the registry offices of the Supreme Court. The website also contains a unique feature by which the mobile phone text messages containing queries, suggestions etc. will end up on website and may be retrieved and replied from concerned Officer's mobile phone.

The web site contains a brief history of the Apex Court of the state. The information about Hon'able retired Chief Justices and Judges of the Supreme Court and also provides profiles of my brother Judges in the Court. It provides its users access to the maps of the Principal and registry offices of the Supreme Court, from anywhere of the world. It will also provide the concerned legal counsels and the litigants,

whose mobile phone numbers would have been provided to Supreme Court, the facility of Short Messaging Service (SMS) to get notifications about their case hearings. It also provides access to text of the AJK Interim Constitution Act, 1974 and the AJK Supreme Court Rules, 1978 along with useful links of other Government Departments, the Superior Courts of Pakistan, its provinces and AJK Government and the AJK Bar Council have also been provided.

- The launching of the website and certainly its proper usage and making it regularly updated will help in achieving many objects connected with its launching e.g.
- It will provide all the people greater access to the judicial services at ease.
- It will improve the disposition of the cases.
- It will provide the latest important judgments of the court and facility of getting their prints.

- On completion of the whole automation project it will certainly be helpful in introducing and improving many other judicial services, such as, after amendment in Supreme Court Rules, the facility of e-filing of the petitions and the appeals.
- It will improve the confidence of the communities on Judicial System and the court.

Here, I would like to remind you that being the Apex Court of Appeal and the last Obiter, the matters finally reach to it in ascending manner, it is very essential to achieve whole goal of making judicial services accessible in fast and transparent way, the High Court, Shariat Court, other judicial tribunals and the lower judiciary are also required to be get fully automated and interlinked. I hope that the Government would take up the matter on the priority basis, as the impacts of the working of the judicial system transcend to each direction in the society.

I hope that this website will expand in its scope and content. I also have hoped that the concerned administrators of this website will continually make efforts to update and improve it. At the moment we do not have IT Professionals employed here, until that is achieved and the project is completely transferred to the Supreme Court AJ&K, I hope the IT Board shall endeavour for providing all kinds of technical and other assistance to make it successful. The role of the legal fraternity is also of very vital importance, they should regularly access the website and avail services, encourage their clients to visit the same and also give feedback and suggestions for its improvement.

Before parting with, I deem it necessary to acknowledge the untiring efforts of the officers and staff of the Information Technology Board especially Director General IT Board Mr Sarwar Gondal and I would also like to extend my heartiest congratulations to all the concerned who remained involved

in development and successful launching of the website of Supreme Court.

I would also like to say thanks on behalf of my learned brother Judges of the Supreme Court, Supreme Court AJ&K and myself to Minister of Azad Government State of Jammu & Kashmir and Chairman Information Technology Board Mr. Muhammad Matloob Inkalabi for his cooperation in initiation of the project of the automation of the Supreme Court of AJ&K and successful launch of the website of the Supreme Court AJ&K.

I thank you all for taking out your time to make you able to attend this momentous event.

Allah Hafiz