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## Courts get GNLU boost to clear backlog

Ahmedabad/New Delhi: For a few days every year, these law students fan out in the interiors of Gujarat to immerse themselves in the functioning of district courts and help clear the backlog of cases in their own small yet meaningful way. In a unique experiment, the Gujarat National Law University (GNLU), as part of an understanding with the state's lower judiciary, is partnering with district courts that are reeling under a shortage of law officers. The idea is to enable students to provide constructive help.

GNLU vice-chancellor Bimal N Patel says the experiment was a result of a 2009 survey conducted by the university on backlog of cases in the lower judiciary, and how small initiatives like clubbing of similar cases together and preparing chronological statements on cases can help save valuable time.

"Some 120 of our students went about the state conducting the study in all districts of Gujarat," Patel said. "They met judges and found out why the courts were tied down." The volume of cases in courts is huge, and the shortage of people is also an issue, he said. "So, we identified non-sensitive areas where our students can be involved in a constructive way," he said. ¶