

2025

RAJYA SABHA REPLIES

BUDGET SESSION, 2025
[267th SESSION RAJYA SABHA]
[31st January, 2025 to 13th February, 2025]

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-424
ANSWERED ON - 06/02/2025

JS(NIKG)
LAP

NATIONAL LOK ADALAT SCHEME

✓ 424 DR. ANIL SUKHDEORAO BONDE:
SHRI PRADIP KUMAR VERMA:
SHRI MADAN RATNORE:

Will the Minister of Law and Justice be pleased to state:

- (a) the response of the public towards the initiative of National Lok Adalat scheme;
- (b) whether there has been an impact on reducing case backlogs in the judiciary; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof.

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a): Lok Adalats are organized by Legal Services Institutions at such intervals as it deems fit, in order to reduce the pendency of cases in courts and also to settle the disputes at pre-litigation stage. Lok Adalats are one of the effective modes of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism in reducing the burden on the courts, which have received positive response from the public. There are three types of Lok Adalats - namely State Lok Adalats, National Lok Adalats and Permanent Lok Adalats.

- i. State Lok Adalats are organized by the Legal Services Authorities/Committees as per the local conditions and needs, for settlement of both pre-litigation and post-litigation cases.
- ii. National Lok Adalats are conducted quarterly for settlement of cases (both pre-litigation and post-litigation) in all the courts from the Supreme Court of India to the Taluk Courts on a single day. Every year, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) issues calendar for organising National Lok Adalats.

During the year 2025, National Lok Adalats are scheduled to be held on 8th March, 10th May, 13th September and 13th December.

- iii. Permanent Lok Adalats are permanent establishments set up in most of the Districts to provide compulsory pre-litigative mechanism for settlement of disputes related to Public Utility Services.

(b) and (c): The National and State Lok Adalats are not a permanent establishment and handle pending court cases as referred to it by the respective courts. Since these Lok Adalats are not permanent in nature, all unsettled cases, are reverted to the respective courts and hence do not remain pending with these Lok Adalats. The details of the number of cases disposed of by the Lok Adalats during the last two years and current year are as follows:

(i) National Lok Adalat

Year	Total cases settled (both pre-litigative and pending cases)
2022	4,19,26,010
2023	8,53,42,217
2024	10,45,26,119

(ii) State Lok Adalat

Year	Total cases settled (both pre-litigative and pending cases)
2022-23	8,51,309
2023-24	12,07,103
2024-25 (upto Nov., 24)	10,88,021

(iii) Permanent Lok Adalat (Public Utility Services)

Year	Total cases settled
2022-23	1,71,138
2023-24	2,32,763
2024-25 (upto Nov., 24)	1,10,643

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 425
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

ADR Cell -
✓ (CLA)
Initiatives and reforms in arbitration, mediation and dispute resolution

425. **Shri Sujeet Kumar:**

Will the Minister of **Law and Justice** be pleased to state:

- (a) the key initiatives undertaken under the India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019, to ensure international standards in arbitration and mediation, positioning India as a preferred hub;
- (b) the criteria for empanelling arbitrators and mediators and the manner in which these align with global best practices;
- (c) the manner in which Pre-Institution Mediation and Settlement (PIMS) under the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, address case backlogs and the plans to enhance its efficiency; and
- (d) the steps being taken to raise awareness and build capacities for the effective implementation of the Mediation Act, 2023?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) The India International Arbitration Centre (Centre) has been established as an institution of national importance under the provisions of the India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019, for the purpose of creating an independent, autonomous and world class body for facilitating institutional arbitration. In order to position India as a hub of arbitration, the Centre has

framed and notified the India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations 2023, which lay down a detailed procedure for the conduct of arbitration, at par with leading global arbitral institutions. Further, in terms of section 28 of the Act, the Centre has established a Chamber of Arbitration which consists of experienced arbitration practitioners of repute, at national and international level and persons having wide experience in the area of alternative dispute resolution and conciliation. The Chamber of Arbitrators empanels reputed arbitrators, both for domestic and international arbitration, in terms of the India International Arbitration Centre (Criteria for Admission to the Panel of Arbitrators) Regulations, 2023.

The Centre since its establishment, has conducted workshops, conferences and seminars relating to domestic and international arbitrations, for training and awareness. A mediation training programme was also organized jointly by the Centre and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in May, 2024 at the Centre's premises in Vasant Kunj, New Delhi.

The Centre has also entered into Memorandums of Understanding with various institutions including Indian Institute of Management (IIM) - Rohtak and Rashtriya Raksha University, to promote alternative dispute resolution mechanisms as preferred modes of dispute resolution.

The Centre is envisaged to become a model arbitral institution in the country, thereby paving the way for enhancing the quality of institutional framework for arbitration.

(b) Presently, the arbitral institutions and mediation service providers can adopt their own criteria for empanelling arbitrators and mediators respectively.

The arbitrators in India International Arbitration Centre, are empanelled by the Chamber of Arbitration under Section 28 of the India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019, in terms of the criteria provided in the IIAC (Criteria for Admission to the Panel of Arbitrators) Regulations, 2023. The various provisions of the Mediation Act, 2023, provides for maintenance of panel of mediators including section 41, which enables the Mediation Service Providers, to maintain a panel of mediators.

(c) Section 12A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 provides for mandatory pre-institution mediation and settlement (PIMS) in commercial disputes of specified value, before instituting a suit except in cases in which urgent relief is

contemplated by the party. The parties have to therefore first exhaust the mandatory remedy of PIMS before approaching the Court. This is aimed at providing an opportunity to the parties to resolve the commercial disputes through mediation and prevent disputes which are thus amicably settled being taken to courts for adjudication.

In order to further enhance the efficiency of the PIMS, the Government, through the Mediation Act, 2023 has further amended Section 12A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015. The amendment *inter-alia* empowers the Mediation Service Providers, as notified by the Central Government to conduct PIMS, in addition to Authorities constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

(d) The Government continues to take steps to create awareness about Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms including mediation. In this regard, a book titled as "*A guide to Alternative Dispute Resolution*" was released by the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law & Justice, on 26.11.2023, during the celebrations of the Constitution Day.

The India International Arbitration Centre also continues to conduct workshops and seminars for various stakeholders in the alternative dispute resolution ecosystem and encourage parties to consider adopting the alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, to enable time bound, efficacious and cost effective dispute resolution.

The Mediation Act, 2023, is further expected to be a pivotal legislative intervention towards providing standalone law on mediation and enabling the growth of a culture of amicable settlement of disputes out of court and the outcome being party driven. The Government is continuously engaging with various stakeholders including High Courts and National Legal Services Authority for raising awareness and effective implementation of the provisions of the Mediation Act, 2023.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 426

ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

Female friendly infrastructure in district courts

JSC (GM)
JR
✓426 DR. FAUZIA KHAN:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that only 6.7 per cent court infrastructure at district level is female-friendly;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor and the details of measures taken to establish creches, baby care rooms and separate washrooms in District Courts;
- (c) whether any infrastructural audits have been conducted for district-level courts and High Courts to assess their accessibility to women; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (d): The primary responsibility of development of infrastructure facilities for judiciary rests with the State Governments. However, to augment the resources of the State and UT Governments, the Central Government has been implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for the Development of Infrastructure Facilities for the district and subordinate judiciary since 1993-94, by providing financial assistance to them in the prescribed fund-sharing pattern between the Centre and States. There are five components covered under the scheme, viz., court hall, residential units, lawyers' halls, toilet complexes and digital computer rooms for the convenience of lawyers and litigants.

Specific aspects including the female friendly nature of court infrastructure at the district level and their infrastructural audits are issues within the domain of the respective State

Governments and the concerned High Courts, which exercise supervisory jurisdiction over the district courts.

The planning and design of a court room is done by the building / infrastructure committees of the respective High Courts, who sanction the projects to be funded under the CSS. The Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice, has developed certain norms and specifications of the court halls. These norms and specifications have been calculated based on recommendations of the National Courts Management System (NCMS) Committee of the Supreme Court in the baseline report on Court Development Planning System, existing norms and practices being followed by different State Governments and certain CPWD norms and are part of the CSS guidelines. The guidelines have provision for flexi-funds under which, the State/UTs, if they so desire, can set aside the funds allocated (25% in case of States and 30% in case of UTs), including Central and State Share, as flexi-fund to be spent on any component, which is in line with the overall aim and objective of the approved CSS. No data on district-wise female-friendly infrastructure is available centrally.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 427
ANSWERED ON - 06/02/2025

SS(NKG)
LAD
LEGAL AID TO THE DOWNTRODDEN IN ODISHA

427 SHRI MUZIBULLA KHAN:

Will the Minister of Law and Justice be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has conducted any training programmes for lawyers and legal aid personnel in Odisha to equip them with the necessary skills for handling cases;
- (b) the remuneration the lawyers get from Government in dealing with cases of the people belonging to the SC, ST, OBC and other vulnerable groups in Odisha referred to them by legal aid; and
- (c) the steps being taken to ensure the effective implementation of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) schemes and other legal aid programmes in Odisha?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a): To enhance the capacities of panel lawyers, especially their skills, client counselling and representation, NALSA has conducted Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes, wherein about 100 Judicial Officers and Lawyers were trained as Master Trainers so that they could impart further training at the local level. Accordingly, training programmes for the panel lawyers including in the State of Odisha are being undertaken across the country. The details of training programmes conducted for Panel Lawyers in Odisha during last three years and current year are as follows:

Year	Training programmes conducted	No. of participants in the training programmes
2021-22	42	731
2022-23	64	827
2023-24	29	732
2024-25 (upto Nov.,24)	30	836

(b): Regulation 14 of the National Legal Services Authority (Free and Competent Legal Services) Regulations, 2010 framed by NALSA has the following provision for payment of fee to the panel lawyers:

“(1) Panel lawyers shall be paid fee in accordance with the Schedule of fee, as approved under the State regulations.

(2) The State Legal Services Authority and other Legal Services Institution shall effect periodic revision of the honorarium to be paid to panel lawyers for the different types of services rendered by them in legal aid cases.

(3) As soon as the report of completion of the proceedings is received from the panel lawyer, the Legal Services Institution shall, without any delay, pay the fees and expenses payable to panel lawyer.”

In this regard, vide The Odisha Gazette No. 670 dated 31.03.2017 (S.R.O. No. 155/2017 dated 23.08.2016), the Odisha State Legal Services Authority (OSLSA) has notified amendments in the existing schedule of fee structure of legal services Panel Lawyers, which is available on their website (<https://oslsa.odisha.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Fee-Structure-of-Legal-Services-Panel-Lawyers..pdf>) under ‘Panel Lawyers’ tab.

(c): The implementation of NALSA schemes and other legal aid programmes is done by the State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs), including OSLSA which is monitored by NALSA. In this regard, NALSA receives monthly activity reports from all SLSAs including OSLSA, highlighting the activities carried out in a particular month. Apart from monthly activity reports, NALSA also prepares its own Annual Report including activities of SLSAs, which is laid before both Houses of the Parliament. Further, All India Meets and Regional Meets are frequently organized by NALSA to monitor the performance of Legal Services Authorities.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 428
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

Financial Autonomy of the Judiciary

Admin. III
(LA)

428. Dr. Ajeet Madhavrao Gopchade:

Will the Minister of **LAW AND JUSTICE** be pleased to state:

the actions taken by Government in response to the National Commission Consultation paper on the Financial Autonomy of the Indian Judiciary, submitted on September 26, 2001, highlighting essential elements of the judicial system, such as the necessity for the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India to monitor expenditures of judiciary and proposing the creation of National and State Judicial Councils to manage policy-making, budgeting, and implementation which indicates that finalized budgets for the judiciary should be submitted to Parliament or the concerned State Legislatures?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

The National Commission to review the working of the Constitution (NCRWC) had issued a Consultation Paper on the subject and later submitted its report containing recommendations on the subject to the Government on 31st March, 2002. Regarding financial autonomy of the Judiciary, there are adequate provisions in the constitution and other laws which protect it. However, the Report of the NCRWC was forwarded to all Ministries / Departments of the Government for examination and processing the same. Action on the recommendation lies with the Ministry/Department of the Government of India which are administratively concerned with the subject matter of the recommendations.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 429
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

JSCNMJR-I)
NM

SALARY AND EMOLUMENTS OF JUDGES

✓429. SMT. KIRAN CHOUDHRY:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:-

(a) the steps taken by Government to address the systemic deficiencies that impede the expeditious resolution and disposal of cases pending in the courts; and

(b) whether Government is considering increasing the salaries and emoluments of the Judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court of India?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE/AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a): The disposal of pending cases is within the exclusive domain of the judiciary. However, the Government has taken various initiatives to facilitate expeditious resolution and disposal of cases.

(i) The National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms was set up in August, 2011 with the twin objectives of increasing access by reducing delays and arrears in the system and enhancing accountability through structural changes and by setting performance standards and capacities. The Mission has been pursuing a coordinated approach for phased liquidation of arrears and

pendency in judicial administration, which, inter-alia, involves better infrastructure for courts including computerization, increase in sanctioned strength of District and Subordinate Courts, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation and re-engineering of court procedure for quick disposal of cases and emphasis on human resource development.

(ii) Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of Judicial Infrastructure, funds are being released to States/UTs for construction of court halls, residential quarters for judicial officers, lawyers' halls, toilet complexes and digital computer rooms that ease the life of various stakeholders including the litigants, thereby aiding justice delivery. As on date, Rs. 11841.72 crores have been released since the inception of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for the Judiciary in 1993-94. The number of court halls has increased from 15,818 as on 30.06.2014 to 22,037 as on 20.01.2025, and number of residential units has increased from 10,211 as on 30.06.2014 to 19,690 as on 20.01.2025, under this scheme.

(iii) Further under the Phase I & II of the e-Courts Mission Mode Project, information and communication technology (ICT) had been leveraged for IT enablement of District and Subordinate Courts. 18,735 District and Subordinate Courts were computerized till 2023. WAN connectivity has been provided to 99.5% of court complexes. Video conferencing facility has been enabled between 3,240 court complexes and 1,272 corresponding jails. As on 31.12.2025, 1540 eSewaKendras in District Courts and 29 eSewaKendras in High Courts have been made functional to bridge the digital divide by providing citizen centric services to lawyers and litigants. 27 virtual courts have been set up in 21 States/UTs. As on 31.12.2024, these courts have handled more than 6.36 crore cases and realized more than Rs. 691.95crores in fines. The Cabinet on 13.09.2023 has approved eCourts Phase-III at an outlay of Rs.7,210 crores. Taking the gains of Phase-I and Phase-II to the next level, the e-Courts Phase-III aims to usher in a regime of enhanced ease of justice by moving towards digital, online and paperless courts. It intends to incorporate latest technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Block Chain, etc. to make justice delivery

progressively more robust, easy and accessible to all the stakeholders.

(iv) The Government has been regularly filling up vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts. From 01.05.2014 to 27.01.2025, 66 Judges were appointed in the Supreme Court. 1013 new Judges were appointed and 776 Additional Judges were made permanent in the High Courts during the same period. The sanctioned strength of Judges of the High Courts has been increased from 906 in May, 2014 to 1122 till now. The sanctioned and working strength of judicial officers in District and Subordinate Courts has increased as under:

As on	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength
31.12.2013	19,518	15,115
30.01.2025	25,771	20,478

Source: MIS Portal of the Department of Justice

However, filling up of vacancies in District and Subordinate judiciary falls within the domain of the State Governments and High Courts concerned.

(v) In pursuance of a Resolution passed in Chief Justices' Conference held in April, 2015, Arrears Committees have been set up in all 25 High Courts to clear cases pending for more than five years. Arrears Committees have been set up under District Courts as well.

(vi) Under the aegis of the Fourteenth Finance Commission, the Fast Track Courts have been established for dealing with cases of heinous crimes; cases involving senior citizens, women, children, etc. As on 31.12.2024, 863 Fast Track Courts are functional for handling cases of heinous crimes, crimes against women and children, etc. To fast-track criminal cases involving elected MPs / MLAs, ten (10) Special Courts are functional in nine (9) States/UTs. Further, the Central Government has approved a Scheme for setting up Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country for the expeditious disposal of pending cases of Rape and POCSO Act. As on 31.12.2024, 747 FTSCs including 406 exclusive POCSO (ePOCSO) Courts are functional in 30 States/UTs across the country which have disposed of more than 2,99,000 cases.

(vii) With a view to reduce pendency and unclogging of the courts, the Government has amended various laws like The Negotiable Instruments

(Amendment) Act, 2018, The Commercial Courts (Amendment) Act, 2018, The Specific Relief (Amendment) Act, 2018, The Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2019 and The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Act, 2018.

(viii) Alternate Dispute Resolution methods have been promoted whole heartedly. Accordingly, The Commercial Courts Act, 2015 was amended in August, 2018 making Pre-institution Mediation and Settlement (PIMS) mandatory in case of commercial disputes. Amendment to The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 has been made by The Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act 2015 for expediting the speedy resolution of disputes by prescribing timelines.

Under The Commercial Courts Act, 2015, there is provision for case management hearing which provides for an efficient, effective and purposeful judicial management of a case so as to achieve a timely and qualitative resolution of a dispute. It assists in early identification of disputed issues of fact and law, establishment of procedural calendar for the life of the case and the exploration of possibilities of the resolution of the dispute.

Another novel feature introduced for the commercial courts is the system of color banding which limits the number of adjournments that can be granted in any commercial matter to three and alerts the judges about listing of the cases in accordance with their stage of pendency.

(ix) Lok Adalat is an important Alternative Disputes Resolution Mechanism available to common people. It is a forum where the disputes/ cases pending in the court of law or at pre-litigation stage are settled/ compromised amicably. Under The Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987, an award made by a Lok Adalat is deemed to be a decree of a civil court and is final and binding on all parties and no appeal lies against thereto before any court. Lok Adalat is not a permanent establishment. National Lok Adalats are organized simultaneously in all Taluks, Districts and High Courts on a pre-fixed date.

The details of the cases disposed of in National Lok Adalats during the last four years are as under: -

Years	Pre-litigation Cases	Pending Cases	Grand Total
2021	72,06,294	55,81,743	1,27,88,037
2022	3,10,15,215	1,09,10,795	4,19,26,010
2023	7,10,32,980	1,43,09,237	8,53,42,217
2024 (upto 31.12.2024)	8,70,19,059	1,75,07,060	10,45,26,119
Total	19,62,73,548	4,83,08,835	24,45,82,383

(x) The Government launched the Tele-Law programme in 2017, which provides an effective and reliable e-interface platform connecting the needy and disadvantaged sections seeking legal advice and consultation with panel lawyers via video conferencing, telephone and chat facilities available at the Common Service Centres (CSCs) situated in Gram Panchayats and through Tele-Law mobile App.

***Percentage Wise break-up of Tele – Law Data**

Category	Cases Registered	% Wise Break Up	Advice Enabled	% Wise Break Up
Gender Wise				
Female	41,75,351	39.32	41,20,027	39.27
Male	64,43,290	60.68	63,72,548	60.73
Caste Category Wise				
General	24,90,291	23.45	24,52,633	23.37
OBC	33,54,939	31.59	33,11,963	31.56
SC	33,45,204	31.50	33,11,945	31.56
ST	14,28,207	13.45	14,16,034	13.50
Total	1,06,18,641		1,04,92,575	

*Data as on 31-12-2024.

(xi) Efforts have been made to institutionalize pro bono culture and pro bono lawyering in the country. A technological framework has been put in place where advocates volunteering to give their time and services for pro bono work can register as Pro Bono Advocates on Nyaya Bandhu (Android & iOS and Apps). Nyaya Bandhu Services are also available on UMANG Platform. Pro

Bono Panel of advocates has been initiated in 23 High Courts at the State level. Pro Bono Clubs have been started in 109 Laws Schools to instill Pro Bono culture in budding lawyers.

(b): The pay, allowance, pension etc. in respect of judges of Supreme Court and High Courts are governed by The Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958 and The High Court Judges (Salary and Conditions of Services) Act, 1954 respectively. The salary, pension and allowances of judges of Supreme Court and High Courts were last revised w.e.f. 01.01.2016 consequent upon implementation of 7th Pay Commission recommendation by the Government, through an amendment in both the applicable laws mentioned above. Presently, no proposal for enhancing pay, allowances and pension etc. for the judges of Supreme Court and High Courts is under consideration of the Government.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No - 430

ANSWERED ON - 06/02/2025

USE OF AI IN JUDICIAL PROCESSES

✓ 430. DR. SYED NASEER HUSSAIN:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has introduced or piloted any Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based tools to assist in case management and resolution;
- (b) the manner in which the Ministry plans to mitigate potential biases or inaccuracies arising from the use of AI in judicial decision-making;
- (c) the safeguards put in place to protect data privacy in AI-based legal tools; and
- (d) whether there are plans to expand the use of AI to streamline the judiciary, particularly in handling backlog cases?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (d): As per information provided by the Supreme Court of India and available with the Ministry, under e-Courts Project Phase III, an attempt is being made to integrate modern technologies for smoother user experience and to build a "smart" system in which the Registries will have minimal data entry and scrutiny of files. To create a smart system, the latest technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its subsets Machine Learning (ML), Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Natural Language Processing (NLP), etc., are being used in the e-Courts software applications. AI is being used in areas such as intelligent scheduling, prediction and forecast, improving administrative efficiency, Natural Language Processing (NLP), automated filing, enhancing the case information system, communicating with the litigants through chatbots and translation.

A Sub-Committee consisting of six judges of the various High Courts, assisted by technical working group members consisting of domain experts, has been constituted by the Chairperson of the eCommittee, Supreme Court of India to suggest/recommend secure connectivity and authentication mechanisms for data protection, to preserve the right to privacy. The Sub-Committee is mandated to critically assess and examine the digital infrastructure, network and service delivery solutions created under the eCourts project for giving solutions for strengthening data security and for protecting the privacy of citizens. The Government has allocated an amount of Rs. 7210 Crore for the implementation eCourts Phase III, which has 24 project components. Of these 24, one component is Future Technological Advancement (AI, Block chain, etc.). As per the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of eCourts Phase III, Rs. 53.57 Crore has been allocated for this component, for the High Courts across India up to 2027.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No - 431
ANSWERED ON- 06/02/2025

JSCLM
e-courts

e-COURTS MISSION MODE PROJECT PHASE- III

✓ 431 SHRI NARHARI AMIN:

SHRI BRIJ LAL:

SHRI MAYANKBHAI JAYDEVBHAI NAYAK:

SHRI MADAN RATHORE:

SHRI NARAYANA KORAGAPPA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there will be an expansion of the existing infrastructure to include more courts at the district and sub-district levels under Phase-III;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the manner in which the Phase III addressing the issue of case backlog and whether there are specific timelines or targets set for reducing the pendency of cases through the new digital tools and systems introduced in this phase;
- (d) whether there are any measures in place to train judicial staff and stakeholders in utilizing the new technologies introduced by the e-Courts Project; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (b): With a significant outlay of Rs.7210 crore, the eCourts Phase III Project underlines the importance which the Government attaches to the infrastructural needs of the courts in the country. Several initiatives have been planned and are under progress, to strengthen and expand the capacity of the existing infrastructure at the district and sub-district levels. Some

of the major initiatives under the eCourts Phase III project include, making fully functional advanced e-Sewa Kendras in all court complexes, interlinking of all courts across the country, including High Courts and District and subordinate courts, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enablement of the Indian judicial system and making the justice delivery system accessible, cost-effective, transparent, and accountable. Besides, infrastructure is being developed for paperless courts in a phase-wise manner, expansion of the virtual courts for hearing of court cases by creating a robust digital infrastructure, live streaming of court proceedings, digitisation of the entire court records, E-filing of cases and provision for video conferencing facilities. Some of the futuristic technological advancements such as Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and others are also planned. For ensuring seamless availability of ICT infrastructure, solar power facilities are being installed and obsolete hardware is being replaced. Migrating the District Court websites to the Secure, Scalable & Sugamya Website as a Service (S3WAAS) platform is an ongoing process and efforts are on to provide adequate cloud storage facilities in the courts.

(c): No time frame has been prescribed for disposal of various kinds of cases by the respective courts. Timely disposal of cases in courts depends on several factors which, inter-alia, include availability of adequate number of judges and judicial officers, supporting court staff and physical infrastructure, complexity of facts involved, nature of evidence, co-operation of stake holders viz. bar, investigation agencies, witnesses and litigants and proper application of rules and procedures. There are several factors which may lead to delay in disposal of cases. These, inter-alia, include vacancies of judges, frequent adjournments and lack of adequate arrangement to monitor, track and bunch cases for hearing. As far as, the technological interventions are concerned, under eCourts Project, the Wide Area Network (WAN) has been extended to 99.5% court complexes, 27 Virtual Courts have been set up in 21 States/UTs to try traffic offences, litigants have access to case information through the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), VC facilities have been operationalized between 3240 Courts and related 1272 Prisons, live streaming of court proceedings is functional in the 9 High Courts, e-filing system (version 3.0) has been rolled out with upgraded features for lawyers to access and upload documents related to the cases from any location 24X7. As on date, 12,19,214 cases have been filed in High Courts and 49,04,673 have been filed in District & Taluka Courts (Total 61,23,887) using eFiling facility. Apart from this, 1540 eSewa Kendras (Facilitation Centres) in District & Subordinate courts and 39 eSewa Kendras (Facilitation Centres) in

High Courts including 3 benches of Gauhati High Court have been rolled out to provide citizen centric services to lawyers and litigants.

(d) to (e): The details of the training programs conducted by the eCommittee, SCI covering various stakeholders, like, courts staff, advocates, Judges, etc., are available in the public domain at eCommittee, SCI webportal link: <https://ecommitteesci.gov.in/document-category/training-and-awareness-programmes/>.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 432
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

INSTRUCTION/ORDERS TO LOWER JUDICIARY BY THE SUPREME COURT

SSC(NMSP-I)
NM

✓432. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government/Hon'ble Supreme Court has issued any instruction/orders to lower judiciary to dispose of criminal and civil cases which are pending for more than 40 years and 30 years;
- (b) if so, the details and outcome thereof since the said instruction/order has been issued, State-wise; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (c): In April, 2024, the Supreme Court Committee on "Model Case Flow Management Rules for Trial Courts, District Appellate Courts, High Courts and to suggest a plan for reduction of arrears in the High Courts and District Courts", prepared and shared an 'Action Plan for Arrears Reduction in District Judiciary' to dispose of old pending cases in time bound manner. The Action

Plan inter-alia, indicated focusing upon prioritization of long- standing cases with special emphasis on cases pending for excessively long periods, such as over 10, 20 or 30 years; accelerating the progression of long standing and newer cases to finalization; equitable case distribution among judges; effective handling of unready and stayed cases; effective utilization of alternative dispute resolution; use of technology; managing undated cases for facilitating timely progression and resolution; adequate human resources support to Judicial Officers; regular monitoring of case progress and regular review meetings to assess effectiveness of action plan; stakeholder engagement to address procedural delays; and tailored strategies allowing for flexibility and adaptation of action plan to meet the specific circumstances of each district.

While the disposal of court cases falls within the domain of the judiciary, the Central Government remains committed to ensuring their speedy disposal and reducing pendency as mandated under Article 21 of the Constitution. The Government set up the National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms in 2011, with the twin objectives of increasing access by reducing delays and arrears in the system and enhancing accountability through structural changes and by setting performance standards and capacities. The Mission has been pursuing a co-ordinated approach for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial administration, which, inter-alia, involves improved infrastructure for courts including computerization, increase in strength of subordinate judiciary, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation, re-engineering of court procedure for quick disposal of cases and emphasis on human resource development.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 433
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

JSC(NMJR-I)
NM

VACANCIES IN LOWER JUDICIARY

✓433 MS. SUSHMITA DEV:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of judicial vacancies in the lower judiciary across the country, State-wise;
- (b) the total number of sanctioned and vacant posts in administrative staff, support staff, technical staff and legal aid personnel in lower judiciary across the country, State-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to expedite the filling up the vacancies in lower judiciary?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a) to (c): The details of sanctioned strength, working strength and vacancy position of judicial officers in District and Subordinate Courts, are at *Annexure-I*. Filling up of vacant positions of the judicial officers in District and Subordinate courts is the responsibility of the High Courts and State Governments concerned. As per the Constitutional framework, in exercise of powers conferred under proviso to Article 309 read with Articles 233 and 234 of the Constitution, the respective State Government in consultation with the High Court frames the rules and regulations regarding the appointment and recruitment of Judicial Officers. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order passed

in January 2007 in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case, has inter-alia, stipulated certain timelines, which are to be followed by the States and the respective High Courts for recruitment of judges in District and Subordinate Courts. Recruitment of administrative staff, support staff, technical staff and legal aid personnel in lower judiciary does not fall in the purview of the Central Government. This information, therefore, is not centrally maintained.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 433 FOR ANSWER ON 06.02.2025 REGARDING 'VACANCIES IN LOWER JUDICIARY'.

Posts of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts as on 30.01.2025

Sl. NO.	States/UTs	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength	Vacancy
1	Andhra Pradesh	639	564	75
2	Arunachal Pradesh	44	33	11
3	Assam	485	461	24
4	Bihar	2019	1536	483
5	Chandigarh	30	30	0
6	Chhattisgarh	663	465	198
7	D & N Haveli and Daman & Diu	7	6	1
8	Delhi	897	803	94
9	Goa	50	40	10
10	Gujarat	1720	1185	535
11	Haryana	781	551	230
12	Himachal Pradesh	179	160	19
13	Jammu and Kashmir	322	279	43
14	Jharkhand	705	506	199
15	Karnataka	1375	1154	221
16	Kerala	612	533	79
17	Ladakh	17	11	6
18	Lakshadweep	4	4	0
19	Madhya Pradesh	2028	1692	336
20	Maharashtra	2190	1940	250
21	Manipur	62	49	13
22	Meghalaya	99	56	43
23	Mizoram	74	45	29
24	Nagaland	34	24	10
25	Odisha	1041	841	200
26	Puducherry	36	26	10
27	Punjab	804	723	81
28	Rajasthan	1654	1312	342
29	Sikkim	35	23	12
30	Tamil Nadu	1369	1023	346
31	Telangana	560	445	115
32	Tripura	133	109	24
33	Uttar Pradesh	3700	2704	996
34	Uttarakhand	298	270	28
35	Andaman and Nicobar	1105	875	230
36	West Bengal			
TOTAL		25771	20478	5293

Source: - MIS portal of Department of Justice.

*Combined vacancy of UT Andaman & Nicobar Island and State of WB as shown against State of West Bengal

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 434
ANSWERED ON 06/02/2025

JSC/MJR-I)
NM

ESTABLISHMENT OF MULTI-DOOR COURTHOUSE CENTRES

✓434. SHRI NARAYANA KORAGAPPA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there are approx 4.50 crore cases pending in district and taluka courts, 61 lakh in High Courts and less than a lakh in the Supreme Court;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that out of the above cases, nearly 30 per cent come under the Ministry of Finance;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether there would be establishment of small-claims courts, night courts, a tourist court and Multi-Door Courthouses to fast track the court cases; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) & (b): As per information available on National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), the details of cases pending in various courts as on 30.01.2025 are as under:

Sl. No.	Name of Court	pending cases
1.	Supreme Court	82,922
2.	High Courts	62,28,980
3.	District and Subordinate Courts	4,56,17,477

(c) & (d): As per the information available on the LIMBS Portal, there are about 7 lakh cases pending where the Government of India is a party. Out of these, in about 1.9 lakh cases the Ministry of Finance is mentioned as a party.

(e) & (f): Following the enactment of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018, and the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Suo Motu Writ (Criminal) No. 1/2019, the Central Government introduced a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the establishment of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs). These include combined FTSCs, which handle both Rape and POCSO Act cases, and exclusive POCSO Courts, dedicated solely to cases under the POCSO Act, ensuring their expeditious disposal. As per inputs received from the High Courts, as of 31.12.2024, a total of 747 FTSCs, including 406 exclusive POSCO (e-POCSO) Courts, are functional across 30 States/UTs.

Additionally, for the expeditious resolution of commercial disputes, the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, provides for the establishment of Commercial Courts to ensure effective and timely adjudication of such matters.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 435

ANSWERED ON 06.02.2025

JSC (67M)
JR
Judicial infrastructure in Odisha

✓435. Shri Subhasish Khuntia:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the fund disbursed by the Central Government for the Infrastructure development of the judiciary in Odisha;
- (b) the key areas of judicial infrastructure developed through this fund in Odisha;
- (c) whether there are any ongoing or planned projects for improving the judicial infrastructure in the State; and
- (d) whether the Central Government has planned any additional financial assistance for improving judicial infrastructure in the State in the upcoming financial year?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a): The Central Government has been administering a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) to supplement the resources of the States/UTs for the development of infrastructure facilities for the district judiciary. Since the inception of this scheme in 1993-94, a sum of Rs. 250.28 crore has been released to the State of Odisha, out of which Rs. 137.54 crore was released in the last five years, including the financial year 2024-25.

(b) & (c): The funds released under the CSS have been utilized for the construction of court buildings and residential quarters for judicial officers, lawyers' halls, toilet complexes and digital

computer rooms. As on date, 88 projects, which include, construction of 210 court halls, 92 toilet complexes, 28 lawyers' halls, 28 digital computer rooms and 73 residential units are under implementation in the State of Odisha.

(d): The allocation of funds to the States/UTs depends upon the weightage formula enshrined in the Scheme guidelines and the overall availability of funds with the Central Government under the scheme as per the budgetary allocation and with the understanding that the States have made adequate provision in their State budget for meeting their prescribed State share. Any demand or request for grant is based on the action plan prepared and communicated by the States to the Ministry. Funds shall be allocated to the States/UTs, accordingly, once the demand is projected for the next financial year (i.e. 2025-26).

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 97#**

ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

VACANCIES OF JUDGES IN HIGH COURTS OF THE COUNTRY

✓ 97# SHRI SANDEEP KUMAR PATHAK:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the steps taken by Government to fill up vacancies of Judges in all the High Courts of the country / during the last three years;
- (b) the reasons for not filling up the vacancies of Judges in the High Courts so far; and
- (c) by when the vacancies of Judges in the High Courts would be filled and the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (C) IN RESPECT OF
RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 97# FOR REPLY ON 13th FEBRUARY, 2025
REGARDING 'VACANCIES OF JUDGES IN HIGH COURTS OF THE COUNTRY'**

(a) to (c): Appointment of Judges to High Courts is made under Article 217 and 224 of the Constitution of India and according to the procedure laid down in the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) prepared in 1998 pursuant to the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 (Second Judges case) read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998 (Third Judges case).

As per the MoP, the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the Supreme Court vests with the Chief Justice of India, while the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, in consultation with two senior-most puisne Judges of the High Court. As per the MoP, the High Courts are required to make recommendations at least 06 months before the occurrence of a vacancy. However, this time limit is hardly adhered to by the High Courts. For appointments to the High Courts, the views of concerned State Government are obtained in accordance with the MoP. The recommendations also have to be considered in the light of such other reports as may be available to the Government in respect of the names under consideration. The recommendations of the High Court Collegium, the State Governments and the Government of India are then forwarded to the Supreme Court Collegium (SCC) for advice. Only those persons whose names have been recommended by the SCC are appointed as Judges of the High Courts. Appointment of Judges in the higher judiciary is a continuous, integrated and collaborative process between the executive and the judiciary. It requires consultation and approval from various Constitutional Authorities both at State and Central level. Hence, the time needed for filling up of vacancies of the Judges in the High Courts cannot be indicated.

While very effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies of Judges in High Courts keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges and also due to increase in the sanctioned strength of Judges. Since May 2014, the Government has increased the sanctioned strength of High Court Judges from 906 to 1122 (as on date). Under the collaborative effort between the Government and the Judiciary, 323 Judges have been appointed in various High Court during the period 01.01.2022 to 07.02.2025.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO. 99

ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

Stress management for Judges

JSCNMR-I)
J-I

✓ 99. DR. AJEET MADHAVRAO GOPCHADE:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by Government in collaboration with the Supreme Court to address stress management for Judges, considering the potential stress caused by the workload;
- (b) whether Government is aware of any cases where Judges have faced suicidal thoughts or mental health challenges; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken to address this concern, given that stress free Judges are essential for upholding the integrity and independence of our judicial system?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (c) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (C) OF RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *99 FOR ANSWER ON 13.02.2025 REGARDING 'STRESS
MANAGEMENT FOR JUDGES'.**

a) The National Judicial Academy, Bhopal under the guidance of the National Judicial Academic Council (NJAC) chaired by the Chief Justice of India regularly conducts programs for judiciary that include specialized sessions on stress management. These programs feature renowned dignitaries and psychiatrists, who provide expert guidance to judges on managing the pressures associated with their demanding roles, helping to mitigate the impact of workload-related stress. Understanding the significance of this crucial issue, the Academy has been incorporating this component in its various academic programs. In addition to that, the following programmes have been exclusively conducted by the Academy for the past three years on stress management for Judges:

S. No.	Programme No.	Title	Dates
1.	P-1227	National Seminar for Principal District & Sessions Judges and Additional District Judges on Psychological Adjustments and Stress Management	15-16 January, 2022
2.	P-1320	National Seminar on Arbitration and Stress Management	3-4 December, 2022
3.	P-1333	National Seminar on Arbitration and Stress Management	4-5 March, 2023
4.	P-1351	National Seminar on stress Management	5-6 August, 2023

b) No Sir.

c) Does not arise.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1065
ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

Third-Party Funding of litigation

✓ 1065 Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque:

Will the Minister of Law and Justice be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is considering the establishment of a legal and regulatory framework to facilitate Third-Party Funding (TPF) of litigation in the country, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (b) whether Government has examined the potential of TPF as a means to address high litigation costs and pendency of cases, and if so, the key findings of such assessments?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a) & (b) At present, there is no proposal under consideration of the Government for establishment of a legal and regulatory framework to facilitate Third Party Funding of litigation in the country and further, no examination of the potential of Third Party Litigation Funding as a means to address high litigation costs and pendency of cases has been carried out by the Government.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No-1066
ANSWERED ON- 13/02/2025

56(e-courts)
e-courts

IMPLEMENTATION OF e-COURTS PROJECT IN ODISHA

✓1066 SHRI SUBHASISH KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the progress of the e-Courts mission mode project in Odisha;
- (b) the number of courts in the State that have been digitized and equipped with virtual hearing facilities;
- (c) the steps being taken to ensure access to e-Courts in rural and remote areas of Odisha; and
- (d) the funds allocated and utilized for implementing the e-Courts project in Odisha?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) : As per the information provided by the High Court of Orissa, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure of the High Court of Orissa, along with all courts in the District headquarters and at Taluka stations, is being developed under the e-Courts Project. Courts are being computerized, proceedings are being conducted via video conferencing (VC), and case records are being digitized to facilitate efficient judicial process.

As on date, 712 courts have been covered under e- Courts Project. In all these courts, Case Information System (CIS) software has been implemented and as a result, the stakeholders are able to view the status of their cases 24x7. e-Filing and e-Payment have been enabled for all these courts. 6,876 advocates and 494 litigants (party-in-person) have been registered under the e-filing portal and 76,728 cases have been e-filed. 2,27,99,629 documents

in new cases and 2,89,93,779 documents in existing cases have been e-filed through e-filing portal. 154 court complexes have been provided with Multi Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) connectivity. 117e-SewaKendras have been established across the State.

All the criminal courts have been integrated under Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS). As on date, 15,18,906 FIRs and 8,27,556 chargesheets have been consumed by different courts under ICJS. 341 courts in the district judiciary and 18 courts in the High Court are functioning paperless. Court proceedings of 4 benches in the High Court are being live streamed for being viewed by the general public and all the district court websites have been migrated to Secure, Scalable and Sugamya Website as a Service (S3WaaS) platform.

National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP) has been implemented in the district courts of Odisha. 869 mobile phones have been procured and distributed under the e-Courts project for electronic service of summons. Virtual courts have been established for traffic challan cases arising in the Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Commissionerate area, on a pilot basis.

Further, substantial progress has been made in the field of digitization both in the High Court and district courts. 4,28,23,709 pages in the High Court and 10,97,46,629 pages in the district courts have been digitized as on 31.12.2024.

e-Committee, Supreme Court of India has made provision for the Judiciary of Odisha for migrating to cloud technology and has provided adequate cloud storage in National Government Cloud Services i.e. Meghraj 2.0. Solar power facility is under process of installation at 73 locations for ensuring seamless availability of ICT infrastructure.

Necessary training and awareness initiatives are being undertaken regularly for the stakeholders i.e. judges, judicial officers, advocates, judicial staff, advocates clerks, technical persons, etc. Necessary budgetary funds are provided in the e-Courts project under the head "Capacity Building" for creating awareness among the stakeholders and for change management.

(b): As per the information provided by the High Court of Orissa, 341 courts in the district judiciary have been digitized across the State. All the courtrooms, including those in High Courts, district courts and taluka courts in the State of Odisha have been provided with ICT hardware, such as, desktop computers, all-in-one PCs, cameras and speaker-microphone systems etc. for virtual hearing.

(c): As per the information provided by the High Court of Orissa, all the courts in rural and remote areas of Odisha are being covered under the e-Courts Project and are continuously

upgraded with necessary ICT infrastructure. Essential equipments are provided to enable computerization, digitization and video conferencing-based proceedings and to access e-Courts.

(d): The Financial Progress in Odisha with respect to eCourts Phase-III is as under:

Financial Year	Fund Allocated (in Rs.)	Fund Utilized (in Rs.)
2023-24	9,78,51,908/-	6,77,30,521/-
2024-25*	58,48,43,036/-	29,94,43,518/-

*As on 07.02.2025

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No-1067
ANSWERED ON- 13/02/2025

e-COURTS MISSION MODE PROJECT

JS(UM)
e-courts
✓1067. SHRI SANJAY SETH:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status and progress of the e-Courts mission mode project, particularly focusing on the video conferencing facilities implemented in district courts and jails;
- (b) the number of district courts and jails currently equipped with video conferencing facilities under Phase-I and Phase-II of the e-Courts project;
- (c) the impact of these facilities on improving the efficiency of court proceedings and the reduction in delays, particularly for under-trial prisoners; and
- (d) the future plans for expanding video conferencing facilities in additional district courts and jails as part of the ongoing efforts under the e-Courts project?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) & (b): As part of the National eGovernance Plan, the eCourts project is an integrated Mission Mode Project under implementation since 2007 for the ICT development of the Indian Judiciary based on the "National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in the Indian Judiciary". Phase I (2011-2015) of the e-Courts project aimed at providing basic hardware and network connectivity to the Courts, while Phase II (2015-2023) focused on providing citizen centric services to the litigants and lawyers including, development of an end-to end digital system which revolutionized the way public accessed the services provided by the judiciary.

As for the progress and current status of the eCourts Mission Mode Project, several e-initiatives on part of the Government have helped facilitate access to justice using technology, which are detailed as under:

- i. During phase I, Video Conferencing (VC) facility was operationalized between 493 court complexes and 347 corresponding jails. In eCourts Phase II, VC facilities were enabled between 3240 court complexes and corresponding 1272 jails. As on date, the district and subordinate courts heard 2,53,92,330 cases, while the High Courts, heard 91,66,773 cases (totaling 3.45 crore) using video conferencing system. The High Court-wise details of VC hearings are at Annexure I. The Supreme Court of India held 7,54,443 hearings (from March'2020 till May'2024) through video conferencing. All High Courts have implemented the Video Conferencing Rules, including all the District Courts under their jurisdiction. The High Court-wise details are at Annexure II. As per the information provided by Ministry of Home Affairs, details of the Jails equipped with Video Conferencing Facility as mentioned in Prison Statistics India, 2022 published by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), as on 31st December, 2022 are at Annexure III.
- ii. Under the Wide Area Network (WAN) Project, connectivity has been provided to 99.5% of total Court Complexes across the country, with 10 Mbps to 100 Mbps bandwidth speed. The Wide Area Network (WAN) Project under eCourts project is aimed at connecting all District and Subordinate court complexes, spread across the country using various technologies like Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS), Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), Radio Frequency (RF), Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT), Submarine Cable etc. This forms the backbone for the eCourts project ensuring data connectivity in courts across the length and breadth of the country.
- iii. National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) is a database of orders, judgments, and cases, created as an online platform under the eCourts Project. It provides information relating to judicial proceedings/decisions of all computerized district and subordinate courts of the country. The litigants can access case information and more than 28.74 crore orders / judgments (as on date).
- iv. Case Information Software (CIS) based on customized Free and Open- Source Software (FOSS) has been developed. Currently CIS National Core Version 3.2 is being implemented in District Courts and the CIS National Core Version 1.0 is being implemented for the High Courts.
- v. As part of eCourts services, 7 platforms have been created to provide information on case status, cause lists, judgements etc. to lawyers/ litigants through SMS Push and Pull, Email, multilingual eCourts services Portal, JSC (Judicial Service centers), Info Kiosks, eCourts Mobile App for lawyers/litigants (2.81 crore downloads) and JustIS app for judges (20,996 downloads) as on date.
- vi. Live Streaming of court proceedings has been started in the High Courts of Gujarat, Gauhati,

Orissa, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Patna, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Calcutta & the Supreme Court of India, thus allowing media and other interested persons to join the proceedings.

- vii. 27 Virtual Courts have been set up in 21 States/UTs to try traffic offences. Over 6.36 crore cases have been handled by these virtual courts and in more than 66 lakhs cases, online fine of more than Rs. 691.95 crores have been realized.
- viii. e-filing system (version 3.0) has been rolled out with upgraded features for lawyers to access and upload documents related to the cases from any location 24X7.
- ix. e-Filing of cases requires the option for electronic payment of fees which includes court fees, fines and penalties which are directly payable to the Consolidated Fund. Therefore e-Payment system was launched for hassle free transfer of fee etc.
- x. ~~To bridge the digital divide, 1540 eSewa Kendras (Facilitation Centres) in District &~~ Subordinate courts and 39 eSewa Kendras (Facilitation Centres) in High Courts including 3 benches of Gauhati High Court have been rolled out to provide citizen centric services to the lawyers and litigants. It also assists the litigants in accessing online e-Courts services and acts as a saviour for those who cannot afford the technology or are located in far-flung areas. It also aids to address the challenges caused by illiteracy among citizens at large. These also provide benefits in saving time, avoidance of exertion, travelling long distances, and saving cost by offering facilities of e- filing of cases across the country, to conduct the hearing virtually, scanning, accessing e-Courts services etc.
- xi. National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP) has been launched for technology enabled process serving and issuing of summons. It has currently been implemented in 28 States/ UTs.
- xii. A new "Judgment Search" portal has been started with features such as search by Bench, Case Type, Case Number, Year, Petitioner/ Respondent Name, Judge Name, Act, Section, Decision: From Date, To Date and Full Text Search. This facility is being provided free of cost to all.

(c): Third party evaluations of the eCourts Project (Phase I and II), have brought out that the eCourts Project has facilitated reduction in the pendency of cases as it has eased the access to case laws to the Judges and court officials, thereby enabling them to do their research faster and save time. Majority of the time saved and cost reductions have been in respect of accessing the court records. The findings showed that the eCourts project has reduced burden of staff members like preparing cause lists, balance sheets, disposal lists and many other things manually. It has resulted in sparing of time for other important work like evidence recording, issuance of process etc. Ultimately, number of ready

matters has increased. Overall efficiency and work speed have improved.

Virtual hearings serve a significant purpose in ensuring access to justice. Using video conferencing, the lawyers and litigants may appear before the court from any location (far-flung areas as well) of their choice, thereby, saving considerable time and money, thus helping under privileged litigants. Further, the lawyers may attend hearings at multiple locations at short notice and witnesses may be produced from safe locations. Additionally, with virtual hearings in place, the undertrial prisoners can attend the court proceedings remotely, thereby reducing the need for frequent physical presence in court, thus reducing time spent in jail awaiting trial. Thus, virtual hearing leads to faster adjudication of cases thereby reducing pendency of cases.

(d): The Government has allocated an amount of Rs. 7210 Crore for the implementation eCourts Phase III, which has 24 project components. Of these 24, one component is expansion of video conferencing facilities to courts, jails and hospitals. As per the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of eCourts Phase III, Rs. 228.48 crore have been allocated for enhancing and upgrading the available infrastructure of Video Conferencing in 10200 establishments, including 500 Jails, 9000 Courts and 700 District Government Hospitals, across India up to 2027.

Annexure I

Statement referred to in reply of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1067 for 13/02/2025 regarding e-Courts mission mode project. The High Court-wise details of Virtual hearings is as below:

Number of cases dealt with (virtual hearings) on video conferencing in High Courts and District Courts as on 31 December 2024				
S.No.	High Court	High Courts	District Courts	Grand Total
1	Allahabad	246974	6151239	6398213
2	Andhra Pradesh	406000	1437307	1843307
3	Bombay	66425	207836	274261
4	Calcutta	162009	92562	254571
5	Chhattisgarh	104137	293320	397457
6	Delhi	322024	6066421	6388445
7	Gauhati-Arunachal Pradesh	2801	8317	11118
8	Gauhati-Assam	267010	483760	750770
9	Gauhati-Mizoram	4125	13268	17393
10	Gauhati-Nagaland	1194	915	2109
11	Gujarat	412020	217908	629928
12	Himachal Pradesh	184836	190180	375016
13	Jammu & Kashmir	262015	547531	809546
14	Jharkhand	222546	703246	925792
15	Karnataka	1259542	166361	1425903
16	Kerala	166375	634798	801173
17	Madhya Pradesh	679198	1038518	1717716
18	Madras	1485785	393383	1879168
19	Manipur	51882	16413	68295
20	Meghalaya	6014	58911	64925
21	Orissa	341244	317373	658617
22	Patna	277650	2845764	3123414
23	Punjab & Haryana	613578	2985626	3599204
24	Rajasthan	244052	224451	468503
25	Sikkim	698	16124	16822
26	Telangana	1265315	195018	1460333
27	Tripura	22393	37376	59769
28	Uttarakhand	88931	48404	137335
	Total	9166773	25392330	34559103

Annexure II

Statement referred to in reply of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1067 for 13/02/2025 regarding e-Courts mission mode project. The High Court-wise details of adoption of VC rules is as below:

Status of implementation of Rules of Video Conferencing as on 31.12.2024			
Sr.No.	High Court	Whether the Rules of Video Conferencing is implemented in High Court	Whether the Rules of Video Conferencing is implemented in District Courts
1	Allahabad	Yes	Yes
2	Andhra Pradesh	Yes	Yes
3	Bombay	Yes	Yes
4	Calcutta	Yes	Yes
5	Chhattisgarh	Yes	Yes
6	Delhi	Yes	Yes
7	Gauhati-Arunachal Pradesh	Yes	Yes
8	Gauhati-Assam	Yes	Yes
9	Gauhati-Mizoram	Yes	Yes
10	Gauhati-Nagaland	Yes	Yes
11	Gujarat	Yes	Yes
12	Himachal Pradesh	Yes	Yes
13	Jammu & Kashmir	Yes	Yes
14	Jharkhand	Yes	Yes
15	Karnataka	Yes	Yes
16	Kerala	Yes	Yes
17	Madhya Pradesh	Yes	Yes
18	Madras	Yes	Yes
19	Manipur	Yes	Yes
20	Meghalaya	Yes	Yes
21	Orissa	Yes	Yes
22	Patna	Yes	Yes
23	Punjab & Haryana	Yes	Yes
24	Rajasthan	Yes	Yes
25	Sikkim	Yes	Yes
26	Telangana	Yes	Yes
27	Tripura	Yes	Yes
28	Uttarakhand	Yes	Yes
	Implemented	28	28
	Not Implemented	0	0

Annexure III

Statement referred to in reply of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1067 for 13/02/2025 regarding e-Courts mission mode project. The details of the Jails Equipped with Video Conferencing Facility as mentioned in Prison Statistics India, 2022 published by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) as on 31st December, 2022, as received from Ministry of Home Affairs is as below:

Sl. No.	State/UT	Central Jails		District Jails		Sub Jails		Women Jails		Borstal Schools		Open Jails		Special Jails		Others		Total	
		Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC	Total Jails	No. of Jails with VC
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
1.	ANDHRA PRADESH	4	4	8	7	91	64	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	106	76
2.	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
3.	ASSAM	6	6	22	22	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	31	30
4.	BIHAR	8	8	31	31	17	17	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	59	59
5.	CHHATTISGARH	5	5	20	20	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	33
6.	GOA	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
7.	GUJARAT	4	4	11	11	9	9	2	2	0	0	4	0	2	2	0	0	32	28
8.	HARYANA	3	3	17	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20
9.	HIMACHAL PRADESH	2	2	9	9	3	3	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	16	16
10.	JHARKHAND	7	7	16	15	7	6	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	32	30
11.	KARNATAKA	8	8	21	20	27	26	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	59	55
12.	KERALA	4	4	13	12	16	16	3	3	1	1	3	3	16	15	1	1	57	55
13.	MADHYA PRADESH	11	11	41	39	73	71	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	132	122
14.	MAHARASHTRA	9	9	28	26	4	0	1	1	1	0	19	19	1	1	1	0	64	56
15.	MANIPUR	2	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2
16.	MEGHALAYA	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
17.	MIZORAM	1	0	8	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	4
18.	NAGALAND	1	1	11	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	5
19.	ODISHA	5	5	9	9	73	65	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	0	92	83

SI. No.	State/UT	Central Jails		District Jails		Sub Jails		Women Jails		Borstal Schools		Open Jails		Special Jails		Others		Total	
20.	PUNJAB	10	9	7	6	5	5	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	26	23
21.	RAJASTHAN	9	9	26	25	60	52	7	4	1	1	41	0	2	1	0	0	146	92
22.	SIKKIM	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
23.	TAMIL NADU	9	9	14	12	104	94	5	5	3	2	3	0	4	4	0	0	142	126
24.	TELANGANA	3	2	7	6	20	20	1	1	1	0	1	0	4	3	0	0	37	32
25.	TRIPURA	1	1	2	2	10	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	13
26.	UTTAR PRADESH	7	6	64	61	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	77	71
27.	UTTARAKHAND	1	1	7	7	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	11	11
28.	WEST BENGAL	8	8	13	13	30	30	1	1	0	0	4	4	4	4	0	0	60	60
	TOTAL (STATES)	130	126	415	386	563	500	32	26	10	7	91	32	39	34	3	1	1283	1112
29.	A & N ISLANDS	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1
30.	CHANDIGARH	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
31.	DNH & DAMAN DIU	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
32.	DELHI	14	14	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	16
33.	JAMMU & KASHMIR	2	2	10	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	14	13
34.	LADAKH	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
35.	LAKSHADWEEP	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
36.	PUDUCHERRY	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	4	4
	TOTAL (UTs)	18	18	13	11	11	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	47	38
	TOTAL (ALL-INDIA)	148	144	428	397	574	504	34	28	10	7	91	32	42	37	3	1	1330	1150

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1068

ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

Judicial recruitments

JSC APPHS
APPHS
✓ 1068. DR. FAUZIA KHAN :

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is planning to establish a national-level recruitment process for judicial services of all States;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the details of measures taken to reform judicial appointments at the district, State and national level?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (c): Recruitment of Judicial Officers is the responsibility of the High Courts and State Governments concerned. As per the Constitutional framework, in exercise of powers conferred under proviso to Article 309 read with Articles 233 and 234 of the Constitution, the respective State Government in consultation with the High Court frames the rules and regulations regarding the appointment and recruitment of Judicial Officers in the respective State Judicial Service. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide judicial order passed in January 2007 in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case, has inter alia, stipulated certain timelines which are to be followed by the States and the respective High Courts for recruitment of judges in District and subordinate courts.

Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are appointed under Article 124, 217 and 224 of the Constitution of India and according to the procedure laid down in the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) prepared in 1998 pursuant to the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 (Second Judges case) read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28,

1998 (Third Judges case). As per the MoP, the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, in consultation with two senior-most puisne Judges of the High Court. For appointments to the High Courts, under the MOP, the views of concerned State Government are also obtained. The recommendations also have to be considered in the light of such other reports as may be available to the Government in respect of the names under consideration. The recommendations of the High Court Collegium, the State Governments and the Government of India are then forwarded to the Supreme Court Collegium (SCC) for advice. Only those persons are appointed as Judges of High Courts, whose names have been recommended by the SCC.

Appointment of the Judges of the Constitutional Courts is a continuous, integrated and collaborative process between the Executive and the Judiciary. It requires consultation and approval from various constitutional authorities both at state and central level. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies of Judges in High Courts do keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges and also due to increase in the strength of Judges.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 1069
ANSWERED ON - 13/02/2025

JSC(NK67)
LAP

ACCESSIBILITY OF JUSTICE TO OBCs, SCs AND STs

✓1069 SHRI MASTHAN RAO YADAV BEEDHA:

Will the Minister of Law and Justice be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any efforts are being made by the Ministry to ensure easy, accessible and affordable judicial system for the people belonging to socially backward classes like OBCs, SCs and STs;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the court premises and proceedings become more accessible for socially backward classes like OBCs, SCs and STs;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the manner in which Government proposes to do the same?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a) to (e): The Government has taken several steps to ensure availability of affordable and accessible justice to the citizens including SCs, STs and OBCs. National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) had been setup under the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 to provide free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society as covered under Section 12 of the Act, to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities. The activities/programs undertaken by Legal Services Authorities include Legal Aid and advice; Legal Awareness Programmes; Legal Services/Empowerment camps; Legal Services Clinics; Legal Literacy Clubs; Lok Adalats and implementation of Victim Compensation Scheme.

Further, under the aegis of the LSA Act, 1987, Lok Adalats are organised to promote justice on the basis of equal opportunities. For this purpose, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk Court level to the Supreme Court. There are three types of Lok Adalats namely State Lok Adalats, National Lok Adalats and Permanent Lok Adalats. National Lok Adalats are organized simultaneously in all Taluks, Districts and High Courts on a pre-fixed date. State Lok Adalats are organised by State Legal Services Authorities as per local conditions and needs and Permanent Lok Adalats are conducted as per the number of sittings decided per week.

In 2021, a comprehensive, pan - India scheme titled “Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice in India” (DISHA) was launched for a period of five years (2021-2026) at an outlay of Rs. 250 crores. The DISHA scheme aims to provide easy, accessible, affordable and citizen-centric delivery of legal services through the scheme of Tele-Law, Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) and Legal Literacy and Legal awareness programme. Till 31st January 2025, Tele Law service has been made available across 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats in 785 districts across 36 States and UTs and has rendered pre - litigation advice to 1,06,85,242 beneficiaries which includes 33,70,198 SCs, 14,45,410 STs, 33,66,932 OBCs etc. The Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal services) enables seamless connect through the Nyaya Bandhu Application (available on Android/iOS) between the interested Pro Bono Advocates and registered beneficiaries who are entitled for free legal aid under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. As on 31st January, 2025, there are 8783 Pro Bono advocates registered under the Nyaya Bandhu program. Through the Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness programme, approximately 1 crore beneficiaries at the State and district and local levels have been made aware and sensitized on various rights, duties and entitlements.

The Government of India has approved a new Central Sector Scheme namely Legal Aid Defense Counsel System (LADCS) Scheme on 12.03.2024. LADCS Scheme aims to provide legal aid to the beneficiaries w.r.t. criminal cases only and the beneficiaries need to be eligible as per eligibility criteria as stated in Sections 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The approved financial outlay of LADCS scheme is Rs. 998.43 crore for 3 years (F.Y. 2023-24 to F.Y. 2025-26). As on 30th December 2024, LADC offices are functional in 654 districts across the country and has engaged 5251 staff including 3448 Defense Counsels. During the year 2024-25 (upto December, 2024), LADCS offices dealt more than 3.95 lakh criminal cases.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1070
ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

STATUS OF PENDING CASES IN JUDICIARY

JSCNMJR-I)
NM
✓ 1070. SHRI C. Ve. SHANMUGAM:
SHRI SANJEEV ARORA:
DR. M. THAMBIDURAI:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of pending cases in the Civil Courts, High Courts and Supreme Court over the last three years, including Tamil Nadu, as on date, and the details of the categories and nature of these cases; and
- (b) the steps Government is taking to reduce the pendency of cases in the Civil Courts, High Courts and Supreme Court including setting up of more courts functioning throughout the year and the manner in which these measures have been effective in the last three years?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a): The number of pending cases in the District and Subordinate Courts, High Courts and Supreme Court over the last three years, including Tamil Nadu, as on date, is as under:

S. No	Name of court	No. of pending cases			
		*31.12.2022	*31.12.2023	*31.12.2024	**As on 07.02.2025
1.	Supreme Court of India	78,797	80,674	82,496	81,573
2.	High Courts	53,92,031	54,42,547	55,40,682	62,35,242
3.	District and Subordinate Courts	4,32,93,727	4,39,70,061	4,54,54,003	4,57,42,040

*Source: Supreme Court of India. **National Judicial data grid (NJDG)

The details of the categories and nature of these cases are not being maintained centrally.

(b): In case of Supreme Court of India, Article 130 of the Constitution of India provides that the Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in such other place or places as the Chief Justice of India may, with the approval of the President, from time to time, appoint. The Eleventh

Law Commission in its 125th Report titled "The Supreme Court – A Fresh Look", submitted in 1988, reiterated the recommendations made by Tenth Law Commission in its 95th Report for splitting the Supreme Court into two namely (i) Constitutional Court at Delhi and (ii) Court of Appeal or Federal Court sitting in North, South, East, West and Central India. The Eighteenth Law Commission in its 229th Report had also suggested that a Constitutional Bench be set up at Delhi and four Cassation Benches be set up in the Northern region at Delhi, Southern region at Chennai/Hyderabad, Eastern region at Kolkata and Western region at Mumbai. The matter was referred to the Chief Justice of India, who informed that after consideration of the matter, the Full Court in its meeting held on 18th February, 2010, found no justification for setting up of Benches of the Supreme Court outside Delhi. In Writ Petition WP(C) No. 36/2016 on establishment of National Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court vide its judgment dated 13.07.2016 deemed it proper to refer the aforementioned issue to the Constitutional Bench for authoritative pronouncement. **The matter is sub-judice in the Supreme Court.**

In case of High Court, Benches are established in accordance with the recommendations made by the Jaswant Singh Commission and judgment pronounced by the Apex Court in W.P.(C) No.379 of 2000 and after due consideration of a complete proposal from the State Government which has to provide necessary expenditure and infrastructural facilities and the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court who is required to look after the day today administration of the High Court. To be complete, the proposal should also have the consent of the Governor of the concerned State. At present, there is no complete proposal pending with the Government for setting up of Bench(es) in any High Court.

In case of District and Subordinate courts, the setting up of more courts is within the domain of the State/UT Governments and their respective High Courts.

The disposal of pending cases in time bound manner is within the exclusive domain of the judiciary. However, the Government is committed towards facilitating an ecosystem for expeditious disposal of cases by judiciary and reducing pendency as mandated under Article 21 of the Constitution. To this end, the Government set up the National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms in 2011, with the twin objectives of increasing access by reducing delays and arrears in the system and enhancing accountability through structural changes and by setting performance standards and capacities. The Mission has been pursuing a co-ordinated approach for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial administration, which, inter-alia, involves improved infrastructure for courts including

computerization, increase in strength of subordinate judiciary, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation, re-engineering of court procedure for quick disposal of cases and emphasis on human resource development.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1071

ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

SHORTFALL OF JUDGES IN KARNATAKA HIGH COURT

✓ 1071 SHRI NARAYANA KORAGAPPA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the sanctioned strength of Karnataka High Court Judges is 62;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the working strength of Karnataka High Court is 50, indicating there are 12 vacancies;
- (c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to fill the vacancies; and
- (d) the details of recommendations in respect of SCs, STs and OBCs under process to fill the above vacancies?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (d): As on 07.02.2025, against the sanctioned strength of 62 Judges, 49 Judges are working in the Karnataka High Court.

Appointment of the Judges of the Constitutional Courts is a continuous, integrated and collaborative process between the Executive and the Judiciary. It requires consultation and approval from various constitutional authorities both at state and central level. As per the Memorandum of Procedure for appointment of judges of the High Courts, the responsibility for initiation of proposal for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court. The Chief Justice of the High Court is required to initiate the proposal for filling up of vacancy of a Judge in a High Court six months prior to the occurrence of the vacancy. However, this timeline is hardly adhered to by the High Courts. Only those persons are appointed as Judges of High Courts who are recommended by

the Supreme Court Collegium. Under this collaborative effort between the Government and the Judiciary, 61 Judges have been appointed in the Karnataka High Court since 2014.

As on 07.02.2025, only one proposal for appointment as Judge of Karnataka High Court, is under consideration. No other proposal for appointment of Judges has been received from the Karnataka High Court Collegium.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1072
ANSWERED ON – 13/02/2025

FAST TRACK SPECIAL COURTS

JS(J-II)
J-II
✓1072. MS. SUSHMITA DEV:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the current operational Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) in the country in the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;
- (b) whether Government has taken note of challenges faced by the States in maintaining these courts due to financial and administrative constraints, if so, the steps taken in this regard; and
- (c) whether Government is considering expanding the scope of FTSCs beyond sexual offences to address other categories of high-pendency cases, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (c): A Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the establishment of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs), including exclusive POCSO Courts for expeditious disposal of Rape and POCSO Act cases came to be introduced in October, 2019, following the enactment of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018 and the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court [Suo Motu Writ (Criminal) No. 1/2019]. The Scheme has been extended twice, with the latest extension up to 31st March 2026, targeting the establishment of 790 courts. As per the inputs received from the High Courts, as on 31.12.2024, 747 FTSCs including 406 exclusive POCSO Courts (e-POCSO) are functional in 30 States/UTs. These courts have disposed of around 3,00,000 cases of Rape and POCSO Act as of 31.12.2024. Year-wise and State/UT-wise details of operational FTSCs over the past five years are provided in the **Annexure**.

The primary responsibility of establishing and ensuring the effective functioning of FTSCs rests with the State/UT Governments and the respective High Courts. To facilitate this, financial assistance is provided under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) by the Central Government. The Central Government has released a sum of ₹1008.14 Crore to the States/UTs since the inception of the Scheme to ensure the smooth functioning of the courts. The Scheme operates within a collaborative framework, with regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms in place to ensure operational efficiency. To support its effective implementation, the Central Government has undertaken several measures, including timely fund releases, periodic review meetings via video

conferencing with the concerned nodal officers of the State/UT Governments and their respective High Courts, and continued engagement with the stakeholders to address the challenges in implementation of the Scheme. Additionally, communications have been issued at the highest level i.e. the Hon'ble Minister of Law & Justice to the Hon'ble Chief Ministers of States/UTs and Hon'ble Chief Justices of High Courts, emphasizing the importance of effective functioning of these courts.

The FTSC Scheme which is funded by the Nirbhaya Fund was specifically designed to ensure the timely disposal of cases related to Rape and offences under the POCSO Act, 2012, recognizing the gravity of these crimes and their impact on victims.

ANNEXURE**ANNEXURE TO THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1072 FOR ANSWER ON 13-02-2025 REGARDING "FAST TRACK SPECIAL COURTS"**

Sl. No.	Name of State/UT	No. of FTSCs (up to Dec. 2020)	No. of FTSCs (up to Dec. 2021)	No. of FTSCs (up to Dec. 2022)	No. of FTSCs (up to Dec. 2023)	No. of FTSCs (Up to Dec.2024)
1	Andhra Pradesh	8	10	14	16	16
2	Assam	7	15	17	17	17
3	Bihar	45	45	45	46	46
4	Chandigarh	1	1	1	1	1
5	Chhattisgarh	15	15	15	15	15
6	Delhi	0	16	16	16	16
7	Goa	0	0	1	1	1
8	Gujarat	35	35	35	35	35
9	Haryana	16	16	16	16	16
10	Himachal Pradesh	3	6	5	6	6
11	J&K	0	4	4	4	4
12	Jharkhand	20	22	22	22	22
13	Karnataka	14	18	30	31	30
14	Kerala	23	28	52	54	55
15	Madhya Pradesh	66	67	67	67	67
16	Maharashtra	25	34	39	19	6
17	Manipur	0	2	2	2	2
18	Meghalaya	0	5	5	5	5
19	Mizoram	0	3	3	3	3
20	Nagaland	0	1	1	1	1
21	Odisha	15	36	44	44	44
22	Puducherry	0	0	0	1	1
23	Punjab	3	12	12	12	12
24	Rajasthan	45	45	45	45	45
25	Tamil Nadu	14	14	14	14	14
26	Telangana	19	25	34	36	36
27	Tripura	3	3	3	3	3
28	Uttar Pradesh	218	218	218	218	218
29	Uttarakhand	4	4	4	4	4
30	West Bengal	0	0	0	3	6
	Total	599	700	765	757	747

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1073

ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

VACANCIES OF JUDGES IN THE COUNTRY

✓1073. DR. SASMIT PATRA:

Will the Minister of *Law and Justice* be pleased to state:

- (a) total number of vacancies of Judges in the country as on date in Supreme Court, High Courts, District Courts, Civil Courts, Sessions Courts, Magistrate Courts, Family Courts, Tribunals, etc;
- (b) the total number of vacancies in Courts, Court-wise;
- (c) the reasons for such vacancies in these Courts, hierarchy-wise;
- (d) the steps Government is taking to fill up these vacancies; and
- (e) the timeline and number of such vacancies that are expected to be filled up?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (e): The details of vacancies in the Supreme Court, High Courts and District and Subordinate Judiciary are at Annexure-I and Annexure-II respectively.

Filling up of vacant positions of the judicial officers in District and Subordinate courts is the responsibility of the High Courts and State Governments concerned. As per the Constitutional framework, in exercise of powers conferred under proviso to Article 309 read with Articles 233 and 234 of the Constitution, the respective State Government in consultation with the High Court frames the rules and regulations regarding the appointment and recruitment of Judicial Officers. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order passed in January 2007 in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case, has inter-alia, stipulated certain timelines, which are to be followed by the States and the respective High Courts for recruitment of judges in District and Subordinate Courts.

Appointment of Judges to High Courts is made under Article 217 and 224 of the Constitution of India and according to the procedure laid down in the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) prepared in 1998 pursuant to the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 (Second Judges case) read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998 (Third Judges case).

As per the MoP, the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the Supreme Court vests with the Chief Justice of India, while the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, in consultation with two senior-most puisne Judges of the High Court. As per the MoP, the High Courts are required to make recommendations at least 06 months before the occurrence of a vacancy. However, this time limit is hardly adhered to by the High Courts. For appointments to the High Courts, the views of concerned State Government are obtained in accordance with the MoP. The recommendations also have to be considered in the light of such other reports as may be available to the Government in respect of the names under consideration. The recommendations of the High Court Collegium, the State Governments and the Government of India are then forwarded to the Supreme Court Collegium (SCC) for advice. Only those persons whose names have been recommended by the SCC are appointed as Judges of the High Courts. Appointment of Judges in the higher judiciary is a continuous, integrated and collaborative process between the executive and the judiciary. It requires consultation and approval from various Constitutional Authorities both at State and Central level. Hence, the time needed for filling up of vacancies of the Judges in the High Courts cannot be indicated.

While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies of Judges in High Courts keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges and also due to increase in the sanctioned strength of Judges. Since May 2014, the Government has increased the sanctioned strength of High Court Judges from 906 to 1122 (as on date). Under the collaborative effort between the Government and the Judiciary, 1013 Judges have been appointed in various High Courts since 2014 till 10.02.2025.

ANNEXURE-I**Statement showing Sanctioned strength and Vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts (As on 10.02.2025)**

Sl. No.	Supreme Court/ High Court(s)	Sanctioned Strength	Vacancies
	Supreme Court	34	2
1	Allahabad	160	81
2	Andhra Pradesh	37	7
3	Bombay	94	26
4	Calcutta	72	29
5	Chhattisgarh	22	6
6	Delhi	60	22
7	Gauhati	30	6
8	Gujarat	52	20
9	Himachal Pradesh	17	5
10	J & K and Ladakh	17	10
11	Jharkhand	25	9
12	Karnataka	62	13
13	Kerala	47	2
14	Madhya Pradesh	53	20
15	Madras	75	10
16	Manipur	5	1
17	Meghalaya	4	0
18	Orissa	33	15
19	Patna	53	19
20	Punjab & Haryana	85	34
21	Rajasthan	50	17
22	Sikkim	3	0
23	Telangana	42	12
24	Tripura	5	0
25	Uttarakhand	11	3
	Total	1114	367

ANNEXURE-II**State-wise vacancy report in respect of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Judiciary as on 10.02.2025**

Sl. NO.	States/UTs	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength	Vacancy
1	Andhra Pradesh	639	564	75
2	Arunachal Pradesh	44	33	11
3	Assam	485	461	24
4	Bihar	2019	1536	483
5	Chandigarh	30	30	0
6	Chhattisgarh	663	465	198
7	D & N Haveli Daman & Diu	7	6	1
8	Delhi	897	803	94
9	Goa	50	40	10
10	Gujarat	1720	1185	535
11	Haryana	781	551	230
12	Himachal Pradesh	179	160	19
13	Jammu and Kashmir	322	279	43
14	Jharkhand	705	506	199
15	Karnataka	1390	1152	238
16	Kerala	612	533	79
17	Ladakh	17	11	6
18	Lakshadweep	4	4	0
19	Madhya Pradesh	2028	1692	336
20	Maharashtra	2190	1940	250
21	Manipur	62	49	13
22	Meghalaya	99	57	42
23	Mizoram	74	45	29
24	Nagaland	34	24	10
25	Odisha	1041	840	201
26	Puducherry	36	26	10
27	Punjab	804	723	81
28	Rajasthan	1654	1308	346
29	Sikkim	35	23	12
30	Tamil Nadu	1369	1023	346
31	Telangana	560	445	115
32	Tripura	133	109	24
33	Uttar Pradesh	3700	2698	1002
34	Uttarakhand	298	270	28
35	Andaman and Nicobar	1105	875	230
36	West Bengal			
TOTAL		25786	20466	5320

Source: MIS portal, Department of Justice

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1074
ANSWERED ON – 13/02/2025

FAST TRACK COURTS

JS(J-II)
J-II
✓ 1074. SHRI NARHARI AMIN:

Will the Minister of **LAW AND JUSTICE** be pleased to state:

- (a) the planned improvements for the scheme until 2026 particularly with increased funding and the efforts to set up more courts across the country;
- (b) the specific measures being taken to meet the remaining target of 1800 Fast Track Courts;
- (c) the steps being taken to improve public awareness and accessibility to the Fast Track Courts, particularly in rural and underserved areas; and
- (d) the details of the impact of Fast Track Special Courts on the speedy disposal of POCSO Act cases and other heinous crime cases?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (d): Establishment of subordinate courts including Fast Track Courts (FTCs) for providing speedy justice in the country lies within the domain of the State/UT Governments who set up such courts as per their need and resources, in consultation with their respective High Courts. The 14th Finance Commission had recommended for setting up of 1800 Fast Track Courts (FTCs) during 2015-2020 for speedy trial of specific cases of heinous nature, civil cases related to women, children, senior citizens, disabled persons, persons infected with terminal ailments etc. and property related cases pending for more than 5 years. The Finance Commission had further urged the State Governments to utilize enhanced fiscal space available through tax devolution for this purpose. The Union Government has requested the State/UT Governments to allocate funds for the setting up of FTCs, from the financial year 2015-16 onward. As per information made available by the High Courts, **863 FTCs are functional** across the country as on 31.12.2024. State-wise details of functional Fast Track Courts (FTCs) are at **Annexure-I**. These courts are spread across the country, including rural and underserved areas.

Further, pursuant to the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018 and the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court [Suo Motu Writ (Criminal) No. 1/2019], the Central Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for setting up Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) including exclusive POCSO (e-POCSO) since October, 2019 for expeditious trial and disposal of pending cases pertaining to Rape and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in a time-bound manner. The Scheme has been extended twice, with the latest extension up to 31st March 2026, targeting the establishment of 790 courts. The **financial outlay of the scheme is Rs. 1952.23 cr. with Rs. 1207.24 cr. as Central Share** to be incurred from Nirbhaya Fund on the CSS pattern. As per the inputs received from the High Courts, as on 31.12.2024, **747 FTSCs including 406 exclusive POCSO Courts** are functional in 30 States/UTs. These courts have disposed around 3,00,000 cases as of 31.12.2024. The State/UT-wise details of functional Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) along with the cumulative disposal, are at **Annexure-II**.

As per the inputs received from the High Courts, the disposal rate of Rape and POCSO Act cases in Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) is significantly higher than in regular courts. While the average disposal rate of Rape and POCSO Act cases in regular courts is estimated at 3.2 cases per court per month, FTSCs achieve an average of 9.5 cases per month.

The establishment of Fast Track Special Courts demonstrates the unwavering commitment of the Government towards women security, combating sexual and gender-based violence, reducing the backlog of pending cases related to Rape & POCSO Act, and providing enhanced access to justice for survivors of sexual crimes. With professional and experienced judges and support staff specialized in handling sensitive sexual offense cases, these courts ensure consistent and expert-guided legal proceedings offering victims of sexual offences swift resolution in mitigating the trauma and distress, and enabling them to move forward.

ANNEXURE-I**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION
NO. 1074 FOR ANSWER ON 13.02.2025 REGARDING 'FAST TRACK COURTS'****State/UT-wise details of functional Fast Track Courts (As on 31.12.2024)**

Sl. No.	Name of States/UTs	Number of Functional FTCs
1	Andhra Pradesh	21
2	Andaman & Nicobar Island	0
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0
4	Assam	15
5	Bihar	0
6	Chandigarh	0
7	Chhattisgarh	27
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Diu & Daman	0
9	Delhi	26
10	Goa	4
11	Gujarat	54
12	Haryana	6
13	Himachal Pradesh	3
14	Jammu & Kashmir	8
15	Jharkhand	40
16	Karnataka	0
17	Kerala	0
18	Ladakh	0
19	Lakshadweep	0
20	Madhya Pradesh	0
21	Maharashtra	101
22	Manipur	6
23	Meghalaya	0
24	Mizoram	2
25	Nagaland	0
26	Odisha	0
27	Puducherry	1
28	Punjab	7
29	Rajasthan	0
30	Sikkim	2
31	Tamil Nadu	72
32	Telangana	0
33	Tripura	3
34	Uttar Pradesh	373
35	Uttarakhand	4
36	West Bengal	88
	TOTAL	863

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION
NO. 1074 FOR ANSWER ON 13.02.2025 REGARDING 'FAST TRACK COURTS'**

**State/UT-wise details of functional Fast Track Special Courts including exclusive POCSO Courts
(As on 31.12.2024)**

Sl. No.	Name of States/UTs	Functional Courts		Cumulative Disposal since the inception of the Scheme		
		FTSCs including exclusive POCSO	Exclusive POCSO	FTSCs	Exclusive POCSO	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	16	16	0	6221	6221
2	Assam	17	17	0	7664	7664
3	Bihar	46	46	0	14495	14495
4	Chandigarh	1	0	317	0	317
5	Chhattisgarh	15	11	1131	4611	5742
6	Delhi	16	11	676	1660	2336
7	Goa	1	0	61	34	95
8	Gujarat	35	24	2852	11671	14523
9	Haryana	16	12	1815	5438	7253
10	Himachal Pradesh	6	3	531	749	1280
11	Jammu & Kashmir	4	2	112	151	263
12	Jharkhand	22	16	2550	5585	8135
13	Karnataka	30	17	4721	7729	12450
14	Kerala	55	14	15987	7215	23202
15	Madhya Pradesh	67	57	4432	25333	29765
16	Maharashtra	6	2	8635	11988	20623
17	Manipur	2	0	172	0	172
18	Meghalaya	5	5	0	647	647
19	Mizoram	3	1	176	66	242
20	Nagaland	1	0	65	3	68
21	Odisha	44	23	6237	11470	17707
22	Puducherry*	1	1	0	122	122
23	Punjab	12	3	2424	2268	4692
24	Rajasthan	45	30	5251	12040	17291
25	Tamil Nadu	14	14	0	8898	8898
26	Telangana	36	0	7567	2731	10298
27	Tripura	3	1	230	208	438
28	Uttarakhand	4	0	1792	0	1792
29	Uttar Pradesh	218	74	40257	42404	82661
30	West Bengal	6	6	0	232	232
31	A&N Islands**	0	0	0	0	0
32	Arunachal Pradesh***	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		747	406	107991	191633	299624

Note: At the inception of the Scheme, the allocation of FTSCs across the country was based on a criterion of 65 to 165 pending cases per court, meaning one FTSC would be established for every 65 to 165 pending cases. Based on that, only 31 States/UTs were eligible to join the Scheme.

* Puducherry specially requested to join the Scheme and has since operationalized one exclusive POCSO Court in May 2023.

** A&N islands has consented to join the Scheme, but is yet to operationalize any court.

*** Arunachal Pradesh has opted out of the Scheme citing a very low number of pending cases of Rape and POCSO Act.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1075
ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES FROM THE SC/ST AND FEMALE CATEGORY

✓ 1075 # SHRI NEERAJ DANGI:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) ~~the percentage of Judges from the SC/ST category out of total appointed Judges~~
incourts operating in the country, State-wise;
- (b) the appropriate steps being taken by Government towards the appointment of women Judges and Judges from the SC/ST category in the High Courts of the country;
- (c) the current status of the number of vacant posts of Judges in the High Courts across the country, State-wise; and
- (d) the details regarding the number of Judges appointed per lakh people as per the Judge to population ratio in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) & (b): The state-wise details of the working strength of Judicial Officers from the SC/ST category in District and Subordinate Courts is at *Annexure-I*.

Appointment of Judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts is made under Articles 124, 217 and 224 of the Constitution of India, which do not provide for reservation for any caste or class of persons. Therefore, category-wise data pertaining to representation of SCs, STs and OBCs among the Judges of High Courts are not centrally maintained. However, since 2018, the recommendees for the post of High Court Judges

are required to provide details regarding their social background in the prescribed format (prepared in consultation with the Supreme Court). As per the information provided by the recommendees, out of 698 High Court Judges appointed since 2018, 108 are women judges while 22 belong to SC, 15 belong to ST, 87 belong to the OBC category and 37 come from the Minority Communities.

As per the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP), the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the Supreme Court vests with the Chief Justice of India, while the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, in consultation with two senior-most puisne Judges of the High Court. However, the Government has been requesting the Chief Justices of High Courts that while sending proposals for appointment of Judges, due consideration be given to suitable candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Minorities and Women to ensure social diversity in the appointment of Judges in High Courts. Only those persons who are recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium, are appointed as Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts.

(c): The current status of the number of vacant posts of Judges in the High Courts across the country, State-wise is at *Annexure-II*.

(d): Based on the population as per Census 2011 which was 1210.19 million and as per available information regarding sanctioned strength of Judges in Supreme Court, High Courts and District & Subordinate Courts as on 31.12.2024, the judge - population ratio in the country works out to be approximately 21 Judges per million population.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) & (B) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1075 FOR ANSWER ON 13.02.2025 REGARDING 'APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES FROM THE SC/ST AND FEMALE CATEGORY'.

WORKING STRENGTH OF SC/ST JUDGES IN DISTRICT AND SUBORDINATE COURTS AS ON 07.02.2025

Sl. No.	States & Uts	Civil Judge (Junior Division)	Civil Judge (Junior Division)	Civil Judge (Senior Division)	Civil Judge (Senior Division)	District Judge/DJ	District Judge/DJ)	Total Working Strength in District & Subordinate Courts	Total working Strength of judges in District and Subordinate Courts	Percentage of SC/ST Judges of the Total working strength in the District and Subordinate Courts
		SC	ST	SC	ST	SC	ST	SC/ST		
1	Karnataka	77	19	90	20	60	9	275	1152	24%
2	Rajasthan	64	47	60	52	59	24	306	1308	23%
3	Delhi	46	21	12	1	10	1	91	803	11%
4	Puducherry	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	26	12%
5	Tamil Nadu	119	5	57	4	35	1	221	1023	22%
6	Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0%
7	Andhra Pradesh	53	19	23	10	30	3	138	564	24%
8	D & N Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0%
9	Daman & Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0%
10	Goa	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	40	5%
11	Maharashtra	140	2	43	3	44	2	234	1940	12%
12	Arunachal Pradesh	0	9	0	16	0	7	32	33	97%
13	Telangana	38	20	15	7	15	13	108	445	24%
14	Sikkim	0	1	0	2	0	5	8	23	35%
15	Uttarakhand	16	3	12	4	18	5	58	270	21%
16	Andaman and Nicobar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0%
17	Bihar	129	9	63	5	48	3	257	1536	17%

18	Manipur	0	6	0	4	0	4	14	49	29%
19	West Bengal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	863	0%
20	Chandigarh	7	0	0	0	1	0	8	30	27%
21	Haryana	31	0	42	0	21	0	94	551	17%
22	Jammu and Kashmir	13	11	6	7	9	8	54	279	19%
23	Ladakh	1	2	0	4	0	1	8	11	73%
24	Odisha	30	4	0	0	0	0	34	840	4%
25	Punjab	118	0	34	0	33	0	185	723	26%
26	Uttar Pradesh	214	17	134	15	191	7	578	2698	21%
27	Assam	16	23	12	21	0	7	85	461	18%
28	Chhattisgarh	26	57	17	45	30	26	201	465	43%
29	Himachal Pradesh	8	2	8	4	6	1	29	160	18%
30	Jharkhand	15	31	0	0	0	0	46	506	9%
31	Mizoram	0	13	0	17	0	15	45	45	100%
32	Tripura	5	9	4	7	4	6	35	109	32%
33	Gujarat	59	1	50	4	8	0	122	1185	10%
34	Kerala	20	0	11	1	10	1	43	533	8%
35	Lakshadweep	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	4	50%
36	Madhya Pradesh	122	55	79	106	66	73	501	1692	30%
37	Meghalaya	0	15	0	21	0	18	54	57	95%
TOTAL		1371	403	772	381	704	240	3871	20466	19%

Source: MIS portal of Department of Justice.

Annexure-II

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (C) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1075 FOR ANSWER ON 13.02.2025 REGARDING 'APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES FROM THE SC/ST AND FEMALE CATEGORY'.

The vacancy of Judges in High Courts across the country as on 07.02.2025

Sl. No.	High Court	Sanctioned strength			Working strength			Vacancies		
		Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total
1	Allahabad	119	41	160	79	0	79	40	41	81
2	Andhra Pradesh	28	9	37	21	9	30	7	0	7
3	Bombay	71	23	94	52	16	68	19	7	26
4	Calcutta	54	18	72	33	10	43	21	8	29
5	Chhattisgarh	17	5	22	9	7	16	8	-2	6
6	Delhi	45	15	60	38	0	38	7	15	22
7	Gauhati	22	8	30	21	3	24	1	5	6
8	Gujarat	39	13	52	32	0	32	7	13	20
9	Himachal Pradesh	13	4	17	12	0	12	1	4	5
10	J & K and Ladakh	19	6	25	12	3	15	7	3	10
11	Jharkhand	20	5	25	16	0	16	4	5	9
12	Karnataka	47	15	62	47	2	49	0	13	13
13	Kerala	35	12	47	30	15	45	5	-3	2
14	Madhya Pradesh	40	13	53	33	0	33	7	13	20
15	Madras	56	19	75	54	11	65	2	8	10
16	Manipur	4	1	5	4	0	4	0	1	1
17	Meghalaya	3	1	4	3	1	4	0	0	0
18	Orissa	24	9	33	18	0	18	6	9	15
19	Patna	40	13	53	34	0	34	6	13	19
20	Punjab & Haryana	64	21	85	48	3	51	16	18	34
21	Rajasthan	38	12	50	33	0	33	5	12	17
22	Sikkim	3	0	3	3	0	3	0	0	0
23	Telangana	32	10	42	23	7	30	9	3	12
24	Tripura	4	1	5	4	1	5	0	0	0
25	Uttarakhand	9	2	11	8	0	8	1	2	3
	Total	846	276	1122	667	88	755	179	188	367

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1076

ANSWERED ON 13/02/2025

*Judl. Section
(LA)*
National Litigation Policy and reforms in the Code of Civil Procedure 1908

✓ **1076** Shri Sanjay Kumar Jha:

Will the Minister of **Law and Justice** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to formulate a National Litigation Policy as high volume of litigation is becoming a serious problem in the country;
- (b) if so, the details and the framework of the proposed policy;
- (c) whether Government has taken any steps to reduce the number of litigations during the last three years;
- (d) if so, the outcome of the said steps;
- (e) whether Government is bringing reforms in the Code of Civil Procedure 1908; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENT AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) and (b) The National Litigation Policy has not been finalised.

(c) and (d): In order to reduce number of litigations, Government of India has taken various initiatives to promote Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms. The major initiatives taken by the Government in last three years are as follows:

- i. The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 has been progressively amended in the years 2015, 2019 and 2020 to make the arbitration process cost and time effective and minimise the court intervention.
- ii. The Commercial Courts Act, 2015 was amended in the year 2018, to provide *inter-alia* for Pre-Institution Mediation and Settlement (PIMS) mechanism. This is aimed at providing an opportunity to the parties to resolve the commercial disputes through mediation.
- iii. The India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019, was enacted to provide for the establishment of the India International Arbitration Centre (Centre) for the purpose of creating an independent, autonomous and world class body for facilitating institutional arbitration and to declare the Centre to be an institution of national importance.
- iv. The Mediation Act, 2023, lays down the statutory framework for mediation to be adopted by parties to a dispute, especially institutional mediation, wherein various stakeholders have also been identified to establish a robust and efficacious mediation ecosystem in the country.

The legislative reforms with respect to the ADR mechanism have facilitated the timely and efficacious settlement of commercial disputes thereby enabling ease of doing business. The Mediation Act, 2023 is a pivotal legislative intervention towards providing standalone law on mediation and enabling the growth of a culture of amicable settlement of disputes out of court and the outcome being party driven.

(e) & (f) No legislative proposal for reforms in the Code of Civil Procedure 1908 is presently pending with the Government.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 1077
ANSWERED ON - 13/02/2025

LOK ADALATS

JSCNKG
LAP
✓ 1077 SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of Law and Justice be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of e-Lok Adalats organised in the country during the last three years, State-wise;
- (b) the details of permanent Lok Adalats functioning presently, State-wise;
- (c) the details of funds allocated for the expenses to be incurred in organization of Lok Adalat and e-Lok Adalats;
- (d) whether there is any proposal to organise more Lok Adalats and e-Lok Adalats in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a): E-Lok Adalats started functioning during covid pandemic which significantly improved access to justice for people who were not able to physically participate in the Lok Adalats. The first E-Lok Adalat was held on 27.06.2020 and since then, E-Lok Adalats have been organized in 28 States / UTs. The State/UT-wise details of e-Lok Adalats organized in the country since 2020 are at Annexure – A.

(b): The State/UT-wise details of Permanent Lok Adalats functioning as on December, 2024 are at Annexure – B.

(c): Allocation of funds to State/UT State Legal Services Authorities is made for all activities including expenses to be incurred in organization of Lok Adalat and e-Lok Adalat. During the current financial year, Rs. 200 crore has been allocated to NALSA for conduct of their various activities including for Lok Adalats and e-Lok Adalats.

(d) and (e): Every year, NALSA issues a calendar for the year for organising National Lok Adalats. During the year 2025, National Lok Adalats are scheduled to be held on 8th March, 10th May, 13th September and 13th December. State Lok Adalats are organised by State/UT Legal Services Authorities as per local conditions and needs.

Annexure-A

Statement as referred in reply to Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1077 for answering on 13.02.2025 raised by Shri Rajeev Shukla, MP – Lok Adalats

Statement showing details of e-Lok Adalats organized in the country since 2020

S. No.	Name of the State/UT Authority	Pre-Litigation Cases		Pending Cases in Courts		Total	
		Taken Up	Disposal	Taken Up	Disposal	Taken Up	Disposal
1	Andhra Pradesh	661	214	22,072	15,500	22,733	15,714
2	Arunachal Pradesh	141	18	67	23	208	41
3	Bihar	58,182	17,469	9,023	3,078	67,205	20,547
4	Chandigarh	0	0	70	12	70	12
5	Chhattisgarh	13,434	7,789	17,343	9,946	30,777	17,735
6	Delhi	17,456	14,532	95,624	82,099	1,13,080	96,631
7	Goa	0	0	170	65	170	65
8	Gujarat	30,34,794	20,51,115	37,738	20,945	30,72,532	20,72,060
9	Haryana	3,755	3,625	9,565	4,985	13,320	8,610
10	Himachal Pradesh	2,72,292	11,688	416	244	2,72,708	11,932
11	Jammu and Kashmir	2,281	1,575	8,923	6,291	11,204	7,866
12	Jharkhand	1,81,033	1,17,468	58,832	37,411	2,39,865	1,54,879
13	Karnataka	27,585	15,541	3,33,647	2,04,935	3,61,232	2,20,476
14	Kerala	3,985	986	35,541	25,271	39,526	26,257
15	Madhya Pradesh	3,661	312	36,592	8,385	40,253	8,697
16	Maharashtra	8,93,07,997	74,82,029	88,01,647	10,16,097	9,81,09,644	84,98,126
17	Manipur	881	738	172	91	1,053	829
18	Meghalaya	133	33	25	8	158	41
19	Mizoram	1,856	283	168	47	2,024	330
20	Odisha	23,806	1,143	24,272	4,236	48,078	5,379
21	Punjab	5,327	536	9,387	6,639	14,714	7,175
22	Rajasthan	36,725	6,438	57,865	29,674	94,590	36,112
23	Sikkim	1,136	260	236	59	1,372	319
24	Telangana	887	862	12,450	10,408	13,337	11,270
25	Tripura	2,350	505	1,472	169	3,822	674
26	Uttar Pradesh	2,62,807	1,70,942	2,00,384	1,32,544	4,63,191	3,03,486
27	Uttarakhand	3,591	408	12,168	4,210	15,759	4,618
28	West Bengal	15,657	1,927	12,281	9,032	27,938	10,959
	Grand Total	9,32,82,413	99,08,436	97,98,150	16,32,404	10,30,80,563	1,15,40,840

Statement as referred in reply to Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1077 for answering on 13.02.2025 raised by Shri Rajeev Shukla, MP – Lok Adalats

Statement showing details of Permanent Lok Adalats (PLAs) functioning as on December, 2024		
S. No.	Name of the State / UT Authority	PLAs
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0
2	Andhra Pradesh	13
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0
4	Assam	13
5	Bihar	0
6	Chandigarh	1
7	Chhattisgarh	5
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0
9	Daman and Diu	1
10	Delhi	3
11	Goa	2
12	Gujarat	0
13	Haryana	21
14	Himachal Pradesh	0
15	Jammu and Kashmir	0
16	Jharkhand	24
17	Karnataka	6
18	Kerala	3
19	Ladakh	0
20	Lakshadweep	0
21	Madhya Pradesh	50
22	Maharashtra	4
23	Manipur	0
24	Meghalaya	0
25	Mizoram	0
26	Nagaland	0
27	Odisha	22
28	Puducherry	0
29	Punjab	22
30	Rajasthan	36
31	Sikkim	0
32	Tamil Nadu	32
33	Telangana	6
34	Tripura	8
35	Uttar Pradesh	71
36	Uttarakhand	4
37	West Bengal	0
	Grand Total	347