

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

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 420**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, THE 22<sup>nd</sup> JULY, 2021**

**IT based systems in High Courts and the Supreme Court**

420. **Smt. Ambika Soni:**

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

- (a) the total expenditure made so far for implementing Information and Communication Technology based system in High Courts and Supreme Court;
- (b) the achievements of Supreme Court e-committee during last 16 years of its existence ; and
- (c) the fresh steps taken by Government for making virtual hearing as a permanent feature of judicial system?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE**  
**(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)**

- (a) The Government of India is implementing the e-Courts Mission Mode Project throughout the country for Information and Communication Technology enablement of district and subordinate courts. The total expenditure during eCourts Project Phase- I was Rs. 639.41 crore. During Phase-II of eCourts Project, total outlay was Rs. 1670 crore out of which a sum of Rs. 1150.56 crore has been

released to the High Courts till 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. Details of High Court wise fund released is attached at Annexure-I.

In so far as Supreme Court of India is concerned, the expenditure made from the Financial Year 2019-20, FY 2020-21 and from 1/4/2021 to 06/7/2021 for implementing information and communication technology based system in Supreme Court of India is as under:

S.No	Financial Year	Expenditure of IT Head (in Rs.)
1	2019-20	Rs. 2,52,29,949/-
2	2020-21	Rs. 5,78,12,909/-
3	01.04.2021 to 06.07.2021	Rs. 1,13,32,983/- approx. (subject to reconciliation)

(b) The achievements of e-committee of the Supreme Court during last 16 years of its existence are as follows:

i. 18,735 District and Subordinate Courts have been computerized. Under the Wide Area Network (WAN) Project, 2945 sites have been commissioned with 10 Mbps to 100 Mbps bandwidth speed.

ii. Case Information Software (CIS) which forms the basis for the e court services is based on customized Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) which has been developed by NIC. 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.

iii. A new software patch and user manual for COVID-19 management has also been developed to help in smart scheduling of cases.

iv. 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. Litigants can access case status information in respect of over 18.77 crore cases and more than 14.61 crore orders/ judgments pertaining to these computerized courts (as on 01.07.2021). Open APIs has been introduced in 2020 to allow Central and State Governments and institutional litigants including local bodies to access NJDG data to improve pendency monitoring and compliance.

v. 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.

vi. 12 Virtual Courts in 9 States have been operationalized to handle traffic challan cases. More than 72 lakh cases have been handled by 12 virtual courts and online fine of Rs. 159 Crore has been realised till 08.07.2021. The Delhi High Court has set up 34 Digital Courts dealing with Negotiable Instruments Act cases.

vii. The Supreme Court of India emerged as a global leader by conducting 96,239 virtual hearings (as on 09.07.2021 since the beginning of lockdown period). The High Courts (36, 47,381 hearings) and Subordinate Courts (67, 85,877 hearings) have conducted 1.04 crore virtual hearings till 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. VC facilities have also been enabled between 3240 court complexes and corresponding 1272 jails. Funds for 2506 VC cabins and VC equipment for 14,443 court rooms have also been released. 1500 VC licenses (VidyoConnect) have been procured to promote virtual hearings.

viii. To promote Live Streaming of court proceedings, Model Live Streaming Rules have been circulated amongst all the High Courts across the country for their

suggestions before adoption. Gujarat High Court has commenced Live Streaming proceedings already.

ix. New e-filing system (version 3.0) has been rolled out for the electronic filing of legal papers with upgraded features like new dashboard including the options of my partners, Case Filing, Vakaltnama, pleading, e-payments, applications and portfolio. For making the payment process easy and transparent, online payment (e-Payments) of court fees, fines, penalties and judicial deposits has been enabled.

x. To bridge the digital divide, funds have been released for setting up 235 eSewaKendras to facilitate e-filing and virtual hearing of cases in High Courts and District Courts across the country.

xi. Seven platforms have been created for disseminating real time information on case status, cause list, judgments etc. to lawyers and litigants viz. a multilingual and disabled-friendly eCourts Portal, eCourts Mobile App and JustIS App for judges, Automated emails, SMS Push and Pull Service, Judicial Service Centres and Information Kiosks.

xii. National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP) has been launched for technology enabled process serving and issuing of summons.

xiii. To make effective use of database created through National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) and to make the information available to public, 29 LED Display Message Sign Board System called Justice Clocks, have been installed in 20 High Courts.

xiv. The eCommittee of the Supreme Court of India has conducted 30 training and awareness programmes on the ICT services provided under the eCourts project, from May 2020 to May 2021. These programmes have covered nearly 2.03

lakh stakeholders, including High Court Judges, District Judiciary, Court Staff, Master Trainers, Technical Staff of High Courts, and Advocates.

xv. As on 28 May 2021, 30,781 Advocates and Advocate Clerks and 4006 advocate Master trainers were trained by e-Committee in coordination with the respective State Judicial Academies.

xvi. The manuals, brochures, and video tutorials on e-filing have been translated into various regional languages to expand its availability to benefit advocates and litigants.

xvii. e-Committee ,Supreme Court of India released manual for its citizen-centric service “e-Courts Services Mobile App” in 14 languages.

xviii. To create greater awareness through social media, a YouTube channel of e-Courts Services has been created by the e-Committee, which hosts video tutorials on e-Filing in various regional languages. E-Courts services YouTube channel has reached 1, 02,360 views as of 18 September 2020.

xix. eCommittee has launched its website on S3WaaS (Secure, Scalable & Suganya website as a Service) platform provide by NIC. Web site is in compliance with GIGW guidelines (Government of India guidelines for website). It has been developed on Open-Source Technology.

xx. The eCommittee has resumed its newsletter’s digital publication from May 2020, which is hosted on the e-Committee website.

xxi. Model rules framed during pandemic:

- i. Model rules of video conferencing for courts have been framed and circulated to High Courts for their adoption. Till now, several High Courts have implemented the video conference rules.
- ii. Model rules of e-Filing for courts have been framed and circulated to the High Courts. Till now, 9 High Courts and 1 Bench of Gauhati High Court have implemented the video conference rules.

xxii. Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS): Live electronic exchange of data between courts and police through ICJS has been implemented in most High Courts.

c) During the pre COVID period, the virtual hearing set up was used primarily for conduct of remand matters so as to reduce movements of prisoners between court and jails. During the post COVID period, due to lockdown and social distancing protocols, judiciary was forced to seek solutions in technology which gave impetus to virtual hearings. Legal sanctity was given to video-conference hearings by the Apex Court by invoking Article 142 of the Constitution. Video conference emerged as mainstay of the courts during the COVID lockdown period as physical hearings and normal court proceedings in the congregational mode were not possible. However, whether open physical courts will operate along with virtual hearings in hybrid model is an administrative matter which falls within the purview and domain of the judiciary for taking a decision. Towards streamlining virtual hearings, the eCommittee of the Supreme Court has also formulated Model Video Conferencing Rules which have been adopted by several High Courts with

local contextualization. Since COVID lockdown started, the District Courts have heard over 67 lakh cases, while the High Courts have heard over 36 lakh cases through virtual hearings. In addition virtual courts for hearing petty traffic offences have also been set up where the court proceedings are conducted in virtual mode. One video conference equipment each has been provided to all Court Complexes including Taluka Level Court Complexes in rural areas under the Phase II of the e-Courts Project for virtual hearings. To further augment the Video Conferencing (VC) infrastructure, funds for 2506 VC cabins and VC equipment for 14,443 court rooms have also been released. Funds have also been released for procuring 1732 Document Visualisers. Video Conferencing facility has been enabled between 3240 court complexes & 1272 corresponding jails.

**Annexure-I**

Statement referred to in reply part (a) of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 420 for 22/07/2021 regarding funds released to High Courts.

<b>Sr.No</b>	<b>High Court</b>	<b>Total Funds released under eCourts Phase-II (in Rs. crore)</b>
1.	Allahabad	109.48
2.	Andhra Pradesh	1.96
3.	Bombay	125.24
4.	Calcutta	37.09
5.	Chhattisgarh	27.31
6.	Delhi	26.80
7.	Gauhati (Arunachal Pradesh)	11.64
8.	Gauhati (Assam)	67.28
9.	Gauhati (Mizoram)	7.57
10.	Gauhati (Nagaland)	7.15
11.	Gujarat	72.82
12.	Himachal Pradesh	11.19
13.	Common High Court for Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh	18.98
14.	Jharkhand	24.25
15.	Karnataka	65.38
16.	Kerala	36.03
17.	Madhya Pradesh	74.05
18.	Madras	70.15
19.	Manipur	8.52
20.	Meghalaya	10.94
21.	Orissa	46.41
22.	Patna	55.82
23.	Punjab & Haryana	54.13
24.	Rajasthan	72.94
25.	Sikkim	6.81
26.	Telangana & Andhra Pradesh	70.29
27.	Telangana	1.79
28.	Tripura	16.90
29.	Uttarakhand	11.65
	Total	1,150.56