

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1866
ANSWERED ON 22/12/2022**

PENDING CIVIL CASES IN DISTRICT COURTS

1866 # SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR:

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

- (a) the details of the civil cases pending in the district courts of the country during the last five years, State-wise;
- (b) whether Government is considering to take initiative to settle the civil and criminal cases pending at the judiciary level in a definite time frame so that the pending cases in the courts can be resolved; and
- (c) whether Government has conducted any study to find out the reasons for increasing number of the cases in the courts?

ANSWER

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

(a): As per information obtained from Supreme Court of India, the details of the civil cases pending in the district courts of the country during the last five years, State-wise is at ***Annexure-I***.

(b) & (c): The disposal of pending cases in courts lies within the domain of the judiciary, by adopting approaches for a litigant-centric justice delivery system in their jurisdiction. Government has no role in disposal of cases in courts.

As far as disposal of cases in a definite time frame is concerned, no time frame has been prescribed for disposal of various kinds of cases by the respective courts. However, the Government has taken several initiatives to provide an ecosystem for faster disposal of cases by the judiciary.

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, an 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.

The major steps taken during the last eight years under various initiatives for aiding early disposal and their outcomes are as follows:

(i) Improving infrastructure for Judicial Officers of District and Subordinate Courts: As on date, Rs. 9291.79 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 21,159 as on 30.11.2022, and number of residential units has increased from 10,211 as on 30.06.2014 to 18,557 as on 30.11.2022, under this scheme. In addition, 2,673 court halls and 1,662 residential units are under construction (as per Nyaya Vikas Portal). The Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary has been extended till 2025-26 at a total cost of Rs. 9,000 crores, out of which the central share will be Rs. 5,307 crores. Besides, the construction of court halls and residential units, it would also cover the construction of lawyer's halls, toilet complexes, and digital computer rooms. There are 21,159 court halls and 18,557 residential units made available under the scheme so far. 2673 court halls and 1,662 residential units are under construction as part of ongoing projects.

(ii) Leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for improved justice delivery: The Government has been implementing the e-Courts Mission Mode Project throughout the country for information and communication technology enablement of district and subordinate courts. The number of computerised district & subordinate courts has increased to 18,735 so far. WAN connectivity has been provided to 99.3% of court complexes. New and user-friendly version of Case Information Software has been developed and deployed at all the computerized district and subordinate courts. All stakeholders, including judicial officers can access information relating to judicial proceedings/decisions of computerized district & subordinate courts and high courts on the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG). As on 01.12.2022, litigants can access the case status of over 21.74 crore cases and 19.80 crore orders/judgments pertaining to these courts. eCourts services such as details of case registration, cause list, case status, daily orders & final judgments are available to litigants and advocates through the eCourts web portal, Judicial Service Centers (JSC) in all computerized courts, the eCourts Mobile App, email service, and SMS push, and pull services. A video conferencing facility has been enabled between 3,240 court complexes and 1,272 corresponding jails. With a view to handling the COVID- 19 challenges better and making the transition to virtual hearings smoother, 619 e-SewaKendras have been set up at court complexes to facilitate lawyers and litigants needing assistance ranging from case status, getting

judgments/orders, court/case-related information, and e-filing facilities. Rs. 5.01 crore has been allocated for providing equipment in video conferencing cabins in various court complexes to facilitate virtual hearings. Rs. 12.12 crore has been allocated for 1,732 help desk counters for e-filing in various court complexes.

21 virtual courts have been set up in 17 States/UTs viz. Delhi (2), Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala (2), Maharashtra (2), Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir (2), Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, West Bengal, and Rajasthan to try traffic offences. As on 03.03.2022, these courts have handled more than 1.69 crore cases and realized more than Rs. 271.48 crore in fines.

Video conferencing emerged as the mainstay of the courts during the Covid lockdown period as physical hearings and normal court proceedings in the congregational mode were not possible. Since Covid lockdown began, the district courts heard 1,65,20,791 cases while the high courts heard 75,80,347 cases (totalling 2.41 crore) via video conferencing till 31.10.2022. The Supreme Court had 2,97,435 hearings since the lockdown period upto 03.09.2022.

(iii) Filling up of vacant positions in Supreme Court, High Courts and District and Subordinate Courts: From 01.05.2014 to 05.12.2022, 46 Judges were appointed in Supreme Court. 853 new judges were appointed and 621 additional judges were made permanent in the high courts. Sanctioned strength of Judges of High Courts has been increased from 906 in May, 2014 to 1108 currently. sanctioned and working strength of judicial officers in district and subordinate courts has increased as follow:

As on	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength
31.12.2013	19,518	15,115
16.12.2022	25,017	19,192

However, filling up of vacancies in subordinate judiciary falls within the domain of the State Governments and high courts concerned.

(iv) Reduction in Pendency through / follow up by Arrears Committees: 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. Arrears Committee has been constituted in the Supreme Court to formulate steps to reduce pendency of cases in high courts and district courts. In the past, Minister of Law

& Justice has taken up the matter with the Chief Justices of High Courts and the Chief Ministers of states drawing their attention to the cases pending for more than five years and to take up pendency reduction campaign. The Department of Justice has developed an online portal for reporting by all High Courts on the compliance of Arrears Eradication Scheme guidelines of the Malimath Committee Report.

(v) **Emphasis on Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR):** Commercial Courts Act, 2015 (as amended on 20th August, 2018) stipulates mandatory Pre-institution Mediation and Settlement (PIMS) 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.

(vi) **Initiatives to Fast Track Special Type of Cases:** The Fourteenth Finance Commission endorsed the proposal of the Government to strengthen the judicial system in states which included, inter-alia, establishing Fast Track Courts for cases of heinous crimes; cases involving senior citizens, women, children etc., and urged the State Governments to use the additional fiscal space provided in the form of enhanced tax devolution from 32% to 42% to meet such requirements. As on 31.10.2022, 838 Fast Track Courts are functional for 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 (1 each in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and 2 in NCT of Delhi). Further, the central government has approved a scheme for setting up 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country for the expeditious disposal of pending cases of Rape under IPC and crimes under POCSO Act. As on date, 28 States/UTs have joined the scheme. Rs.140 crore was released in the financial year 2019-20, Rs. 160 crore has been released during the financial year 2020-21 and Rs. 134.557 crore has been released during the financial year 2021-22 for the scheme Rs. 53.55 crore has been released during current FY upto October, 2022. 731 FTSC are functional 412 exclusive POCSO Courts, which disposed more than 1,24,000 cases as on 31.10.2022.

(vii) In addition, to reduce pendency and unclogging of the courts, the Government has recently 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) 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. In order to reduce the pendency of cases in courts and also to settle the disputes at pre-litigation stage, Lok Adalats are organized by Legal Services Institutions at such intervals as it deems fit. Lok Adalat is not a permanent establishment. However, as per Section 19 of the LSA Act, 1987, Lok Adalats are organized by Legal Services Institutions as per requirement. National Lok Adalats are organized simultaneously in all Taluks, Districts and High Courts on a pre-fixed date.

The details of the case disposed off in Lok Adalats during the last two 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
Total	3,82,21,509	1,64,92,538	5,47,14,047

(ix) The government launched the Tele-Law programme in 2017, which provided 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 Panchayat and through Tele-Law mobile App.

Category	Total Advice Enabled	%
SC	8,62,464	31.51%
ST	4,90,729	17.93%
OBC	7,94,986	29.04%
Women	9,19,389	33.59%
General	5,88,932	21.52%
As of 30th Nov 2022,		

(x) Efforts have been made to institutionalize pro bono culture and pro bono lawyering 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 also available on UMANG Platform.

Pro Bono Panel of advocates have been initiated in 21 High Courts at the State level. Pro Bono Clubs have been started in 69 select Laws Schools to instill Pro Bono culture in budding lawyers.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) OF RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1866 FOR ANSWER ON 22.12.2022 REGARDING
'PENDING CIVIL CASES IN DISTRICT COURTS'**

Details of Civil Cases Pending in District & Subordinate Courts from 2018 to 2022.

S. N	States/Uts	Total Number of Pending Cases(Civil)				
		2018*	2019*	2020*	2021*	2022**
1	Uttar Pradesh	1656944	1714208	1805336	1850739	1670274
2	Andhra Pradesh	529427	311798	351110	414077	415444
3	Telangana		246280	281547	322417	327638
4	Maharashtra	1185586	1236874	1363965	1478744	1542796
5	Goa	21499	21993	24332	25820	25603
6	Diu and Daman	2571	2581	2955	3140	1411
7	Silvassa					1892
8	West Bengal	493021	505168	546955	600575	606777
9	Andaman&Nicobar	3769	3841	4207	4476	4418
10	Chattisgarh	55924	59642	62912	72062	77563
11	Delhi	187733	197432	216127	249500	251891
12	Gujarat	466855	425827	460382	455312	436650
13	Assam	67993	71550	80793	87179	92704
14	Nagaland	2379	1302	1581	1780	1573
15	Meghalaya	3157	3196	3502	3705	3609
16	Manipur	3417	3932	4309	5257	4889
17	Tripura	8971	8785	10776	11271	11317
18	Mizoram	3021	2624	2586	2648	2792
19	Auranchal Pradesh	1921	1898	2228	2450	2743
20	Himachal Pradesh	116269	123264	146485	157703	160134
21	Jammu& Kashmir	55965	59151	69083	75211	77329
22	Jharkhand	61991	67779	77312	88696	87650
23	Karnataka	726513	744463	820004	848853	891724
24	Kerala	421358	432085	512392	543434	542413
25	U.T of Lakshadweep	133	156	144	169	165
26	Madhya Pradesh	309147	312221	337383	359364	364164
27	Tamil Nadu	616179	648084	717710	757473	761467
28	Puducherry	12633	14185	15818	14298	13591
29	Orissa	305621	313318	342356	362945	360986
30	Bihar	366915	386715	417183	464456	489861
31	Punjab	256779	273721	349193	393846	405565
32	Haryana	277973	308603	384167	429831	451678
33	Chandigarh	17203	18209	21009	22976	23353
34	Rajasthan	469742	439357	483330	518923	535685
35	Sikkim	387	341	466	499	533
36	Uttarakhand	34038	31414	35548	36474	37887
	Total	8743034	8991997	9955186	10666303	10686169

Source:- Supreme Court of India

* as on 31st December of the end of respective year.

** as on 30.09.2022

