

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2509**  
ANSWERED ON 10/08/2023

**PENDENCY OF LITIGATION IN COURTS**

**2509. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR GUPTA:**

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of the dissatisfaction of public with the slow pace of decisions by the courts;**
- (b) the initiatives taken, if any, by Government to ensure timely disposal of cases by the District courts, High Courts and the Supreme Court;**
- (c) the judge-case ratio and judge-population ratio in the country; and**
- (d) the details of the steps, if any, being taken by Government to improve the judge-case and judge-population ratios?**

**ANSWER**

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

**(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)**

**(a) & (b):** The adjudication and disposal of cases is within the exclusive domain of the judiciary and the Central Government has no direct role in the matter.

However, the Government is fully committed to speedy disposal of cases in accordance with Article 21 of the Constitution and reducing pendency. Amongst the several initiatives taken by the Government to provide a supportive ecosystem for speedy disposal of cases by the judiciary, the setting up of National Mission for Justice Delivery

and Legal Reforms in August, 2011 was an important step. The Mission has 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. Over the years, the Mission has been pursuing a co-ordinated approach for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial administration, which, inter-alia, involves better 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.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for 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 would ease the life of lawyers and litigants, thereby aiding justice delivery. As on date, Rs. 10035 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 21,365 as on 30.06.2023, and number of residential units has increased from 10,211 as on 30.06.2014 to 18,846 as on 30.06.2023, under this scheme.

Further under the e-Courts Mission Mode Project, information and communication technology (ICT) has been leveraged for IT 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 99.4% of court complexes. Video conferencing facility has been enabled between 3,240 court complexes and 1,272 corresponding jails. 815 e-Sewa Kendras 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. 22 virtual courts have been set up in 18 States/UTs. As on 31.05.2023, these courts have handled more than 3.113 crore cases and realized more than Rs. 408 crores in fines. E-courts Phase III is about to begin which intends to incorporate latest technology such Artificial

Intelligence(AI) and Block chain to make justice delivery more robust, easy and accessible to all the stakeholders.

Government has been regularly filling up the vacancies in higher judiciary. From 01.05.2014 to 10.07.2023, 56 Judges were appointed in Supreme Court. 919 new Judges were appointed and 653 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 1114 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
07.08.2023	25,254	19,846

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

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.

Under the aegis of the Fourteenth Finance Commission ,the government has established Fast Track Courts for dealing with cases of heinous crimes; cases involving senior citizens, women, children etc. As on 31.05.2023, 832 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. 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.

With a view 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.

Alternate Dispute Resolution methods have been promoted whole heartedly. Accordingly, the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 was amended on 20th 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.

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 case disposed off in Lok Adalats during the last three 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 (upto 17.06.2023)	3,00,11,291	61,88,686	3,61,99,977
Total	6,82,32,800	2,26,81,224	9,09,14,024

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.

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

Till 28th Feb, 2023	Cases Registered	% Wise Break Up	Advice Enabled	% Wise Break Up
Gender Wise				
Female	15,75,140	34.38	15,35,775	34.39
Male	30,06,772	65.62	29,30,601	65.61
Caste Category Wise				
General	9,82,636	21.45	9,52,773	21.33
OBC	13,28,505	28.99	12,93,153	28.95
SC	14,88,971	32.50	14,53,283	32.54
ST	7,81,800	17.065	7,67,167	17.18
Total	45,81,912		44,66,376	

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.

**(c) & (d):** The detailed statement of judge-case ratio in the country for various courts is at **ANNEXURE-I**.

In case of judge-population ratio, the Department uses the criterion of using the population as per Census 2011 and as per available information regarding sanctioned strength of Judges in Supreme Court, High Court and District & Subordinate Courts in the particular year. 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 in the year 2023, the

judge - population ratio in the country works out to be approximately 21 Judges per million population in comparison.

The Central Government has a limited role in improvement of judge-case ratio and judge-population ratio as the same are dependent upon the augmentation of judges' strength. In case of appointment of judges in higher judiciary it 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. Whereas, the appointment of Judicial Officers in the District and Subordinate Courts falls within the domain of the High Courts and State Governments concerned in which the Central Government has no direct role.

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**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (C) AND (D) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2509 FOR ANSWER ON 10.08.2023 REGARDING 'PENDENCY OF LITIGATION IN COURTS.**

<b>Ratio between Judges and Cases in the country</b>				
<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>Courts</b>	<b>No. of Cases</b>	<b>No. of Judges</b>	<b>Ratio</b>
1	Supreme Court	69,766 (pending as on 1.07.2023)	34	2051.94
2	High Court	60,63,499 (pending as on 4.08.2023)	1,114	5443.0
3	District & Subordinate Court	4,44,07,204 (pending as on 4.08.2023)	25,246	1758.98

Source: National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG).