

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION No-2041

ANSWERED ON- 12/12/2024

MODERNISATION OF COURTS

2041. SHRI LAHAR SINGH SIROYA :

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

- (a) the current status of digitisation efforts in the judiciary to enable virtual hearings;
- (b) the current budget allocation for digitisation and court modernisation efforts and the manner in which cost-effective implementation of these initiatives is ensured; and
- (c) Government's plans to integrate Artificial Intelligence or other advanced technologies to assist in case processing, legal research or decision making within the judiciary?

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): Video conferencing (VC) 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. To bring uniformity and standardization in the conduct of VC, an overarching order was passed by the Supreme Court of India on 6th April 2020, which gave legal sanctity and validity to the court hearings done through VC. Further, VC rules were framed by a 5-Judge Committee of the Supreme Court, which were circulated to all the High Courts for adoption after local contextualization. These are available on the website of the eCommittee, Supreme Court of India. All the High Courts, except High Court of Madras, have adopted Video Conferencing rules. The High Court of Madras has its own VC rules, similar to earlier circulated rules.

Under eCourts Mission Mode Project, during Phase I of the project video conferencing facility has been operationalised between 488 court complexes & 342 corresponding jails. In

eCourts Phase II of the project, one video conference equipment each has been provided to all Court Complexes, including taluk level courts and funds have been sanctioned for additional VC equipment for 14,443 court rooms (High Court-Wise details attached at Annexure I). VC facilities are already enabled between 3240 court complexes and corresponding 1272 jails.

As per the information provided by the Supreme Court of India, the numbers of cases dealt with (virtual hearings) on video conferencing in High Courts and District Courts is at Annexure II.

(b): Under eCourts Project Phase-III, for the FY 2024-25, Rs. 110.21 crore has been allocated to the digitisation component.

The eCourts Project is being implemented by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India and eCommittee, Supreme Court of India, in a decentralized manner through the respective High Courts. The eCommittee of Supreme Court of India is responsible for the policy planning, strategic direction and guidance for implementation of eCourts project. The Department of Justice releases funds to High Courts on the recommendation of eCommittee of Supreme Court of India.

(c): The Supreme Court of India has adopted the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) language technology in translation of judicial documents and use of AI in Legal Research Assistance on judicial side. The AI Committee of Supreme Court has identified the use of AI on the administrative side viz. in process automation, to keep track of pending cases and to have a special focus on old cases & cases pertaining to senior citizens, women and marginalised sections.

Under eCourts Project Phase-III, an amount of Rs. 177.18 crore has been allocated for Future Technological Advancements component. This component has subsets like Machine Learning (ML), Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) etc.

Annexure I

Statement referred to in reply of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2041 for 12/12/2024 regarding modernisation of courts. High Court wise details of VC equipment for Court Rooms is as follows:

S.No	High Court	Number of Functioning Court Rooms	Number of VC equipment were already provided	Number of additional equipment to be provided
A	B	C	D	E
1	Allahabad	2438	150	2288
2	Andhra Pradesh	550	212	338
3	Bombay	2178	486	1692
4	Calcutta	840	88	752
5	Chhattisgarh	395	90	305
6	Delhi	479	6	473
7	Gauhati	442	194	248
8	Gujarat	1078	327	751
9	Himachal Pradesh	135	43	92
10	Jammu & Kashmir	218	86	132
11	Jharkhand	417	28	389
12	Karnataka	1029	200	829
13	Kerala	508	159	349
14	Madhya Pradesh	1274	203	1071
15	Madras	1169	267	902
16	Manipur	38	37	1
17	Meghalaya	36	64	0
18	Orissa	688	141	547
19	Patna	1046	76	970
20	Punjab & Haryana	972	118	854
21	Rajasthan	1239	238	1001
22	Sikkim	21	17	4
23	Telangana	440	129	311
24	Tripura	78	66	12
25	Uttarakhand	184	52	132
	Total	17892	3477	14443

*Total estimated cost for VC equipment for 14443 court rooms is Rs.28.886 crore

Annexure II

Statement referred to in reply of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2041 for 12/12/2024 regarding modernisation of courts. The numbers of cases dealt with (virtual hearings) on video conferencing in High Courts and District Courts are as below:

Number of cases dealt with (virtual hearings) on video conferencing in High Courts and District Courts as on 31 st October 2024				
S. No.	High Court	High Courts	District Courts	Grand Total
1	Allahabad	245882	6060607	6306489
2	Andhra Pradesh	403795	1434743	1838538
3	Bombay	63545	193991	257536
4	Calcutta	159069	91824	250893
5	Chhattisgarh	103987	269275	373262
6	Delhi	322024	5880587	6202611
7	Gauhati – Arunachal Pradesh	2711	8277	10988
8	Gauhati – Assam	266892	471387	738279
9	Gauhati – Mizoram	4100	13268	17368
10	Gauhati - Nagaland	1143	893	2036
11	Gujarat	410580	215153	625733
12	Himachal Pradesh	184635	188666	373301
13	Jammu & Kashmir	261536	539402	800938
14	Jharkhand	222340	696882	919222
15	Karnataka	1256124	162330	1418454
16	Kerala	165926	624823	790749
17	Madhya Pradesh	678660	1016653	1695313
18	Madras	1480662	392067	1872729
19	Manipur	51226	16246	67472
20	Meghalaya	5929	55838	61767
21	Orissa	337746	310089	647835
22	Patna	277502	2778508	3056010
23	Punjab & Haryana	607628	2888346	3495974
24	Rajasthan	242675	217992	460667
25	Sikkim	658	15795	16453
26	Telangana	1153779	194005	1347784
27	Tripura	22360	36238	58598
28	Uttarakhand	88515	47904	136419
	Total	9021629	24821789	33843418