

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

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 31st 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:

SI. 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

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