

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1547
ANSWERED ON 12/02/2026

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

1547. SHRI RYAGA KRISHNAIAH:
SHRI BABUBHAI JESANGBHAI DESAI:
SHRI DEEPAK PRAKASH:
SHRI MADAN RATHORE:

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

- (a) the number of vacancies in Supreme Court, High Courts and subordinate judiciary since December 2025;
- (b) how many judicial appointments were made during this period;
- (c) whether delays were observed in the collegium or appointment process;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) how pendency levels changed following recent appointments; and
- (f) the measures initiated to improve judge-population ratios?

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) to (f): The details of number of vacancies in the Supreme Court, High Courts and Subordinate Judiciary, is as below:

Name of Court	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength	Vacancy
Supreme Court (as on 06.02.2026)	34	33	01
High Court (as on 06.02.2026)	1122	813	309
District and Subordinate Court (as on 05.02.2026)	25,894	21,046	4,848

Appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts is made under Articles 124, 217 and 224 of the Constitution of India and according to the procedure laid down in the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) prepared in 1998 pursuant to the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 (Second Judges case) read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998 (Third Judges case). As per the MoP, the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the Supreme Court vests with the Chief Justice of India, while the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, in consultation with two senior-most puisne Judges of the High Court.

Filling up of the vacancy in the higher Judiciary 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 which are obtained in accordance with the MoP. The recommendations also have to be considered in the light of such other reports as may be available to the Government in respect of the names under consideration. The recommendations of the High Court Collegium, the State Governments and the Government of India are then forwarded to the Supreme Court Collegium (SCC) for advice. Only those persons whose names have been recommended by the SCC are appointed as Judges of the High Courts.

7 Judges were appointed in the Supreme Court and 157 Judges were appointed in various High Courts in the year 2025. 07 Judges have been appropriated in High Courts so far in 2026.

Further, filling up of vacant positions of the judicial officers in District and Subordinate courts is the responsibility of the High Courts and State Governments concerned. As per the Constitutional framework, in exercise of powers conferred under the proviso to Article 309 read with Articles 233 and 234 of the Constitution, the respective State Government, in consultation with the High Court, frames the rules and regulations regarding the appointment and recruitment of Judicial Officers. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order passed in January 2007 in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case, has inter-alia stipulated certain timelines, which are to be followed by the States and the respective High Courts for recruitment of judges in District and Subordinate Courts.

Pendency of cases in courts arise due to several factors which inter alia, include complexity of the facts involved, nature of evidence, co-operation of stakeholders,

viz., bar, investigation agencies, witness and litigants, the availability of physical infrastructure, supporting court staff, etc. besides the shortage of judges. The disposal of cases is within the exclusive domain of the judiciary. However, the Central Government is committed for speedy disposal of cases and reducing pendency as mandated under Article 21 of the Constitution and has taken several initiatives to provide an ecosystem for faster disposal of cases by the judiciary.
