

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 4056
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 24th MARCH, 2023**

Expenses on Litigations

4056. SHRI RAJ KUMAR CHAHAR:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the prohibitive cost being borne by litigants of Western Uttar Pradesh in pursuing their litigation at Allahabad and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to promote e-filing and hearing through video conferencing in the High Courts to save the travelling and expenses of litigation;
- (c) whether any communications have been sent to the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court for promoting e-filing and virtual hearing of the cases and if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government is aware of the global trend of hearing through video conferencing and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) : So far as, Court fees are concerned, the same is equal for all litigants approaching a court. However, transportation and other logistic expenses are additional costs that are borne by the litigants, who are based outside the cities, wherein the courts are located.

(b) : Under eCourts Mission Mode Project Phase -II, Government has started various e-initiatives including eFiling and video conferencing to facilitate easy access to justice and thus, reducing expenses of litigation as well as travelling time.

New e-filing system (version 3.0) has been rolled out for the electronic filing of legal papers with upgraded features. In the new version, new tab is provided which allows Advocates and litigants to record their oath with in-system video recording while uploading documents. The new version provides new dashboard including the options of my partners, Case Filing, Vakalatnama, pleading, e-payments, applications and portfolio. Help section provided in the new version provides tutorial videos, FAQ and user manual.

Government has released Rs.119.29 crores for installation of Video Conferencing equipment. VC facilities have also been enabled between 3240 court complexes and corresponding 1272 jails. Funds for 2506 VC cabins and VC equipment for 14,443 courtrooms have also been released. 1500 VC licenses have been procured to promote virtual hearings. A sum of Rs. 7.60 crore has been released for procurement of 1732 Document Visualizers.

As part of IEC campaign several initiatives have been taken to educate the Judicial Officers, lawyers and public about the facilities available under eCourts Project, such as

- **eCommittee Website**

Launched exclusively for the e-Committee and linked to the website of the DoJ for dissemination of information relating to eCourts Project amongst all stakeholders and to enable High Courts to upload their achievements and best practices.

- **Awareness through social media platforms like YouTube, twitter, facebook, Kooh, Instagram**

Under the title 'eCourts Services' for video tutorials on eFiling, 12 help videos in 7 regional languages have been uploaded apart from Hindi and

English and circulated for advocates as part of awareness, through eFiling portal help desk and also on social media through eCommittee YouTube channel.

- **Awareness and familiarization of e-filing**

Various webinars were held for different High Courts on eFiling. Manual and Brochure on eFiling made available on eFiling Portal.

- **eCommittee Training at National and State level**

Training and awareness programmes on the ICT have been conducted covering nearly 5,13,080 stakeholders including Judges of States, Courts staff and Advocates. 25 Master Trainers have been trained in each High Court who in turn has already trained 5409 Master Trainers across the country. These, 5409 Master Trainers have in turn imparted training programme on eCourts Services and e-filing in each district of the country for advocates in their regional languages and also identified Master Trainer Advocates.

(c) and (d) : Yes Sir, vide DO letter dated 09.03.2023, Hon'ble Minister of Law & Justice, Shri Kiren Rijiju has written to Chief Justices of all High Courts including Chief Justice of Allahabad emphasising the role of virtual hearings and saturation of eSewa Kendras in all court complexes for providing these services.

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. Through video conferencing the District & Subordinate courts heard 1,84,95,235 cases while the High Courts heard 77,67,596 cases (totalling 2.62 cr) till 31.01.2023. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India held 4,02,937 hearings through video conferencing till 31.01.2023.
