

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

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LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 2531

TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 4<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2021

Delay in Judicial Verdict

†2531. SHRI RAMESH CHANDER KAUSHIK:  
SHRI DILIP SAIKIA:

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

- (a) whether due to corona pandemic judicial verdicts are getting inordinately delayed in the country due to which the undertrials are not getting proper justice;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to tackle this situation; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) to (d) Disposal of pending cases in courts is within the domain of the judiciary. No time frame has been prescribed for disposal of various kinds of cases by the respective courts. Government has no role in disposal of cases in courts. The Central Government is fully committed to speedy disposal of cases in accordance with Article 21 of the Constitution and reducing pendency. After announcement of nation-wide lockdown, directions have been issued from time to time by the respective High Courts to the Subordinate Courts under their administrative jurisdiction for hearing of urgent civil and criminal matters in virtual or physical mode depending on local conditions. Most High Courts have further

advised district and subordinate courts that where there is no shut down/lockdown, they may, as far as possible, resume normal functioning by virtual/physical mode and take up all kind of cases, including those pertaining to under-trial prisoners.

In wake of threat of spreading of Covid-19 virus, particularly, in overcrowded prisons, the State Governments and UT Administrations have constituted High Powered Committees (HPCs) comprising of Executive Chairman of the State Legal Services Authority (SLSA), the Principal Secretary (Home/Prison), Director General of Prison(s). National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has requested all State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) to effectively render assistance to High Powered Committees for identification and facilitation in releasing Undertrial Prisoners/Convicts either on interim bail or on parole. During lockdown from March to May 2020, a total number of 58,797 undertrial prisoners and 20,972 convicts were released on interim bail/parole on recommendations of HPC or through efforts of Legal Services Authorities.

NALSA through SLSAs has also directed all District Legal Services Committees (DLSAs) to convene Undertrial Review Committee (UTRC) Meetings on weekly/monthly basis as per NALSA protocol. During 2020-21, 10,961 UTRC meetings were held and 13,983 inmates were released pursuant to UTRCs recommendations. Further, more than 2,515 meetings of UTRCs were held in across the country during May, 2021 to 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021. 20,593 bail applications were filed on the recommendations of UTRCs and consequently, 9,237 prisoners were released.

NALSA has issued a Protocol for Early Access to Justice at Pre-Arrest, Arrest and Remand Stage for providing assistance to suspects and accused at Pre-Arrest, Arrest and Remand Stage. As per data compiled by NALSA during

January 2020 to March 2021, legal assistance was provided to 5,840 suspects/accused at pre-arrest stage pursuant to which 1,871 suspects/accused were not arrested by the police. Further, assistance was provided to 6,510 arrestees at police stations before producing them in courts. Moreover, during the same period, 1,04,015 persons were provided legal assistance at remand stage and 46,735 bail applications were filed wherein bail was granted in 25,894 such matters.

NALSA have also directed to identify all such convicts who have become eligible or are on the verge of becoming eligible for getting remission for early release and to provide necessary legal assistance to them. 92,593 prisoners including 70,382 Under Trial Prisoners have been released after emergence of the second wave of Covid-19.

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