

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No 3429

TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 17TH DECEMBER, 2021

Scheme for Development of Judicial Infrastructure

3429. SHRI KHAGEN MURMU:

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

- (a) whether the Government agrees with the view that a sound judiciary is essential for enforcing laws and creating trust in the economy, and also that the issues of pendency, delays and backlogs can be tackled to a large extent by strengthening the physical, digital, and human infrastructure of the courts;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the initiatives have been taken/being taken by the Government to review the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary and remove roadblocks delaying the upgrade of judicial infrastructure;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): Disposal of cases pending in various courts is within the domain of judiciary. Timely disposal of cases in courts depends on several factors which, inter-alia, include availability of adequate number of judges and judicial officers, supporting court staff and physical infrastructure, complexity of facts

involved, nature of evidence, co-operation of stake holders viz. bar, investigation agencies, witnesses and litigants and proper application of rules and procedures. There are several factors which may lead to delay in disposal of cases. These, *inter-alia*, include vacancies of judges, frequent adjournments and lack of adequate arrangement to monitor, track and bunch cases for hearing. The Central Government is fully committed to speedy disposal of cases in accordance with Article 21 of the Constitution and reducing pendency. The Government has taken several initiatives to provide an ecosystem for faster disposal of cases by the judiciary. National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms was set up in August, 2011 with the twin objectives of increasing access by reducing delays and arrears in the system and enhancing accountability through structural changes and by setting performance standards and capacities. The Mission has been pursuing a co-ordinated approach for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial administration, which, *inter-alia*, involves better infrastructure for courts including computerization, increase in strength of subordinate judiciary, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation, re-engineering of court procedure for quick disposal of cases and emphasis on human resource development.

(c) to (e): The primary responsibility of development of Infrastructure facilities for judiciary rests with the State Governments. To augment the resources of the State Governments, the Union Government has been implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Development of

Infrastructure Facilities in district and subordinate courts by providing financial assistance to State Governments / UTs in the prescribed fund sharing pattern. The Scheme is being implemented since 1993-94. Till date the Central Government has sanctioned Rs. 8709.77 crore under the Scheme to States/UTs. The scheme has been extended from time to time. Under this scheme funds are released by the Central Government for construction of court buildings and residential accommodations for Judicial Officers of District and Subordinate Judiciary. The Government has extended the above scheme for a further period of five years from 01.04.2021 to 31.03.2026, with a total budgetary outlay of Rs.9000 crores, including Central share of Rs.5307 crores. The scheme components have been expanded, to also cover the construction of toilets, digital computer rooms and Lawyers' Hall in the district and subordinate courts and Rs. 47.00 crore have been approved for the construction of Toilet complexes in the District and Subordinate Courts.

As per information made available by the High Courts, 20,595 Court Halls and 18,078 Residential Units are available in the District and Subordinate Courts as on 01.12.2021. Moreover, 2846 Court Halls and 1,775 Residential Units are under construction.

To improve the digital infrastructure of the courts, the Government is also implementing the eCourts Mission Mode Project. Government has been implementing the e-Courts Mission Mode Project throughout the country for Information and Communication Technology enablement of district and

subordinate courts. Number of computerized District & Subordinate courts has increased to 18,735 as on 01.07.2021. WAN connectivity has been provided to 98.7% of court complexes. New and user-friendly version of Case Information Software has been developed and deployed at all the computerized District and Subordinate Courts. All stakeholders including Judicial Officers can access information relating to judicial proceedings/decisions of computerized District & Subordinate Courts and High Courts on the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG). As on 01.11.2021, litigants can access case status of over 19.56 crore cases and 15.72 crore order/judgements pertaining to these courts. eCourts services such as details of case registration, cause list, case status, daily orders & final judgments are available to litigants and advocates through eCourts web portal, Judicial Service Centres (JSC) in all computerized courts, eCourts Mobile App, email service, SMS push & pull services. Video Conferencing facility has been enabled between 3240 court complexes and 1272 corresponding jails. With a view to handle the COVID- 19 challenges better and to make the transition to virtual hearings smoother, funds have been provided for setting up 235 e-Sewa Kendras at court complexes to facilitate lawyers and litigants needing assistance ranging from case status, getting judgements/orders, court/case related information and efilings facilities. Rs. 5.01 crores has been allocated for providing equipment in Video Conferencing cabins in various court complexes to facilitate virtual hearings. Rs. 12.12 crores has been allocated for 1732 Help desk counters for efilings in various court complexes.

Fifteen Virtual Courts have been set up in 11 States/UTs viz. Delhi (2), Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala (2), Maharashtra (2), Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir (2), Uttar Pradesh and Odisha to try traffic offences. As on 01.11.2021, these courts have handled more than 99 lakh cases and realised more than Rs.193.15 crore in fines.

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. Since Covid lockdown started, the District courts heard 1,01,77,289 cases while the High Court heard 55,24,021 cases (totalling to 1.57 crore) till 31.10.2021 using video conferencing only. The Supreme Court had 1,50,692 hearings since the lockdown period upto 29.10.2021.
