

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

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †3147  
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 13TH DECEMBER, 2024**

**PENDING CASES IN VARIOUS COURTS**

**†3147. SHRI RAMASHANKAR RAJBHAR:**

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

- (a) whether the number of courts as well as the judges are sufficient to dispose of the pending cases in various courts of the country;**
- (b) if not, the details thereof along with the progress made in setting up these courts, State/UT-wise;**
- (c) whether the Government has received any suggestion from the States and social organizations in this regard; and**
- (d) if so, the the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard?**

**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):** The disposal of cases in courts is contingent upon several factors which, inter-alia, include availability of physical infrastructure and supporting court staff, 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. Other factors that lead to the delay in the disposal of cases include lack of prescribed timeframe by respective courts for disposal of various kinds of cases, frequent adjournments and lack of adequate arrangement to monitor, track and bunch cases for hearing. The setting up of more

courts at District and Subordinate level, is within the domain of the concerned High Court and respective State Government.

In the case of High Court, Benches are established in accordance with the recommendations made by the Jaswant Singh Commission and judgment pronounced by the Apex Court in W.P.(C) No.379 of 2000 and after due consideration of proposal from the State Government. In the case of Supreme Court of India, Article 130 of the Constitution of India provides that the Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in such other place or places as the Chief Justice of India may, with the approval of the President, from time to time, appoint. The Eleventh Law Commission in its 125<sup>th</sup> Report titled “The Supreme Court – A Fresh Look”, submitted in 1988, reiterated the recommendations made by Tenth Law Commission in its 95<sup>th</sup> Report for splitting the Supreme Court into two namely (i) Constitutional Court at Delhi and (ii) Court of Appeal or Federal Court sitting in North, South, East, West and Central India. The Eighteenth Law Commission in its 229<sup>th</sup> Report had also suggested that a Constitutional Bench be set up at Delhi and four Cassation Benches be set up in the Northern region at Delhi, Southern region at Chennai/Hyderabad, Eastern region at Kolkata and Western region at Mumbai. The matter was referred to the Chief Justice of India, who informed that after consideration of the matter, the Full Court in its meeting held on 18th February, 2010, found no justification for setting up of Benches of the Supreme Court outside Delhi. In Writ Petition WP(C) No. 36/2016 on establishment of National Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court vide its judgment dated 13.07.2016 deemed it proper to refer the aforementioned issue to the Constitutional Bench for authoritative pronouncement. **The matter is sub-judice in the Supreme Court.**

The Sanctioned Strength of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts has increased from 19,518 in 2014 to 25,741 as on 09.12.2024 by the State Governments and concerned High Courts. During the period from 01.05.2014 to 09.12.2024 with the approval of the respective State Governments,

concerned High Courts and the Chief Justice of India, the Central Government has increased the Judge strength of the High Courts from 906 to 1122 i.e. by 216 posts. The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2019 came into force w.e.f. 09.08.2019 by which the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 was amended to increase the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court of India from 30 to 33 (excluding CJI).

**(c) & (d):** Since May 2014, a separate High Court for the State of Andhra Pradesh has been constituted and a Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri has been established on the proposal of the respective State Governments and concerned High Courts. Further, the Government has taken several initiatives to provide an ecosystem for faster reduction of pendency of cases by the judiciary:

- i.** The 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 coordinated approach for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial administration, which, inter-alia, involves better infrastructure for courts including computerization, increase in sanctioned strength of District and Subordinate Courts, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation and re-engineering of court procedure for quick disposal of cases and emphasis on human resource development.
- ii.** Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of Judicial Infrastructure, funds are being released to States/UTs for construction of court halls, residential quarters for judicial officers, lawyers' halls, toilet complexes and digital computer rooms that ease the life of various stakeholders including the litigants, thereby aiding justice delivery. As on date, Rs. 11571.57 crores have been released since the inception of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for the Judiciary in 1993-94.

The number of court halls has increased from 15,818 as on 30.06.2014 to 23,590 as on 31.10.2024, and number of residential units has increased from 10,211 as on 30.06.2014 to 21,076 as on 31.10.2024, under this scheme.

**iii.** Further under the Phase I & II of the e-Courts Mission Mode Project, information and communication technology (ICT) had been leveraged for IT enablement of District and Subordinate Courts. 18,735 District and Subordinate Courts were computerized till 2023. WAN connectivity has been provided to 99.5% of court complexes. Video conferencing facility has been enabled between 3,240 court complexes and 1,272 corresponding jails. As on 30.09.2024, 1375 eSewa Kendras in District Courts and 28 eSewa Kendras in High Courts have been made functional to bridge the digital divide by providing citizen centric services to lawyers and litigants. 28 virtual courts have been set up in 21 States/UTs. As on 30.09.2024, these courts have handled more than 5.82 crore cases and realized more than Rs. 634.74 crores in fines. The Cabinet on 13.09.2023 has approved eCourts Phase-III at an outlay of Rs.7,210 crore. Taking the gains of Phase-I and Phase-II to the next level, the e-Courts Phase-III aims to usher in a regime of enhanced ease of justice by moving towards digital, online and paperless courts. It intends to incorporate latest technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Block Chain, etc. to make justice delivery progressively more robust, easy and accessible to all the stakeholders.

**iv.** The Government has been regularly filling up vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts. From 01.05.2014 to 21.11.2024, 64 Judges were appointed in the Supreme Court. 999 new Judges were appointed and 767 Additional Judges were made permanent in the High Courts during the same period. The sanctioned strength of Judges of the High Courts has been increased from 906 in May, 2014 to 1122 till now. The sanctioned and working strength of judicial officers in District and Subordinate Courts has increased as under:

As on	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength
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31.12.2013	19,518	15,115
09.12.2024	25,741	20,479

However, filling up of vacancies in District and Subordinate judiciary falls within the domain of the State Governments and High Courts concerned.

- v. In pursuance of a Resolution passed in Chief Justices' Conference held in April, 2015, Arrears Committees have been set up in all 25 High Courts to clear cases pending for more than five years. Arrears Committees have been set up under District Courts as well.
- vi. Under the aegis of the Fourteenth Finance Commission, the Fast Track Courts have been established for dealing with cases of heinous crimes; cases involving senior citizens, women, children, etc. As on 30.09.2024, 862 Fast Track Courts are functional for handling cases of heinous crimes, crimes against women and children, etc. To fast-track criminal cases involving elected MPs / MLAs, ten (10) Special Courts are functional in nine (9) States/UTs. Further, the Central Government has approved a Scheme for setting up Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country for the expeditious disposal of pending cases of Rape and POCSO Act. As on 30.09.2024, 750 FTSCs including 408 exclusive POCSO (ePOCSO) Courts are functional in 30 States/UTs across the country which have disposed of more than 2,81,000 cases.
- vii. With a view to reduce pendency and unclogging of the courts, the Government has amended various laws like the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Act, 2018, the Commercial Courts (Amendment) Act, 2018, the Specific Relief (Amendment) Act, 2018, the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2019 and the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Act, 2018.
- viii. Alternate Dispute Resolution methods have been promoted whole heartedly. Accordingly, the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 was amended in August, 2018 making Pre-institution Mediation and Settlement (PIMS) mandatory in case of commercial disputes. Amendment to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 has been made by the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act 2015 for expediting the speedy resolution of disputes by prescribing timelines.

Under the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, there is provision for case management hearing which provides for an efficient, effective and purposeful judicial management of a case so as to achieve a timely and qualitative resolution of a dispute. It assists in early identification of disputed issues of fact and law, establishment of procedural calendar for the life of the case and the exploration of possibilities of the resolution of the dispute.

Another novel feature introduced for the commercial courts is the system of color banding which limits the number of adjournments that can be granted in any commercial matter to three and alerts the judges about listing of the cases in accordance with their stage of pendency.

- ix.** Lok Adalat is an important Alternative Disputes Resolution Mechanism available to common people. It is a forum where the disputes/ cases pending in the court of law or at pre-litigation stage are settled/ compromised amicably. Under the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987, an award made by a Lok Adalat is deemed to be a decree of a civil court and is final and binding on all parties and no appeal lies against thereto before any court. Lok Adalat is not a permanent establishment. National Lok Adalats are organized simultaneously in all Taluks, Districts and High Courts on a pre-fixed date.

The details of the cases disposed of in National Lok Adalats during the last four years are as under: -

<b>Years</b>	<b>Pre-litigation Cases</b>	<b>Pending Cases</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
2021	72,06,294	55,81,743	1,27,88,037
2022	3,10,15,215	1,09,10,795	4,19,26,010
2023	7,10,32,980	1,43,09,237	8,53,42,217
2024 (upto 09.11.24)	6,46,35,285	1,26,34,580	7,72,69,865
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,38,89,774</b>	<b>4,34,36,355</b>	<b>21,73,26,129</b>

- x.** The Government launched the Tele-Law programme in 2017, which provides an effective and reliable e-interface platform connecting the needy and disadvantaged sections seeking legal advice and consultation with panel lawyers via video conferencing, telephone and chat facilities available at the Common Service Centres (CSCs) situated in Gram Panchayats and through

## Tele-Law mobile App.

### \*Percentage Wise break-up of Tele – Law Data

Category	Cases Registered	% Wise Break Up	Advice Enabled	% Wise Break Up
<b>Gender Wise</b>				
Female	4014611	39.12	3963499	39.06
Male	6247980	60.88	6183286	60.94
<b>Caste Category Wise</b>				
General	2387060	23.26	2352649	23.19
OBC	3252495	31.69	3213067	31.67
SC	3246025	31.63	3215657	31.68
ST	1377011	13.42	1366312	13.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>10262591</b>		<b>10146785</b>	

\*Data as on 31-10-2024.

- xi.** Efforts have been made to institutionalize pro bono culture and pro bono lawyering in the country. A technological framework has been put in place where advocates volunteering to give their time and services for pro bono work can register as Pro Bono Advocates on Nyaya Bandhu (Android & iOS and Apps). Nyaya Bandhu Services are also available on UMANG Platform. Pro Bono Panel of advocates has been initiated in 23 High Courts at the State level. Pro Bono Clubs have been started in 109 Laws Schools to instill Pro Bono culture in budding lawyers.