

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4345
ANSWERED ON – 20/12/2024

FAMILY COURTS

**4345. Shri Navaskani K:
Shri Selvam G:
Shri C N Annadurai:**

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

- (a) the current number of family courts established across the country, State and district-wise;
- (b) whether there are any plans to increase the number of family courts in regions with a high volume of family cases to improve accessibility and reduce travel times for litigants;
- (c) whether all the family courts are equipped with adequate infrastructure and resources to handle sensitive family matters, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the steps taken to ensure the appointment of trained counsellors, mediators, and psychologists in the family courts;
- (e) the steps being taken to improve the infrastructure and facilities in Family Courts to create a more conducive environment for litigants; and
- (f) the main challenges faced by family courts in delivering timely justice and the measures the Ministry is implementing to enhance their efficiency?

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): The State-wise details of functional family courts in the country, as on 31.10.2024, are at **Annexure**. The District-wise details are not centrally maintained.
- (b) & (c): The Family Courts Act, 1984 provides for establishment of family courts by the State Governments in consultation with their respective High Courts to promote conciliation and secure speedy settlement of disputes relating to marriage, family affairs and for matters connected therewith. Under Section 3(1) (a) of the said Act, it is mandatory for the State Governments to set up a family court for every area in the State comprising a city or a town whose population exceeds one million. In other areas of the States, the family courts may also be set up if the State Governments deem it necessary. 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. The Central Government is fully committed to speedy disposal of cases in accordance with Article 21 of the Constitution and reducing pendency.

(d): As per Section 6 of the aforesaid Act, it is the responsibility of the State/UT Governments, in consultation with their respective High Court, to determine the number and categories of counsellors, officers, and other employees required to assist a Family Court in discharge of its functions and provide the Family Court with such counsellors, officers and other employees as it may think fit.

(e): The Government has taken several initiatives to provide an ecosystem for faster disposal of cases by the judiciary. 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 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 procedures for quick disposal of cases and emphasis on human resource development. The Family Courts are also covered by the ambit of these initiatives. The major initiatives are given below:

i.Improving infrastructure for Judicial Officers of District and Subordinate Courts: The Government has been implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for development of infrastructure facilities for the judiciary since 1993-94, to augment the resources of the State Governments for the construction of judicial infrastructure in the district and the subordinate courts. There are five components covered under the scheme, viz., court hall, residential units, lawyers' halls, toilet complexes and digital computer rooms for the convenience of lawyers and litigants. While the development of infrastructure in district courts is primarily the responsibility of the State/UT Governments, the Central Government supplements the resources of the State/UT Governments through the said Scheme. As of now, a central share of Rs. 11,583.07 crores has been released since the inception of the scheme in 1993-94. 21,940 court halls and 19,660 residential units are available in the district and subordinate courts under the scheme as on date. Another 3,164 Court Halls and 2,619 residential units are currently under construction.

ii.Leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for improved justice delivery:

The Department of Justice, Government of India in close coordination with the eCommittee, Supreme Court of India has been implementing the eCourts Mission Mode Project throughout the country for Information and Communication Technology enablement of the Indian Judiciary. The number of computerized District & Subordinate courts has increased to 18,735 till 2023. Wide Area Network (WAN) connectivity has been provided to 99.5% 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 date, the litigants can access case information and 28.05 crore orders/judgments pertaining to these courts. The eCourts services such as details of case registration, cause list, case status, daily orders and final judgments are available to litigants and advocates through eCourts web portal, Judicial Service Centres (JSC) in all computerized courts, e-Courts Mobile App, email service, SMS push & pull

services. Rs.12.12 crore has been allocated for 1,732 Help desk counters for e-filing in various court complexes.

With a view to handling the COVID-19 challenges better and to make the transition to virtual hearings smoother, 1394 e-Sewa Kendras (Facilitation centres) in District & Subordinate courts and 36 e-Sewa Kendra (Facilitation centres) in High courts had been made functional to facilitate citizen centric services to lawyers and litigants ranging from case status, getting judgments/orders, court/case related information, e-filing facilities, etc. 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 2,48,21,789 cases while the High Courts heard 90,21,629 cases (totaling more than 3.38 crore) using video conferencing till 31.10.2024. Rs.28.886 crore has been allocated for providing equipment in video conferencing cabins in various court complexes to facilitate virtual hearings. Video Conferencing facility has been enabled between 3,240 court complexes and 1,272 corresponding jails.

iii. Filling up of vacant positions in District and Subordinate Courts: Sanctioned and working strengths of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts have increased as under:

As on	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength
31.12.2013	19,518	15,115
16.12.2024	25,741	20,479

iv. Reduction in Pendency through / follow up by Arrears Committees: In pursuance of Resolution passed in Chief Justices' Conference held in April, 2015, Arrears Committees have been set up in High Courts to clear cases pending for more than five years. Arrears Committees have been set up under District Courts too. Arrears Committee has been constituted in the Supreme Court to formulate steps to reduce pendency of cases in High Courts and District Courts. In the past, Minister of Law & Justice has taken up the matter with Chief Justices of High Courts and Chief Ministers drawing their attention to cases pending for more than five years and to take up pendency reduction campaign.

(f): In the Family Courts, delays in proceedings exacerbate tensions and prolong emotional stress, hindering timely dispute resolution. Enforcing decisions on child custody, visitation rights, and financial support remains challenging despite court rulings, leading to continued conflict and frustration. Additionally, the requirement for travel to another city for court appearances imposes significant logistical and financial burdens, especially for families already under strain. It is also important to note that counsellors play a vital role in providing advice and guidance, but their effectiveness depends on proper training and capacity building. Improving Family Courts necessitates providing sufficient infrastructure and specialized judges with adequate training. Sensitizing judges, court staff, and stakeholders, along with gender sensitivity training, is imperative to ensure fair treatment, reduce bias, and protect the rights of all parties, particularly women. Appointment of lady judges and counsellors could further enhance the system's effectiveness.

The Government has brought these issues to the attention of the States and High Courts by addressing communications at the level of Minister of Law and Justice to the Chief Ministers of States/UTs and the Chief Justices of all High Courts. The last such communication on the subject was sent on 15.07.2023.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4345 FOR ANSWER ON 20.12.2024 REGARDING 'FAMILY COURTS'.**State/UT wise details of functional Family Courts (As on 31.10.2024)**

Sl.No	Name of the State/UT	Functional Family Court
1	Andhra Pradesh	14
2	Andaman Nicobar	1
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0
4	Assam	7
5	Bihar	39
6	Chandigarh	0
7	Chhattisgarh	28
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	0
9	Delhi	30
10	Goa	0
11	Gujarat	49
12	Haryana	30
13	Himachal Pradesh	3
14	Jammu & Kashmir	4
15	Jharkhand	32
16	Karnataka	41
17	Kerala	37
18	Ladakh	0
19	Lakshadweep	0
20	Madhya Pradesh	64
21	Maharashtra	51
22	Manipur	4
23	Meghalaya	0
24	Mizoram	0
25	Nagaland	2
26	Odisha	30
27	Puducherry	2
28	Punjab	33
29	Rajasthan	50
30	Sikkim	6
31	Tamil Nadu	40
32	Telangana	23
33	Tripura	9
34	Uttar Pradesh	189
35	Uttarakhand	27
36	West Bengal	5
	TOTAL	850