

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

LOK SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †917
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 29TH NOVEMBER, 2024**

VACANCIES OF JUDGES

**†917. SHRI IMRAN MASOOD:
SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH:
SHRI K GOPINATH:
SHRI SUDHAKAR SINGH:
DR. M K VISHNU PRASAD:**

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the current status of judicial vacancies in various courts across the country and the impact on the functioning of the judiciary;**
- (b) the total number of vacancies for judges in district courts and high courts, State-wise including district courts and subordinate courts in Tamil Nadu;**
- (c) whether the Government has evaluated the impact of the vacancies on a large number of pending cases in the country, if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) the steps taken to expedite the appointment of judges to fill these vacancies, including any proposed reforms in the appointment process indicating the number of vacancies of judges filled in various courts during the last five years, State-wise; and**
- (e) whether the Government has plans to increase the strength of judges in line with the growing population of each State and case load, and what criteria are being used to determine this need?**

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) to (c): The status of sanctioned strength, working strength and vacancies of Judges across the country as on 21.11.2024, is as under:

| S. No. | Name of Court | Sanctioned Strength | Vacancy |
|---------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Supreme Court | 34 | 02 |
| 2 | High Courts | 1122 | 364 |
| 3 | District and Subordinate Courts | 25725 | 5245 |

Further, the details of sanctioned strength and vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts and District and Subordinate Courts(State/UT wise) including in the State of Tamil Nadu are at *Annexure-I* and *Annexure-II* respectively.

The statement showing posts of Judges filled up during the last five years in the Supreme Court is as under:

| S. No. | Name of the Court | Year | | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|----------------------------|
| | | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 (as on 21.11.2024) |
| 1 | Supreme Court | 10 | -- | 09 | 03 | 14 | 3 |

Further, a statement in regard to appointment of Judges during the past five years in various High Courts is at *Annexure-III*. A statement showing sanctioned strength and vacancies over the last five years in District and Subordinate Courts, State wise is at *Annexure-IV*.

The Government is aware of the impact of the vacancies on the status of pendency in the country. However, the vacancy of judges is not the sole reason, affecting the disposal of cases in courts. The disposal of cases in courts is also affected by several other 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 delay in 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.

(d) to (e): Filling up of vacant positions in the case of District and Subordinate courts is the responsibility of the High Courts and State Governments concerned. As per the Constitutional framework, in exercise of powers conferred under proviso to Article 309 read with Articles 233 and 234 of the Constitution, the respective State Government in consultation with the High Court frames the rules and regulations regarding the appointment and recruitment of Judicial Officers in the respective State Judicial Service. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order passed in January 2007 in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case, has inter-alia, stipulated certain timelines, which are to be followed by the States and the respective High Courts for recruitment of judges in District and Subordinate Courts.

Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are appointed under Article 124, 217 and 224 of the Constitution of India and according to the procedure laid down in

the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) prepared in 1998 pursuant to the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 (Second Judges case) read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998 (Third Judges case).

As per the MoP, the responsibility for initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, in consultation with two senior-most puisne Judges of the High Court. For appointments to the High Courts, under the MOP, the views of concerned State Government are also obtained. The recommendations also have to be considered in the light of such other reports as may be available to the Government in respect of the names under consideration. The recommendations of the High Court Collegium, the State Governments and the Government of India are then forwarded to the Supreme Court Collegium (SCC) for advice. Only those persons are appointed as Judges of High Courts, whose names have been recommended by the SCC.

Appointment of the Judges of the Constitutional Courts is a continuous, integrated and collaborative process between the Executive and the Judiciary. It requires consultation and approval from various constitutional authorities both at state and central level. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies of Judges in High Courts do keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges and also due to increase in the strength of Judges.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) TO (C) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †917 FOR ANSWER ON 29.11.2024 REGARDING 'VACANCIES OF JUDGES'.

Vacant Positions of Judges in the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts as on 21.11.2024

| | | Sanctioned strength | | | Working strength | | | Vacancies | | |
|-----------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| A. | Supreme Court | 34 | | | 32 | | | 2 | | |
| B. | High Court | Pmt. | Addl | Total | Pmt. | Addl | Total | Pmt. | Addl | Total |
| 1 | Allahabad | 119 | 41 | 160 | 81 | 0 | 81 | 38 | 41 | 79 |
| 2 | Andhra Pradesh | 28 | 9 | 37 | 22 | 7 | 29 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 3 | Bombay | 71 | 23 | 94 | 53 | 15 | 68 | 18 | 8 | 26 |
| 4 | Calcutta | 54 | 18 | 72 | 33 | 10 | 43 | 21 | 8 | 29 |
| 5 | Chhattisgarh | 17 | 5 | 22 | 9 | 7 | 16 | 8 | -2 | 6 |
| 6 | Delhi | 45 | 15 | 60 | 34 | 2 | 36 | 11 | 13 | 24 |
| 7 | Guwahati | 22 | 8 | 30 | 19 | 5 | 24 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| 8 | Gujarat | 39 | 13 | 52 | 32 | 0 | 32 | 7 | 13 | 20 |
| 9 | Himachal Pradesh | 13 | 4 | 17 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 10 | Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh | 19 | 6 | 25 | 12 | 3 | 15 | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| 11 | Jharkhand | 20 | 5 | 25 | 18 | 0 | 18 | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| 12 | Karnataka | 47 | 15 | 62 | 44 | 6 | 50 | 3 | 9 | 12 |
| 13 | Kerala | 35 | 12 | 47 | 30 | 15 | 45 | 5 | -3 | 2 |
| 14 | Madhya Pradesh | 40 | 13 | 53 | 35 | 0 | 35 | 5 | 13 | 18 |
| 15 | Madras | 56 | 19 | 75 | 56 | 11 | 67 | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| 16 | Manipur | 4 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 17 | Meghalaya | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 | Orissa | 24 | 9 | 33 | 19 | 0 | 19 | 5 | 9 | 14 |
| 19 | Patna | 40 | 13 | 53 | 35 | 0 | 35 | 5 | 13 | 18 |
| 20 | Punjab & Haryana | 64 | 21 | 85 | 49 | 4 | 53 | 15 | 17 | 32 |
| 21 | Rajasthan | 38 | 12 | 50 | 32 | 0 | 32 | 6 | 12 | 18 |
| 22 | Sikkim | 3 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 23 | Telangana | 32 | 10 | 42 | 24 | 3 | 27 | 8 | 7 | 15 |
| 24 | Tripura | 4 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 25 | Uttarakhand | 9 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| | Total | 846 | 276 | 1122 | 668 | 90 | 758 | 178 | 186 | 364 |

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) TO (C) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †917 FOR ANSWER ON 29.11.2024 REGARDING 'VACANCIES OF JUDGES'.

Vacant Positions of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts as on 21.11.2024

| Sl. No. | States & UTs | Sanctioned Strength | Working Strength | Vacancy |
|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 618 | 544 | 74 |
| 2. | Arunachal Pradesh | 44 | 33 | 11 |
| 3. | Assam | 485 | 461 | 24 |
| 4. | Bihar | 2019 | 1536 | 483 |
| 5. | Chandigarh | 30 | 30 | 0 |
| 6. | Chhattisgarh | 663 | 465 | 198 |
| 7. | D & N Haveli and Daman & Diu | 7 | 6 | 1 |
| 8. | Delhi | 897 | 803 | 94 |
| 9. | Goa | 50 | 40 | 10 |
| 10. | Gujarat | 1720 | 1185 | 535 |
| 11. | Haryana | 773 | 555 | 218 |
| 12. | Himachal Pradesh | 179 | 160 | 19 |
| 13. | Jammu and Kashmir | 322 | 277 | 45 |
| 14. | Jharkhand | 705 | 506 | 199 |
| 15. | Karnataka | 1375 | 1157 | 218 |
| 16. | Kerala | 610 | 534 | 76 |
| 17. | Ladakh | 17 | 11 | 6 |
| 18. | Lakshadweep | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| 19. | Madhya Pradesh | 2028 | 1692 | 336 |
| 20. | Maharashtra | 2190 | 1940 | 250 |
| 21. | Manipur | 62 | 49 | 13 |
| 22. | Meghalaya | 99 | 56 | 43 |
| 23. | Mizoram | 74 | 45 | 29 |
| 24. | Nagaland | 34 | 24 | 10 |
| 25. | Odisha | 1041 | 842 | 199 |
| 26. | Puducherry | 36 | 26 | 10 |
| 27. | Punjab | 804 | 723 | 81 |
| 28. | Rajasthan | 1641 | 1314 | 327 |
| 29. | Sikkim | 35 | 23 | 12 |
| 30. | Tamil Nadu | 1369 | 1023 | 346 |
| 31. | Telangana | 560 | 445 | 115 |
| 32. | Tripura | 133 | 109 | 24 |
| 33. | Uttar Pradesh | 3698 | 2717 | 981 |
| 34. | Uttarakhand | 298 | 270 | 28 |
| 35. | Andaman and Nicobar* | 0 | -12 | 230 |
| 36. | West Bengal* | 1105 | 863 | |
| TOTAL | | 25725 | 20480 | 5245 |

Source: - MIS portal of Department of Justice.

*Combined vacancy of UT Andaman & Nicobar Island and State of WB as shown against State of West Bengal

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Number of appointments made in all the High Courts since 01.01.2019 till 21.11.2024

| S. No. | High Court | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| 1 | Allahabad | 10 | 4 | 17 | 13 | 9 | 0 |
| 2 | Andhra Pradesh | 2 | 7 | 2 | 14 | 6 | 3 |
| 3 | Bombay | 11 | 4 | 6 | 19 | 9 | 5 |
| 4 | Calcutta | 6 | 1 | 8 | 16 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | Chhattisgarh | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | Delhi | 4 | 0 | 2 | 17 | 5 | 0 |
| 7 | Gauhati | 4 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| 8 | Gujarat | 3 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 8 | 4 |
| 9 | Himachal Pradesh | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| 10 | Jammu& Kashmir and Ladakh | 0 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| 11 | Jharkhand | 2 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 12 | Karnataka | 10 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 0 |
| 13 | Kerala | 1 | 6 | 12 | 1 | 3 | 12 |
| 14 | Madhya Pradesh | 2 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 14 | 0 |
| 15 | Madras | 1 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 13 | 3 |
| 16 | Manipur | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| 17 | Meghalaya | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 18 | Orissa | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 0 |
| 19 | Patna | 4 | 0 | 6 | 11 | 2 | 2 |
| 20 | Punjab & Haryana | 10 | 1 | 6 | 21 | 4 | 0 |
| 21 | Rajasthan | 3 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 0 |
| 22 | Sikkim | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 23 | Telangana | 3 | 1 | 7 | 17 | 3 | 0 |
| 24 | Tripura | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| 25 | Uttarakhand | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| | Total | 81 | 66 | 120 | 165 | 110 | 34 |

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) TO (C) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 917 FOR ANSWER ON 29.11.2024 REGARDING 'VACANCIES OF JUDGES'.

| Sanctioned Strength and Vacancies of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts for last five years | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| Sl.No | Name of the State/UTs | As on 31.12.2018 | | As on 31.12.2019 | | As on 31.12.2020 | | As on 31.12.2021 | | As on 31.12.2022 | | As on 31.12.2023 | |
| | | Sanctioned Strength | Vacancies | Sanctioned Strength | Vacancies | Sanctioned Strength | Vacancies | Sanctioned Strength | Vacancies | Sanctioned Strength | Vacancies | Sanctioned Strength | Vacancies |
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 494 | 49 | 597 | 68 | 607 | 97 | 607 | 116 | 607 | 73 | 618 | 83 |
| 2 | Telangana | 493 | 48 | 413 | 79 | 474 | 96 | 474 | 49 | 560 | 150 | 560 | 115 |
| 3 | Auranchal Pradesh | 30 | 5 | 41 | 14 | 41 | 9 | 41 | 9 | 41 | 8 | 44 | 10 |
| 4 | Assam | 430 | 47 | 441 | 29 | 466 | 54 | 467 | 31 | 485 | 60 | 485 | 46 |
| 5 | Bihar | 1845 | 640 | 1925 | 776 | 1936 | 503 | 1954 | 560 | 2016 | 667 | 2016 | 1550 |
| 6 | Chandigarh | 30 | 0 | 30 | 1 | 30 | 4 | 30 | 0 | 30 | 0 | 30 | 1 |
| 7 | Chattisgarh | 452 | 55 | 468 | 75 | 480 | 93 | 482 | 73 | 527 | 90 | 562 | 139 |
| 8 | D & N Haveli and Daman & Diu | 7 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 7 | 1 |
| 9 | Delhi | 799 | 258 | 799 | 118 | 799 | 151 | 884 | 192 | 884 | 203 | 887 | 89 |
| 10 | Goa | 50 | 8 | 50 | 7 | 50 | 10 | 50 | 10 | 50 | 10 | 50 | 10 |
| 11 | Gujarat | 1506 | 356 | 1521 | 336 | 1521 | 369 | 1523 | 400 | 1582 | 431 | 1720 | 545 |
| 12 | Haryana | 651 | 162 | 772 | 297 | 772 | 279 | 772 | 290 | 772 | 308 | 772 | 208 |
| 13 | Himachal Pradesh | 159 | 10 | 175 | 22 | 175 | 14 | 175 | 15 | 179 | 16 | 179 | 21 |
| 14 | Jammu and Kashmir | 310 | 86 | 290 | 58 | 296 | 41 | 300 | 59 | 314 | 91 | 317 | 94 |
| 15 | Ladakh | | | | | 16 | 8 | 17 | 8 | 17 | 8 | 17 | 7 |
| 16 | Jharkhand | 676 | 216 | 677 | 216 | 675 | 131 | 675 | 152 | 694 | 186 | 693 | 181 |
| 17 | Karnataka | 3972 | 725 | 2703 | 534 | 1357 | 286 | 1363 | 276 | 1365 | 233 | 1375 | 225 |
| 18 | Kerela | 496 | 63 | 536 | 79 | 538 | 68 | 569 | 81 | 595 | 122 | 605 | 91 |
| 19 | Lakshadweep | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| 20 | Madhya Pardesh | 1872 | 511 | 2021 | 401 | 2021 | 411 | 2021 | 469 | 2021 | 372 | 2028 | 298 |
| 21 | Maharashtra | 2011 | 167 | 2189 | 247 | 2190 | 250 | 2190 | 250 | 2190 | 250 | 2190 | 250 |
| 22 | Manipur | 55 | 15 | 55 | 16 | 54 | 18 | 59 | 17 | 59 | 17 | 59 | 10 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 23 | Meghalaya | 97 | 58 | 97 | 48 | 97 | 48 | 97 | 48 | 99 | 48 | 99 | 42 |
| 24 | Mizoram | 67 | 21 | 64 | 18 | 64 | 21 | 65 | 23 | 74 | 33 | 74 | 33 |
| 25 | Nagaland | 33 | 7 | 33 | 8 | 33 | 7 | 34 | 10 | 34 | 10 | 34 | 10 |
| 26 | Odisha | 911 | 156 | 919 | 149 | 950 | 194 | 976 | 191 | 1001 | 234 | 1008 | 205 |
| 27 | Puducherry | 26 | 7 | 26 | 15 | 26 | 15 | 26 | 15 | 28 | 17 | 29 | 19 |
| 28 | Punjab | 674 | 144 | 675 | 96 | 692 | 99 | 692 | 85 | 797 | 208 | 797 | 212 |
| 29 | Rajasthan | 1337 | 229 | 1428 | 308 | 1489 | 197 | 1549 | 275 | 1587 | 331 | 1638 | 296 |
| 30 | Sikkim | 23 | 4 | 25 | 6 | 25 | 5 | 28 | 8 | 30 | 9 | 35 | 12 |
| 31 | Tamil Nadu | 1143 | 238 | 1255 | 175 | 1298 | 249 | 1316 | 234 | 1340 | 272 | 1371 | 331 |
| 32 | Tripura | 115 | 40 | 120 | 24 | 120 | 23 | 122 | 25 | 128 | 20 | 128 | 20 |
| 33 | Uttar Pradesh | 3225 | 1188 | 3416 | 838 | 3634 | 1053 | 3634 | 1092 | 3647 | 1173 | 3696 | 1247 |
| 34 | Uttarkhand | 293 | 59 | 294 | 66 | 297 | 42 | 299 | 28 | 299 | 30 | 298 | 27 |
| 35 | West Bengal | 1013 | 75 | 1014 | 96 | 1014 | 96 | 1014 | 96 | 1014 | 96 | 1014 | 96 |
| 36 | A& N Island | 11 | 0 | 0 | -13 | 0 | -13 | 0 | -13 | 0 | -13 | 0 | -13 |
| Total | | 25309 | 5647 | 25079 | 5208 | 24247 | 4929 | 24515 | 5175 | 25077 | 5764 | 25439 | 5428 |

