

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4816
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 20TH MARCH, 2026**

CASE PENDENCY IN HIGH COURTS

4816 MD ABU TAHER KHAN:

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

- (a) the number of civil cases pending in High Courts in the country;
- (b) the number of such cases pending for over ten years;
- (c) the number of posts of judges lying vacant in High Courts in the country;
- (d) the initiatives taken by the Government to fill up the vacancies to the posts of judges lying vacant in High Courts; and
- (e) the initiatives taken by the Government to ensure timely and speedy disposal of cases in High Courts?

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): As per information available on the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), 44,75,765 civil cases as on 16.03.2026 are pending in High Courts in the country, out of which 10,48,393 cases are pending for over 10 years.

(c) & (d): As on 13.03.2026, 316 posts of judges are lying vacant in High Courts in the country. Appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts is made under Articles 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.

Filling up of the vacancy in the higher Judiciary 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 which are obtained in accordance with the MoP. 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 whose names have been recommended by the SCC are appointed as Judges of the High Courts.

(e): The disposal of the cases is within the exclusive domain of judiciary. However, the Central Government is committed for speedy disposal of cases and reducing pendency as mandated under Article 21 of the Constitution and has taken several initiatives to provide an ecosystem for faster disposal of cases by the judiciary:

- i. The Government has been filling up vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts from time to time. From 01.05.2014 to 28.02.2026, 72 Judges have been appointed in the Supreme Court. 1164 new Judges were appointed and 820 Additional Judges were made permanent in the High Courts during the same period. The sanctioned strength of Judges of the High Courts has increased from 906 in May, 2014 to 1122 till date.
- ii. The Phase-III of the eCourts Project (2023-2027) approved on 13.09.2023 with an outlay of Rs.7,210 crore to make justice delivery progressively more robust, easy and accessible. Till date, 660.36 crores pages of court records have been digitized in the High Courts and District Courts. More than 3.97 crore hearings have taken place through Video conferencing and live streaming is functional in several High Courts. The number of e Sewa Kendras (facilitation centres) has increased to 2,444 across High Courts and District Courts.
- iii. Arrears Committees have been set up in all 25 High Courts and the District Courts as well to clear cases pending for more than five years.
- iv. The Government has also amended 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 with a view to reduce pendency.
- v. Alternate Dispute Resolution methods have been promoted. 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.
- vi. Lok Adalat is an important Alternative Disputes Resolution Mechanism available to common people, 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 it before any court. National Lok Adalats are organized simultaneously in all Taluks, Districts and High Courts on a pre-fixed date.
