

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5618
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 27TH MARCH, 2026**

UNDERTRIAL PRISONERS IN VARIOUS PRISONS

5618. SHRI SHYAMKUMAR DAULAT BARVE:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the number of undertrial prisoners in various prisons across the country has been continuously increasing, due to which many prisoners remain in jail for a long period without a final decision in their cases;
- (b) if so, the total number of undertrial prisoners in the country, as on date, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether the Government is considering any concrete plan to reduce the number of undertrial prisoners and to ensure speedy disposal of such cases; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

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): National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) compiles prison statistics reported to it by the States and Union Territories (UTs) and publishes the same in its annual publication “Prison Statistics India”. As per the latest published data for the year 2023, State/UT wise number of undertrial prisoners confined in jails of the country as on 31.12.2023 are attached as **Annexure-A**. These data are readily available on National Crime Records Bureau website: <https://www.ncrb.gov.in/uploads/files/PSI-20231.pdf>.
- (c) & (d): ‘Prisons and Prisoners’ is a State-list subject under Entry 4 of List II of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Therefore, the administration and management of prisons and prisoners is the responsibility of respective State Governments. Central Government has also been supplementing the efforts of State Governments in this regard.

With the objective of providing financial assistance to poor prisoners, who are unable to pay the fine imposed on them or are unable to secure bail due to financial constraints, the

Government is implementing a Scheme named “Support to Poor Prisoners”. The guidelines and SOP for implementation of the Scheme, has provision for bail assistance amounting upto Rs. 1 lakh, prescribing timelines for case processing, and simplification of procedures for drawal and utilisation of funds. For implementation of the Scheme, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had provided an annual financial outlay of Rs. 20 crore for three financial years i.e. 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26.

Further, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has taken initiatives for establishment of Under Trial Review Committees (UTRCs) in all the districts to recommend for release of eligible undertrial prisoners and convicts. Quarterly meetings are held by UTRCs across the country. The number of undertrial prisoners recommended by UTRCs and released during last three years are as under:

Year	No. of UTPs/ Convicts recommended for bail/ release	No. of inmates released pursuant to UTRCs recommendations
2023	73,274	34,232
2024	53,594	25,982
2025	40,434	22,523
Total	1,67,302	82,737

In addition to the above, Government has taken initiatives to operationalize bail reforms for reducing the number of undertrial prisoners in the country. Section 479 (1) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) provides that *“Where a person has, during the period of investigation, inquiry or trial under this Sanhita of an offence under any law (not being an offence for which the punishment of death or life imprisonment has been specified as one of the punishments under that law) undergone detention for a period extending up to one-half of the maximum period of imprisonment specified for that offence under that law, he shall be released by the Court on bail.”*

The Proviso under Section 479 (1) of the BNSS provides further relief to first time offenders/undertrial prisoners and provides that *“where such person is a first-time offender (who has never been convicted of any offence in the past), he shall be released on bond by the Court, if he has undergone detention for the period extending up to one-third of the maximum period of imprisonment specified for such offence under that law”*.

Statement referred to in reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5618 for answer on 27.03.2026 regarding 'Undertrial Prisoners in various Prisons'.

State/UT wise total number of Undertrial Prisoners in the Country as on 31.12.2023		
S. No.	State/UT	Total
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	168
2	Andhra Pradesh	5,568
3	Arunachal Pradesh	188
4	Assam	7,546
5	Bihar	46,529
6	Chandigarh	718
7	Chhattisgarh	11,520
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	134
9	Delhi	17,834
10	Goa	476
11	Gujarat	11,549
12	Haryana	19,292
13	Himachal Pradesh	1,827
14	Jammu & Kashmir	4,568
15	Jharkhand	13,584
16	Karnataka	11,723
17	Kerala	6,064
18	Ladakh	42
19	Lakshadweep	3
20	Madhya Pradesh	22,964
21	Maharashtra ^s	32,438
22	Manipur	416
23	Meghalaya	881
24	Mizoram	1,247
25	Nagaland	432
26	Odisha	14,778
27	Puducherry	304
28	Punjab	24,503
29	Rajasthan	17,263
30	Sikkim	171
31	Tamil Nadu	12,351
32	Telangana	3,799
33	Tripura	847
34	Uttar Pradesh	73,491
35	Uttarakhand	4,398
36	West Bengal	20,294
	Total	3,89,910

Source: Prison Statistics India 2023 Report by National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs.