

**Judicial reforms for disposal of cases**

276. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce judicial reforms to ensure that no case remains pending for more than 12 months from the time of its filing in the lower courts to its final disposal in the Supreme Court; and

(b) if so, what are the specific steps that Government propose to take in the aforesaid direction in view of the huge backlog of cases which are at present pending before the different courts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN): (a) and (b). The Government are desirous that steps be taken to ensure that no case remains pending for more than 12 months from the time of its filing in the lower courts to its final disposal by the highest court. It is, however, not practicable to ensure this immediately, but the following steps have already been taken to speed up the disposal of cases:—

(i) Wherever necessary, the Judge strength of the High Courts is being increased. Recently, the Judge strength of the following High Courts has been increased from the dates the posts are filled up, as indicated below:—

Madhya Pradesh: 6 extra posts of Additional Judges.

Allahabad: 3 extra posts of Additional Judges.

Patna: 3 extra posts of Additional Judges.

Himachal Pradesh: 1 extra post of Additional Judge.

Karnataka: 1 extra post of permanent Judge and 1 extra post of Additional Judge.

(ii) A substantial number of vacancies in the High Courts are being filled up. Initiative has been taken by the Central Government to call for proposals from the State authorities and wherever required reminders have been issued to the concerned State Authorities/Chief Justices;

(iii) As regards the Supreme Court, two vacancies were filled up recently and the Judge-strength of the Supreme Court is now full. A Bill is being introduced to raise the Judge-strength of the Supreme Court by four;

(iv) The Chief Justice of India is seized of the problem and is working out certain measures/proposals in consultation with the High Courts;

(v) It has been decided that the Law Commission as newly constituted will look into the matter;

(vi) Letters have been addressed to the Bar Councils and Bar Associations of various States requesting them for cooperation and also for suggestions for speedy disposal of cases.

(vii) Attention of the Chief Ministers has been invited to the pendency of Criminal cases in the Subordinate Courts and they have been requested to find ways and means for tackling this problem immediately.

**Exploration of Oil in Tamil Nadu**

277. SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken so far for exploration of oil in Tamil Nadu;

(b) the reasons why exploration has not been taken up energetically in this region; and