

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No- 2080

TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 15th DECEMBER ,2023

Legal Reform for Access to Justice

2080. Dr. KRISHNA PAL SINGH YADAV:

SHRI MUKESH RAJPUT:

SHRI SANJAY SETH:

DR. HEENA VIJAYKUMAR GAVIT:

SHRIMATI RANJANBEN DHANANJAY BHATT:

SHRI UNMESH BHAIYYASAHEB PATIL:

SHRI BASANTA KUMAR PANDA:

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE:

DR. SUJAY RADHAKRISHNA VIKHE PATIL:

PROF.RITA BAHUGUNA JOSHI:

SHRI L.S.TEJASVI SURYA:

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

(a) the key legal reforms and initiatives implemented by the Government during the past nine years to improve access to justice; and

(b) the measures taken to streamline the judicial system, foster legal awareness among citizens and repeal old laws?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF
LAW AND JUSTICE; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY
OF CULTURE**

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir. Department of Justice (DoJ), Ministry of Law and Justice has undertaken various initiatives/projects to increase accessibility to legal services and

to enhance the legal literacy and empowerment of the needy people across the country.

In 2017, DoJ launched two key legal aid and empowerment programmes under Access to Justice which included Tele-Law (mainstreaming legal aid at grassroots through technology), and Nyaya Bandhu promoting pro bono legal service, to be implemented in pilot manner. In 2021, all these programmes were formulated into a comprehensive, pan -India scheme titled “Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice in India” (DISHA), launched for a period of five- years (2021-2026). The DISHA scheme aims to provide easy, accessible, affordable and citizen -centric delivery of legal services. Till 30th November 2023, Tele-Law services has been made available across 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats in 782 districts across 36 States and UTs and has rendered legal advice to 60,23,222 beneficiaries. The Nyaya Bandhu service enables seamless connect on the Nyaya Bandhu Application (available on Android/ iOS) between the interested Pro Bono Advocates and registered beneficiaries entitled for free legal aid under section 12 of Legal Services Authorities Act,1987. As on 30th November, 2023, there are 10629 Pro Bono advocates and 89 Law schools have constituted Pro Bono Clubs to facilitate the culture of Pro Bono among law students. Moreover approximately 6 lakh beneficiaries at the state and district and local level have been made aware and sensitized on various rights, duties and entitlements.

The eCourts Mission Mode Project is a national eGovernance project for ICT enablement of district/subordinate courts of the country with a view to facilitate faster disposal of cases by speeding up court processes and providing transparent on-line flow of information on case status, orders/judgments etc. to the judiciary as well as litigants, lawyers, and other stakeholders. As part of the National eGovernance Plan, the eCourts Mission Mode project is under implementation for ICT development of the Indian Judiciary based on the “National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in the Indian Judiciary”.

In initial phase, 14,249 Court sites were computerized. In Phase II of the project which started in 2015, 18735 District and Subordinate Courts have been computerized and 99.4% of total Court Complexes across India inter-linked through WAN connectivity and in addition, various citizen centric services have been initiated.

Accessibility to case status information of 24.47 crore cases and more than 24.13 crore orders/judgments is available on the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG). In addition through Video conferencing, 2.92 crore cases have been heard by the District and Subordinate Courts and High courts and 4.82 lakh cases by the Supreme Court. Live streaming started in 7 High Courts and Constitutional bench of Supreme Court of India. 25 Virtual Courts have been established in 20 States / UTs to try traffic offences. To bridge the digital divide, 875 eSewa Kendras have been made functional under 25 High Courts. The additional features include CIS, NJDG, JustIS app for judges, eFiling, epayments, Judgement & Order Search portal, NSTEP, Justice Clock etc.

Presently, eCourts Phase-III has been approved with a budgetary outlay of Rs.7,210 crore. This phase aims to create a unified technology platform for the judiciary and provide a seamless and paperless interface between the courts, the litigants and other stakeholders. The important features of the eCourts Phase-III includes Digitisation of the court records, both legacy records and pending cases; state of the art and latest Cloud based data repository for easy retrieval; saturating all court complexes across India with e-Sewa Kendras to provide easy access to citizens not having the necessary know-how or computer equipment; Paperless Courts aiming to bring court proceedings under a digital format leading to transparency and accountability in the Indian Judiciary and speedy disposal of cases; Video conferencing facilities to be expanded to cover district hospitals, more courts and jails, police station, etc.; Live Streaming of court proceedings thereby allowing the stakeholder as well as students to see the live Court proceedings thereby encouraging transparency in the court system; Online Courts aimed at eliminating the presence of litigants or lawyers in the court, thus saving time and money; Online Dispute Resolution to work towards providing an alternative dispute resolution machinery; expansion of scope of Virtual Courts beyond adjudication of traffic challans.

The project will help provide a smoother user experience by building a “smart” ecosystem. Registries will have less data entry and minimal file scrutiny facilitating better decision-making and policy planning. The eCourts Phase-III will thus streamline the judicial system and prove to be a game changer for last mile justice

delivery in ensuring ease of justice by making the Court experience convenient, inexpensive and hassle free to all the citizens of the country.

The Government of India has taken steps to repeal obsolete and redundant laws to reduce compliance burden on Citizens and to ensure ease of business and ease of living for citizens. In this regard, from 2014 till date, 1486 redundant laws have been repealed. Legislative action has been taken to repeal 76 more redundant Acts through the Repealing and Amending Bill, 2023.

Moreover, to make people aware of their entitlements as well as their duties under law, legal awareness programmes are held across the country by Legal Service Authorities on various laws and schemes relating to children, labourers, victims of disaster, SC and ST persons suffering from disability etc. Legal Services Authorities have also prepared booklets and pamphlets in understandable language on various laws which are distributed amongst the people. National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) also organises various campaign from time to time to make people aware about various welfare schemes and entitlements of weaker sections of the society and also the undertrials and convicts. It also organizes legal camps with the three-fold objective of spreading awareness about various welfare legislations and schemes, identify target beneficiaries and also to reach out to people individually and address their legal problems. Year-wise details since 2017 onwards of the legal awareness programme organized by NALSA is attached at Annexure-A.

Annexure -A

Statement as referred to in reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No.2080 for answering on 15.12.2023 raised by Dr. Krishna Pal Singh Yadav & Ten Others, (MPs) on details of

Legal Awareness Programmes organized and Persons participated during the period from 2017-18 to 2023-24 (upto Sept.23)

Years	No of programmes Organised	No. of Persons Attended
2017-18	1,65,124	2,16,09,724
2018-19	1,76,916	1,98,56,363
2019-20	2,27,394	3,16,31,228
2020-21	1,26,541	1,30,69,637
2021-22	11,34,086	58,41,26,827
2022-23	4,90,055	6,75,17,665
2023-24 (upto Sept. 23)	1,93,605	1,76,93,492
