

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
LAW AND JUSTICE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1584

ANSWERED ON:14.08.2013

WORKING HOURS OF COURTS

Gaddigoudar Shri P.C.;Jagannath Dr. M.;Singh Rajkumari Ratna;Singh Shri Ratan

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

- (a) the recommendations of the 13th Finance Commission for improvement in justice delivery and the guidelines issued by the Government in this regard;
- (b) whether the working hours of courts have been increased through morning/ evening shifts for quick disposal of pending cases as recommended by the 13th Finance Commission;
- (c) if so, the details thereof including the funds allocated for the purpose and if not, the reasons therefor, State/UT-wise; and
- (d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for expeditious disposal of huge backlog of pending cases in various courts of the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE AND COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) The Thirteenth Finance Commission has recommended the following initiatives for improvement in justice delivery:

- (i) Increasing the number of court working hours using the existing infrastructure by holding morning / evening/ shift courts;
- (ii) Enhancing support to Lok Adalats to reduce the pressure on regular courts;
- (iii) Providing additional funds to State Legal Services Authorities to enable them to enhance legal aid to the marginalized and empower them to access justice;
- (iv) Promoting the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism to resolve part of the disputes outside the court system;
- (v) Enhancing capacity of judicial officers and public prosecutors through training programmes;
- (vi) Supporting creation or strengthening of a judicial academy in each state to facilitate such training;
- (vii) Creation of the post of Court Managers in every judicial district to assist the judiciary in their administrative functions; and
- (viii) Maintenance of heritage court buildings.

(b) & (c) Out of Rs. 5000 crore awarded under the Thirteenth Finance Commission, Rs. 2500 crore has been allocated for Morning/ evening/ shift/special courts to try petty cases so as to clear the backlog of cases and to reduce pendency using the existing infrastructure. The details of fund allocation and progress is at Annex. State Governments have expressed various difficulties in holding morning/evening/shift courts such as

- (i) Geographical & local constraints particularly in North-Eastern States;
- (ii) Shortage of Judicial Officers of appropriate status for these courts; and
- (iii) resistance from Bar Associations.

(d) The initiatives such as Lok Adalats, Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centres, Training of Judicial officers and Training of Public Prosecutors under Thirteenth Finance Commission have contributed to disposal of backlog of cases pending in courts. Since the commencement of the Thirteenth Finance Commission until 31st July, 2013, 46 lakh cases are reported to have been disposed by holding 94,000 Lok Adalats all over the country.