

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

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2948  
TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 11<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2020**

**Committee for Judicial Reforms**

**2948. DR. RAMAPATI RAM TRIPATHI:**

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

- (a) whether the committee constituted for judicial reforms has submitted its report to the Government;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the findings and recommendations of the committee in this regard;**
- (c) if not, the reasons for delay in this regard; and**
- (d) the steps being taken by the Government to make the judicial system more effective and ensure urgent hearings of the criminal acts?**

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE, COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS &  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)**

(a) to (c): National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms was set up in August, 2011 with the twin objectives of increasing access by reducing delays and arrears in the system and enhancing accountability through structural changes and by setting performance standards and capacities. The Mission has been pursuing a co-ordinated approach for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial administration, which, *inter-alia*, involves better infrastructure for courts including computerisation, increase in strength of subordinate judiciary, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation, re-engineering of court procedure for quick disposal of cases and emphasis on human resource development.

To advise on the goals, objectives and strategies of the National Mission and the Action Plan and its implementation, an Advisory Council has been set up under the

Chairmanship of Minister of Law and Justice with wide ranging membership. An action plan of the National Mission was formulated under 5 strategic initiatives which are reviewed by the Advisory Council of the National Mission from time to time. Eleven meetings of the Advisory Council have been held so far. Activities under the National Mission are of an on-going nature and regular reports are presented before the Advisory Council of the National Mission.

(d): Hearings and disposal of cases in courts is within the domain of the judiciary. Government has no role in hearings of cases in courts. However, the Union Government is committed to speedy disposal of cases and reduction in pendency of cases. The major steps taken during the last five years under various initiatives are as follows:

(a) Improving infrastructure for Judicial Officers of District and Subordinate Courts:

As on date, Rs. 7,453.10 crores have been released since the inception of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary in 1993-94. Out of this, Rs.4,008.80 crores (which is 53.79% of the total amount released till date) have been released to the States and UTs since April, 2014. The number of court halls has increased from 15,818 as on 30.06.2014 to 19,694 as on 29.02.2020 and number of residential units has increased from 10,211 as on 30.06.2014 to 17,432 as on 29.02.2020 under this scheme. In addition, 2,814 court halls and 1,843 residential units are under construction.

(b) Leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for improved justice delivery:

Government has been implementing the e-Courts Mission Mode Project throughout the country for Information and Communication Technology enablement of district and subordinate courts. Number of computerized District & Subordinate courts has increased from 13,672 to 16,845 registering an increase of 3,173 during 2014 till date. New and user-friendly version of Case Information Software has been developed and deployed at all the computerized District and Subordinate Courts. All stakeholders including Judicial Officers can access information relating to judicial proceedings/decisions of computerized

District & Subordinate Courts and High Courts on the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG). Currently, case status information in respect of over 13.13 crore pending and disposed cases and more than 11.46 crore orders / judgments pertaining to these computerized courts is available on NJDG. eCourts services such as details of case registration, cause list, case status, daily orders & final judgments are available to litigants and advocates through eCourts web portal, Judicial Service Centres (JSC) in all computerized courts, eCourts Mobile App, email service, SMS push & pull services. Video Conferencing facility has been enabled between 3240 court complexes and 1272 corresponding jails.

- (c) Filling up of vacant positions in Supreme Court, High Courts and District and Subordinate Courts: From 01.05.2014 to 29.02.2020, 35 Judges were appointed in Supreme Court. 522 new Judges were appointed and 443 Additional Judges were made permanent in the High Courts. Sanctioned strength of Judges of High Courts has been increased from 906 in May, 2014 to 1079 currently. Sanctioned and working strength of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts has increased as follows:

As on	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength
31.12.2013	19,518	15,115
29.02.2020	24,018	19,160

Filling up of vacancies in Subordinate judiciary falls within the domain of the State Governments and High Courts concerned.

- (d) Reduction in Pendency through / follow up by Arrears Committees: In pursuance of resolution passed in Chief Justices' Conference held in April, 2015, Arrears Committees have been set up in High Courts to clear cases pending for more than five years. Arrears Committees have been set up under District Judges too. Arrears Committee has been constituted in the Supreme Court to formulate steps to reduce pendency of cases in High Courts and District Courts.
- (e) Emphasis on Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR): Commercial Courts Act, 2015 (as amended on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2018) stipulates mandatory pre-institution

mediation and settlement 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.

- (f) Initiatives to Fast Track Special Type of Cases: The Fourteenth Finance Commission endorsed the proposal of the Government to strengthen the judicial system in States which included, inter-alia, establishing Fast Track Courts for cases of heinous crimes; cases involving senior citizens, women, children etc., and urged the State Governments to use the additional fiscal space provided in the form of enhanced tax devolution from 32% to 42% to meet such requirements. As on 31.12.2019, 828 Fast Track Courts are functional for heinous crimes, crimes against women and children, family and matrimonial disputes, etc. To fast track criminal cases involving elected MPs / MLAs, ten (10) Special Courts are functional in nine (9) States/UTs (1 each in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and 2 in NCT of Delhi) and proportionate funds have been released to these States by the Government. Further, Government has approved a scheme for setting up 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country for expeditious disposal of pending cases of Rape under IPC and crimes under POCSO Act. As on date, 27 States/UTs have joined the scheme for setting up of 649 FTSCs including 363 exclusive POCSO courts. Rs.99.43 crore (out of the total allocation of Rs.100 crore) has already been released as the first instalment for FTSCs.
- (g) In order to reduce pendency and unclogging of the courts the Government has recently amended various laws like 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.

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