

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

LOK SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1757
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 11th FEBRUARY, 2022**

PENDING CASES IN SUPREME COURT AND HIGH COURT

1757. SHRI G.M. SIDDESHWAR:

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

- (a) the total number of pending cases of civil and criminal nature in the Supreme Court and various High Courts in the country;**
- (b) the number of cases lying pending in each of these above courts, for less than five years, between five to ten years, and more than ten years; and**
- (c) whether any measures have been taken by the Government to expedite the process of disposal of these cases?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

(a): As per the information provided by the Supreme Court of India, the total number of pending cases in Supreme Court of India are 70,101 out of which 55,856 are civil matters and 14,245 are criminal matters. As per information available on National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), the total number of pending cases of civil and criminal in various of High Courts is at *Annexure I*.

(b): The number of cases lying pending in Supreme Court of India for less than five years, between five to ten years and more than ten years are as under:-

Pendency Criteria	No. of Pending Cases
Less than 5 years	42819
5 to 10 years	17571
More than 10 years	9711

The number of cases lying pending in High Courts, for less than five years, between five to ten years and more than ten years is at ***Annexure II***.

(c): Disposal of pending cases in courts is within the domain of the judiciary. No time frame has been prescribed for disposal of various kinds of cases by the respective courts. Government has no role in disposal of cases in courts. Timely disposal of cases in courts depends on several factors which, *inter-alia*, include availability of adequate number of judges and judicial officers, supporting court staff and physical infrastructure, complexity of facts involved, nature of evidence, co-operation of stake holders viz. bar, investigation agencies, witnesses and litigants and proper application of rules and procedures. There are several factors which may lead to delay in disposal of cases. These, *inter-alia*, include vacancies of judges, frequent adjournments and lack of adequate arrangement to monitor, track and bunch cases for hearing. The Central Government is fully committed to speedy disposal of cases in accordance with Article 21 of the Constitution and reducing pendency. The Government has taken several initiatives to provide an ecosystem for faster disposal of cases by the judiciary.

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 computerization, 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.

The major steps taken during the last six years under various initiatives are as follows:

(i) **Improving infrastructure for Judicial Officers of District and Subordinate Courts:** As on date, Rs. 8,758.71 crores have been released since the inception of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary in 1993-94. The number of court halls has increased from 15,818 as on 30.06.2014 to 21,376 as on 31.01.2022 and number of residential units has increased from 10,211 as on 30.06.2014 to 18,276 as on 31.01.2022 under this scheme. In addition, 2,832 court halls and 1,693 residential units are under construction. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary has been extended till 2025-26 at a total cost of Rs. 9000 crores, out of which Central share will be Rs. 5307 crores. Besides, construction of Court Halls and Residential Units, it would also cover construction of Lawyer's Halls, Toilet Complexes and Digital Computer Rooms.

(ii) **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 to 18,735 so far. WAN connectivity has been provided to 98.8% of court complexes. 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). As on 21.01.2022, litigants can access case status of over 19.75 crore

cases and 16.50 crore order/judgments pertaining to these courts. 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. With a view to handle the COVID- 19 challenges better and to make the transition to virtual hearings smoother, 451 eSewa Kendras have been set up at court complexes to facilitate lawyers and litigants needing assistance ranging from case status, getting judgments/orders, court/case related information and efilings facilities. Rs. 5.01 crores has been allocated for providing equipment in Video Conferencing cabins in various court complexes to facilitate virtual hearings. Rs. 12.12 crores has been allocated for 1732 Help desk counters for efilings in various court complexes.

Seventeen Virtual Courts have been set up in 13 States/UTs viz. Delhi (2), Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala (2), Maharashtra (2), Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir (2), Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh to try traffic offences. As on 15.01.2022, these courts have handled more than 1.2 crore cases and realized more than Rs.212.01 crore in fines.

Video conferencing emerged as the mainstay of the Courts during the Covid lockdown period as physical hearings and normal court proceedings in the congregational mode were not possible. Since Covid lockdown started, the District courts heard 1,08,36,087 cases while the High Court heard 57,39,966 cases (totalling to 1.65 crore) till 30.11.2021 using video conferencing. The Supreme Court had 1,81,909 hearings since the lockdown period upto 08.01.2022.

(iii) **Filling up of vacant positions in Supreme Court, High Courts and District and Subordinate Courts:** From 01.05.2014 to 31.01.2022, 44 Judges were appointed in Supreme Court. 690 new Judges were appointed and 587 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 1098 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
31.01.2022	24,514	19,341

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

(iv) **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. In the past, Minister of Law & Justice has taken up the matter with Chief Justices of High Courts and Chief Ministers in the past drawing their attention to cases pending for more than five years and to take up pendency reduction campaign. The Department has developed an online portal for reporting by all High Courts on the compliance of Arrears Eradication Scheme guidelines of the Malimath Committee Report.

(v) **Emphasis on Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR):** Commercial Courts Act, 2015 (as amended on 20th 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.

(vi) **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 31.12.2021, 898 Fast Track Courts are functional for heinous crimes, crimes against women and children 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). 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, 28 States/UTs have joined the scheme for setting up of 842 FTSCs including 363 'exclusive POCSO Courts'. Rs.140 crore was released in the financial year 2019-20 and Rs. 160.00 crore has been released during the financial year 2020-21 and Rs. 62.23 crore has been released during the FY 2021-22 upto 31.12.2021 for the scheme. 700 FTSCs are presently functional including 383 exclusive POCSO Courts, which disposed 73627 cases as on 31.12.2021. The continuation of the Scheme of FTSC has been approved for another two years (2021-23) at a total outlay of Rs. 1572.86 crore, including Rs. 971.70 crore as Central share.

(vii) In addition, 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.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1757 FOR ANSWER ON 11.02.2022 REGARDING PENDING CASES IN SUPREME COURT AND HIGH COURT.**Details of Pending Cases in the Country High Court - Wise**

Sl. No	Name of High Courts	Pending Cases (Civil)	Pending Cases (Criminal)	Number of Cases pending in High Courts as on 31.01.2022
1.	Allahabad	419480	389563	809043
2.	Calcutta	190577	35230	225807
3.	Gauhati	45054	10873	55927
4.	Telangana	224611	35921	260532
5.	Andhra Pradesh	191311	33148	224459
6.	Bombay	474782	97598	572380
7.	Chhattisgarh	52537	29839	82376
8.	Delhi	74376	27223	101599
9.	Gujarat	101464	50665	152129
10.	Himachal Pradesh	72861	10338	83199
11.	Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh	41472	6869	48341
12.	Jharkhand	42413	44495	86908
13.	Karnataka	222775	39522	262297
14.	Kerala	169182	42820	212002
15.	Madhya Pradesh	256719	156748	413467
16.	Manipur	4434	508	4942
17.	Meghalaya	1396	217	1613
18.	Punjab & Haryana	283842	165047	448889
19.	Rajasthan	426537	152803	579340
20.	Sikkim	150	34	184
21.	Tripura	1590	195	1785
22.	Uttarakhand	24601	17910	42511
23.	Madras	520843	58297	579140
24.	Orissa	149444	52285	201729
25.	Patna	113736	110336	224072
Total		4106187	1568484	5674671

Source:- National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (B) LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1757
FOR ANSWER ON 11.02.2022 REGARDING PENDING CASES IN SUPREME COURT AND HIGH COURT.**

(as on 08.02.2022)

S. No.	Name of High Courts	Less than 5 years		5 to 10 years		More than 10 years	
		Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal
1	Allahabad	137009	165899	104749	79265	178285	144065
2	Bombay	240518	64006	106816	17558	128744	16484
3	Calcutta	64054	14706	47610	9937	79115	10567
4	Gauhati	35994	8202	7657	2423	1397	267
5	Telangana	120840	22122	64123	9517	40732	4274
6	Andhra Pradesh	96123	19142	57573	8859	38236	5136
7	Chhattisgarh	40002	18412	11632	7789	1238	3706
8	Delhi	51279	17516	14264	5631	9048	4215
9	Gujarat	65251	31355	24672	10965	11541	8345
10	Himachal Pradesh	60648	7534	9877	2509	2645	409
11	Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh	22473	4753	13030	1624	5943	512
12	Jharkhand	27745	22251	9071	9569	5605	12841
13	Karnataka	121230	24551	53170	8213	47866	6639
14	Kerala	99370	19705	53812	11691	15917	11369
15	Madhya Pradesh	120932	70747	73239	44660	62548	41341
16	Manipur	3653	435	383	28	413	40
17	Meghalaya	1211	214	186	2	0	1
18	Punjab and Haryana	148234	93685	62725	42456	73401	29264
19	Rajasthan	281705	94303	79997	24934	66036	33864
20	Sikkim	140	34	10	0	1	0
21	Tripura	1584	188	14	2		
22	Uttarakhand	18420	13426	4633	3702	1592	893
23	Madras	307059	48815	93074	4503	118950	5205
24	Orissa	89501	27523	37094	11037	24243	13187
25	Patna	79159	76380	24653	14010	10366	19603
	Total	2234134	865904	954064	330884	923862	372227

Source:- National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)