GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE

(DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 281

TO BE ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, THE 3rd FEBRUARY 2022

Transparency in virtual court system

281. Shri Vivek K. Tankha:

Will the Minister of *Law and Justice* be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to ensure implementation of the DoPT Standing Committee Report to improve and bring transparency in virtual court systems in SupremeCourt, High Court and Subordinate Courts;

(b) whether Subordinate Courts across India including Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and other states stopped listing fresh matters barring some extreme exceptions during the COVID-19 times;

(c) if so, the details of its impact on justice delivery system; and

(d) whether it is due to the failure to modernise working system of the courts?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

(SHRI KIREN RIJIJU)

(a): The Department of Justice has furnished Action Taken Reply on the report of the Department-RelatedParliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Grievances, Law and Justice on the Functioning of Virtual Courts/ court proceedings through Video-Conferencing to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat on 16.12.2020 and the same is pending before the said committee.

(b) to (d):Information on listing of matters before District and Subordinate Courts is not centrally maintained. However, during the Covid -19 pandemic (24[th]March 2020 – 29th January 2022), the details of cases registered and disposed off by the District and Subordinate Courts are attached in **Annexure.**

Towards enhancement of ICT enablement of Courts, following initiatives have been taken under eCourts project by the eCommittee of the Supreme Court and the Department of Justice:

i. Under the Wide Area Network (WAN) Project, 2957 courts sites have been commissioned (as on 28.01.2022) with 10 Mbps to 100 Mbps bandwidth speed. This forms the backbone for ensuring data connectivity in courts across the length and breadth of the country.

ii. Case Information Software (CIS) which forms the basis for the e-Court services is based on customized Free and Open-Source Software (FOSS) which has been developed by NIC. Currently CIS National Core Version 3.2 is being implemented in District Courts and the CIS National Core Version 1.0 is being implemented for the High Courts.

iii. A new software patch and user manual for COVID-19 management has also been developed to help in smart scheduling of cases.

iv. National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) is a database of orders, judgments and cases, created as an online platform under the eCourts Project. It provides information relating to judicial proceedings/decisions of all computerized district and subordinate courts of the country. Litigants can access case status information in respect of over 19.75 crore cases and more than 16.50 crore orders / judgments pertaining to these computerized (as on 21.01.2022). Open APIs have been introduced in 2020 to allow Central and State Governments and institutional litigants including

local bodies to access NJDG data to improve pendency monitoring and compliance.

v. As part of eCourts project, 7 platforms have been created to provide real time information on case status, cause lists, judgements etc. to lawyers/Litigants through SMS Push and Pull (2,00,000 SMS sent daily), Email (2,50,000 sent daily), multilingual and tactile eCourts services Portal (35 lakh hits daily), JSC (Judicial Service centres) and Info Kiosks. In addition, Electronic Case Management Tools (ECMT) have been created with Mobile App for lawyers (total 72.20 lakh downloads till 3rd January 2022) and JustIS app for judges (16,825 downloads till 3rd January 2022). JustIS mobile app is now available in iOS as well.

vi. 17 Virtual Courts in 13 States/UTs have been operationalized to handle traffic challan cases. More than 1.20 crore cases have been handled by 17 virtual courts and in more than 20 lakhs (20,40,003) cases online fine of more than Rs. 212 (212.01) crore has been realised till 19.01.2022.

vii. The Supreme Court of India emerged as a global leader by conducting 1,81,909 hearings (till 08.01.2022 since the beginning of lockdown period). The High Courts (57,39,966 cases and Subordinate Courts (1,08,36,087 cases) have conducted 1.65 crore virtual hearings till 30.11.2021. VC facilities have also been enabled between 3240 court complexes and corresponding 1272 jails. Funds for 2506 VC cabins and VC equipment for 14,443 court rooms have also been released. 1500 VC licenses have been procured to promote virtual hearings. A sum of Rs. 7.60 crore has been released for procurement of 1732 Document Visualizers.

viii. New e-filing system (version 3.0) has been rolled out for the electronic filing of legal papers with upgraded features like new

dashboard including the options of my partners, Case Filing, Vakalatnama, pleading, e-payments, applications and case portfolio management. Draft eFiling rules have been formulated and circulated to the High Courts for adoption. A total of 17 high Courts have adopted the model rules of e-Filing as on 31.12.2021.

ix. e-Filing of cases requires the option for electronic payment of fees which includes court fees, fines and penalties which are directly payable to the Consolidated Fund. Online payment of court fees, fines, penalties and judicial deposits has been initiated through https://pay.ecourts.gov.in. A total of 16 High Courts have implemented ePayments in their respective jurisdictions. The Court Fees Act has been amended in 23 High Courts till 31.12.2021.

x. eSewa Kendras have been rolled out to bridge the digital divide by providing e filing services to lawyers and litigants. Government has released Rs. 12.54 crore for setting up eSewa Kendras. As on 31.12.2021, 451 eSewa Kendra's have been made functional in District Courts under 25 High Courts.

xi. National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP) has been launched for technology enabled process serving and issuing of summons. It has currently been implemented in 26 States/ UTs.

xii. A new "Judgment Search" portal has been started with features such as search by Bench, Case Type, Case Number, Year, Petitioner/ Respondent Name, Judge Name, Act, Section, Decision: From Date, To Date and Full Text Search. This facility is being provided free of cost to all.

xiii. To make effective use of database created through National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) and to make the information available

to public 30 LED Display Message Sign Board System called Justice Clocks, have been installed in 20 High Courts.

xiv. Towards creating widespread awareness and familiarization of eFiling and eCourts services and to address "skill divide", a manual on E filing and a Brochure on "How to register for E Filing" has been made available in English, Hindi and 12 regional languages for the use of the lawyers. A YouTube channel has been created in the name of the e Court services with video tutorials on e-filing. The eCommittee of the Supreme Court of India has conducted trainings and awareness programmes on the ICT services. These programmes have covered nearly 3,02,614 stakeholders, including High Court Judges, Judges of the District Judiciary, Court Staff, Master Trainers among Judges/DSA, Technical Staff of High Courts, and Advocates.

Details of cases registered and disposed off by the District and Subordinate Courts

Sr. no	State	Registered during 24.03.2020 - 29.01.2022			Disposed during 24.03.2020 - 29.01.2022		
		Civil	Criminal	Total	Civil	Criminal	Total
1	Uttar Pradesh	637593	5128004	5765597	498580	3337591	3836171
2	Maharashtra	657690	1821633	2479323	418039	1098315	1516354
3	Bihar	102848	891994	994842	28944	506383	535327
4	West Bengal	179405	626711	806116	82779	416770	499549
5	Rajasthan	247411	1166963	1414374	183153	876183	1059336
6	Orissa	90434	378578	469012	50781	217020	267801
7	Gujarat	230733	1760235	1990968	206451	1414020	1620471
8	Madhya Pradesh	189192	1265685	1454877	132888	911338	1044226
9	Kerala	302059	1055141	1357200	213032	729232	942264
10	Karnataka	467027	2145209	2612236	373456	2012934	2386390
11	Tamil Nadu	403644	1498547	1902191	310432	1399874	1710306
12	Delhi	166228	488621	654849	111664	304405	416069
13	Haryana	241958	730682	972640	125597	431461	557058
14	Punjab	251208	696887	948095	136209	551972	688181
15	Telangana	156026	445387	601413	81426	304105	385531
16	Andhra Pradesh	202568	368539	571107	104275	261112	365387
17	Jharkhand	36026	424560	460586	15417	327458	342875
18	Assam	52372	216626	268998	39502	122201	161703
19	Himachal Pradesh	110567	472764	583331	80593	340491	421084
20	Chhattisgarh	39686	318484	358170	27275	234983	262258
21	Uttarakhand	33231	250741	283972	26153	167477	193630
22	Jammu and Kashmir	57149	185889	243038	37708	145503	183211
23	Chandigarh	12597	30684	43281	7674	14764	22438
24	Goa	11723	37050	48773	8317	33528	41845
25	Puducherry	12716	23595	36311	12662	20459	33121
26	Tripura	6468	46131	52599	5152	38962	44114
27	Meghalaya	2334	11134	13468	1492	9803	11295

Sr. no	State	Registered during 24.03.2020 - 29.01.2022			Disposed during 24.03.2020 - 29.01.2022		
		Civil	Criminal	Total	Civil	Criminal	Total
28	Manipur	5640	11957	17597	3289	11229	14518
29	Mizoram	2358	4747	7105	1833	3873	5706
30	DNH at Silvasa	861	1935	2796	652	1615	2267
31	Nagaland	334	875	1209	101	379	480
32	Diu and Daman	1227	2190	3417	972	1860	2832
33	Sikkim	1676	3539	5215	1449	3252	4701
34	Ladakh	584	1094	1678	456	936	1392
	Total:	**49,13,573**	**2,25,12,811**	**2,74,26,384**	**33,28,403**	**1,62,51,488**	**1,95,79,891**