GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
(DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2184
TO BE ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, THE 04th AUGUST, 2022

Digitalization of Supreme Court & High Court Record

2184. **Dr. Ashok Bajpai:**

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

(a) the details of the amount sanctioned and released for digitalization of records of the Supreme Court and High Courts, year-wise and court-wise breakup thereof;

(b) whether digitalized records as above are not available online on the websites of the Supreme Court and the High Courts;

(c) whether in the absence of online availability of such digitalized records, the main purpose of digitalization is not serving; and

(d) details of the initiatives, if any, of Government for online availability of digitalized records?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

(SHRI KIREN RIJIJU)

(a): Digitization of records forms a very important part of the ICT development of the Judicial set up. Digitization was proposed to be made a part of the eCourts PhaseII and Rs. 752.50 crores were proposed for the same. However, there was a 10% increase in tax-devolution in 14thFinance Commission takingthe state share to 42% andon account of this, the proposed Rs. 752.50 crores for this activity was not allocated at the level of Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) and this activity was to be done by the State Governments, in lieu of increased devolution.

However, as a special case for North East region, funds to the tune of Rs.13.67 Crores have been released to the Gauhati High Court (Principal bench)for digitization of records of the High Court and District Courts of Assam (Rs. 6.82 Cr. For High Court and Rs.6.85 Cr. for district courts) under eCourt Project Phase II. As the eCourts project covers only District and Subordinate Courts, the Supreme Court is not part of eCourts project Phase II.

(b)& (c): The National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), is an online repository of case statistics, as a result of digitalized case records, from the High Courts and the District and Subordinate Courts of the country. It provides information relating to judicial proceedings/decisions of the computerized courts of the country. Approximately 3000 Court Complexes replicate live data of filing, registration, scrutiny, objections, case status, cause list, judgment and orders on real-time basis..Through the NJDG platform currently litigants can access case status information in respect of over 20.86 crore cases and more than 18.02 crore orders / judgments pertaining to these computerized courts as on 04.07.2022. Case data is available on NJDG for both civil and criminal cases with the ability to perform drill-down analysis based on the age of the case as well as the State and District. NJDG works as a monitoring tool to identify, manage & reduce pendency of cases. It helps to provide timely inputs for making policy decisions to reduce delays in disposing of cases and helps in reducing case pendency. To track cases related to land disputes, Land Records data of 26 States have been linked with NJDG.In consonance with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP) announced by the Government of India, Open Application Programming Interface (API) has been provided to the Central & State Government to allow easy access to the NJDG data using a departmental ID and access key. Recently, reasons for delay have been included in NJDG.

As per the information available on Supreme Court website, Judgement records can be searched online with the following parameters - Case No., Diary No., Judgment Date, Judge Name, Parties, Act-wise, Const. Bench and Free Text.

(d): To make online availability of digitalized records, Department of Justice has undertaken the following initiatives as part of eCourts Project Phase II:

- 18735 District and Subordinate Courts computerized under eCourts phase-II so far.

- Case Information Software (CIS) which forms the basis for the eCourt developed by NIC on Free and Open-Source Software (FOSS).

- NJDG developed with elastic search technology allowing access to 20.86 Cr cases and more than 18.02 cr orders and judgments. Delay reasons added and open APIs introduced.

- Citizen centric services provided through 7 platforms viz. SMS push & pull, e-mail, eCourts services portal, Judicial service Centers, Info kiosks, eCourts mobile app (total 79.65 lakh downloads till 30th April 2022) and JustIS app for judges (17,369 downloads till 4th July 2022).

- eFiling system version 3.0 rolled out with advanced features like e-Vakalatnama, e-signing, video recording of oath etc. Integrated with e payments module.

- Judgment Search Portal has been started for providing certified copies of judgments free of cost.

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