

## REPORT ON ICT INITIATIVES ADOPTED BY THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA

The recently devised and implemented innovations in ICT initiatives in the High Court of Kerala is the Online backbone platform which proposes to integrate different stakeholders of the Judicial System(High Court Judge, High Court Office, Officers and staff of the High Court, Subordinate Courts, Judicial Officers, Officers and Staff of the Subordinate Courts) under a single sign in. All these stakeholders will have role based access and dashboard. Any stakeholder with a Desktop/ Laptop/ Tab/ Mobile and internet connectivity can avail the services / take actions in his/her dashboard based on his/her role from anywhere (office, home or on the move). All applications are proposed to be integrated to the platform so that actions taken/services can be availed under single sign in to the platform instead of accessing multiple applications using different username and passwords.

The services currently implemented in the platform are as follows:

**1. Personnel Management System:** Service details(every event in the Service) including personal details of Judges, Judicial Officers, Staff of the High Court and Subordinate Courts are recorded in the system and are available to all the stakeholders based on their roles.

**2. Subordinate Court Management System:** Every detail of all the Subordinate Courts are recorded in the system so that the details are available online to all the stakeholders based on their roles(High Court Judges, Judicial Officers) for the effective superintendence.

**3. Judicial Officers' Transfer Management System:** Under this online system all that a Judicial Officer seeking transfer is required to do is to indicate three preferences. Everything else is taken care of by the system.

**4. Online Communication system:** High Court Judges, Various Sections of the High Court Office, Officers and Staff of the High Court, Subordinate Courts, Judicial Officers, Officers and Staff of the Subordinate Courts have been assigned dashboards. The platform is integrated with Sandes(GIMS). All internal communications(Letters, Office Memoranda, Proceedings, Notices, Notifications etc) can be sent by the authorised person to the target(single/ multiple) instantaneously obviating the dependence on paper and tapal system.

**5. Online Annual Property Return:** Using this simple and intelligent system all employees of the High Court and Subordinate Courts can file their annual property return from their dashboards. All they

have to do is to update their profile and thereafter with a few mouse clicks property return will be filed and all the previously filed returns can be viewed.

As part of the Computerisation project supported by the eCommittee, Supreme Court of India and the decisions taken by the Committee in charge of Computerisation, the following ICT initiatives have been implemented in the High Court.

### **E-FILING**

Efiling or Electronic filing system is the Judiciary's electronic platform through which documents can be electronically filed with the courts or served on the other parties in a case. E-filing in all categories of cases was introduced in the High Court of Kerala w.e.f 17.05.2021 with the option for physical filing or e-filing. e-service of copies to respondents online, Integrated e-payment system, dashboard facility for Judges,Court Staff,Advocates, Advocate General,Central Government Counsel, Standing Counsel etc., SMS alerts at all stages of case, and delivery of digitally signed order/judgment to all stakeholders has also been incorporated as a part of the system.

It is submitted that eFiling was introduced in the District Judiciary at Munsiff-Magistrate Court, Kolenchery and the Rent Control Court, Ernakulam with effect from 16.06.2020 and in all the Commercial Courts throughout the State with effect from 20.01.2021.

The eFiling ver3.0 rolled out in the District Judiciary from 01-01-2022 onwards across the state for selected types of cases and segments.

### **CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)**

The CMS was rolled out in 2019 replacing the intranet Case Information System (CIS), used as an internal information software for the High Court of Kerala. The leap from an intranet based software to internet based software opened up a wide variety of opportunities to digitize much part of the workflow of the Institution. With the newly added features like e-filing of cases, automatic case allocation, automated caselists, real time court proceedings, online interim order/ judgments, automated delivery of digitally signed orders to concerned lower courts/ police stations/ jails etc , the CMS has been a gamechanger and facelifter for the justice administration system in the state. The transformation of Court from a 'place' to that of a 'service' ie. a service which can be accessed by anyone remotely without being physically present in the court was made possible to an extent after the implementation of CMS. The

CMS is the first court management software system in the Country which has the ability to automatically consume the data of e-filed cases. Such a facility is not present in any other court management software till date.

### **SMART/DIGITAL COURTS IN THE HIGH COURT**

Paperless smartcourts/Digital courtrooms are conceived to achieve the cardinal purpose of enhancing speed in the dispensation of justice and to improve access to court information for the public and above all reduce administrative cost, while increasing efficiency in court proceedings. As of today, six courtrooms in the High Court are fully transformed into paperless smart digital courtrooms. Within a couple of months, it is targeted to convert every courtroom in the High Court of Kerala into Paperless smart digital courtrooms. Some of the facilities that comes as part of the Smart Courtrooms are:

- **Case Display System** : The Court display system includes the details of all functioning Courts including the details of the Honorable judges presiding the same, type of list taken up, item no., case.no along with the party details. The details are displayed in screens installed outside every courtroom as well available online in the website <https://ecourts.kerala.gov.in/>.
- **Virtual hearing with Hybrid facility**: Advocates/party in person can safely attend to their cases from the comfort of their home/office with the virtual mode available through a dedicated video conference unit in the Smart court. The option to attend the case either physically or virtually opens up an array of opportunities for the advocates to cater to their different cases happening in different courts on the same day without being present in each court physically.
- **Integrated audio solution ( Mic with Speaker)** : With the integrated audio systems installed in the smart courtrooms, the audibility of the court proceedings will be enhanced.
- **KIOSK- information at the tip of the finger**: Every smart courtroom is provided with a touch screen Kiosk i.e a small, temporary, stand-alone booth to provide multitude of online facilities i.e Case status, Certified copy application status, E-filing status, Order status, FAQs etc.
- **All in one- touch machine**: The transition from paper to digital screen emphasizes the true vision of a smart/paperless courtroom and The High Court of Kerala is pioneering the mission by installing state of the art 'all in one- touch machines' for Honorable Judges, Government pleaders and advocates. A physical file opens up virtually for all connected with the case. This facility is provided for the first time in the Judicial proceedings in the history of the nation. Wi-Fi connected courtrooms: For Seamless internet connectivity is ensured . Provisions are made to ensure WiFi connectivity in all the floors where courts function.

- **Real- time updated case proceedings** : Once a case is taken up in a smart courtroom and its business is over for the same day, the updated court proceeding for the case is readily available on the website and is accessible from any device.
- **E-Seva kendra** : In order to reduce the digital divide, a dedicated help desk is established in the Enquiry section for providing assistance in E-filing of cases as well as attending court proceedings virtually.

### **ONLINE CERTIFIED COPY APPLICATION**

In this module, applications for Certified Copies can be filed online with e-Payment(court fee). Verification of application by scrutiny officers, defects reporting, curing of defects, re-submission after curing defects etc can be done online and a corresponding QR Code will be generated and impressed upon the requested docs / order/ judgement/ interim order. Further, the same can be signed digitally. The digitally signed certified copy will be delivered to the applicant's user account and email.

### **DASHBOARDS**

The purpose of dashboards is to aggregate information about the activities, displaying important metrics in ways that are visually appealing and easy to understand. Data visualisation provides a real time overview of cases, helps to control workflow, track case status and so on. Dashboards enable the user, be it the Judges, or Advocates/Party in person or the officers of the Court, to manage his activities on the go, without having to be physically present in the court. It presents data that is relevant for the user. Thus the dashboard lets him work in his own environment. Dashboards are developed after proper role mapping, and the persons with specific roles can see the information that matters to their role.

### **DIGITISATION OF CASE RECORDS**

Kerala High Court being a 'Court Of Record', has to preserve and archive its paper records in perpetuity. About thirty three lakhs (33,00,000) of files are now preserved as records. As a Pilot phase of the project, the scheduled 4 lakh pages have been completed and User Acceptance Certificate is issued. As on 24.12.2021, approximately 40000 records consisting of 20 lakh pages have been digitised. It is scheduled to scale up the project by Mid January 2022. The Committee in charge of Computerisation is planning to start digitisation of all pending files along with e-filing of cases. If digitisation is done along with e-filing there can be a tremendous reduction of the cost incurred in digitisation. It will also be an

answer for the space constraints in storing the disposed files and in achieving the end goal of paperless courts.

### **E-OFFICE**

e-Office is a web application enabling the High Court of Kerala to automate the entire workflow of file processing starting from Tapal creation, File Creation, File processing and issuing orders from the file. The launch of e-Office marks a fundamental change in internal office procedures which is so far based on manual handling of files and paper movement. The use of e-Office would lead to speedier decision making, transparency, accountability, and positive impact on the environment by cutting down the use of paper and printing. File Management System (eFile 7.2.0 version) which is the latest version and which is yet to be implemented in any other Government departments in the State, is implemented in the High Court in selected pilot sections and two magistrate courts in the District Judiciary.

### **VCONSOL**

High Court of Kerala implemented VCONSOL Application for Court Proceedings. VCONSOL Court is a role-based, custom-made virtual courthouse made in India. It uses the MeitY award-winning VCONSOL VC engine based on MCU technology for a smoother video conferencing experience even at a very low internet speed. In VCONSOL Courthouse any number of courtrooms can be created & supported.

### **REVAMPED WEBSITE FOR HIGH COURT**

A revamped GIGW compliant dynamic website of the High Court “hckerala.gov.in” was launched on 2nd November 2020. The website being dynamic, all contents to be displayed on the website are to be updated through the dashboard provided to the designated Sections of the High Court. The web portal has been designed in such a manner that dynamic information displayed in the website is being fetched from underlying web applications/ databases relating to the Judicial and Administrative functions of the High Court as well as the Subordinate Courts. All the services related to Kerala High Court have been integrated with the new website.

### **JUSTICE CLOCK**

Justice Clock has been installed in the High Court, which is an LED display board that shows information such as the number of pending cases and solved cases across various courts in the District Judiciary as well as the High Court. Facility has been incorporated in the system to convert the display as a live display, to display data fed via online /live mode in the Justice clock.

## **COURT AUTOMATION STUDY**

A complete automation of justice delivery system in Kerala is a vision of the Committee in charge of Computerisation and many deliberations were made with the government and the government assured full support and assistance. As per the suggestion of Chief Secretary level meeting, the Digital University, Kerala has been entrusted to conduct a study and submit a roadmap and a design to accomplish full Automation. The Vice-Chancellor of the Digital University Dr. Saji Gopinath is heading the team of experts for the study and has submitted a preliminary proposal. The Digital University has to conduct a detailed Functional Requirement Study(FRS). This is expected to be a clear road map, design, and a vision document for complete automation.

## **PAPERLESS COURTS**

The paperless court concept is implemented in two pilot locations; one Judicial First Class Magistrate Court and one Addl. Chief Judicial Magistrate Court identified by the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala. The project envisages to cover all functionalities in a peerless mode. The repository of case documents are created by consuming eFiled cases and by scanning of existing files. An online application is being developed under guidance of Hon'ble High Court Computer Committee which will cater to the needs of all stakeholders; such as Judges, Advocates, Police, Prison and Court Officials for managing the digitised documents.

### Important Features

Integration of various organs of the project such as CIS NC 3.2, eFiling ver 3.0, ICJS

and web application covering various functionalities in a Magestrate Court are being taken care. Thrust is given for document management, sharing of data between various stakeholders etc.

- CIS 3.2 for process generation and publishing

The CIS NC 3.2 modules for process generation and publishing can be used for

generation the summons which can be uploaded to the paperless court web portal after digital signing.

For further processing by stakeholders

- Document management server for paperless environment

All types of documents can be uploaded to the paperless courts environment which

can be viewed in flip book style by users concerned. Provision for marking and annotation also will be provided in the documents

- Witness deposition management

Preparing the depositions and authentication by imposing witness thumb impressions and signature of the judicial officer are taken in this module. The same will be available to the concerned stakeholder.

- Online Bail Bond filing

All functions in filing of Bail Bonds and processing of the same is provided in this

module. Major functions are filing with other requisite documents by the advocate, Scrutiny of the same by the Bench Clerk, Surety Thumb Capture & Generation of Release order by the Judge along with Esign facility, Jail memo and Station Memo generation and Issuance by email as well as at the dashboard. Digital Signing of Process by the Judge and Download provision of the same at the police dashboard is also provided .

### **ONLINE COPY APPLICATION FOR SUBORDINATE COURTS**

The application is for filing of Online copy application for both certified and free copy application by the Advocate and the litigant with a single sign on irrespective of the establishment for any type of document. There is facility for filing of required documents such as affidavits and sanction petition along with the copy application as per the rule. Applicants can know the status online at each stage at his dashboard. Status of the application as well as downloading the QRCode generated Digitally signed Certified Copies are available in the dashboard of the applicant. The feature for forwarding the certified copies as email attachment is also available. Made over applications from one court to another court are also taken care to avoid duplicate entry of the copy application. Features like District Admin, State Admin Dashboard along with replies for support tickets are provided.

### **RECRUITMENT PORTAL**

Recruitment portal of High Court of Kerala is a comprehensive web based application to support the entire recruitment process, ranging from issuing of notifications to publishing of rank list. It is an exclusive portal to manage and monitor recruitments to various posts in the High Court of Kerala, Kerala Higher Judicial Service Examination, Kerala Judicial Service Examination, State Brief and In-service

examinations for the staffs of the High Court of Kerala. The web portal is integrated with SBlePAY and provides online and offline fee payment modes.

### **ONLINE RTI FILING AND WORKFLOW MANAGEMENT**

This application is being developed to effectively manage the activities of the

High Court Registry pertaining to the Right to Information Act, 2005. Major functionalities of this application are:

- Online filing of RTI applications through the dynamic High Court Website and also to make payment online. An applicant can view the status of a filed RTI application online through the RTI Web Portal.
- Any Indian Citizen can file RTI online/offline.
- Internal processing of RTI applications in the PIO section of the High Court.
- The application filed through the Web Portal would reach the "PIO Section", who would transmit the RTI application electronically to the concerned section (administrative as well as judicial) and get back the response.
- Disposal of the RTI application and intimation of the application status in the Web Portal as well as intimation of the same through email/SMS.
- First appeals can also be filed online against existing applications.
- First/Second appeal status online view.

The application will be ready for deployment very soon.

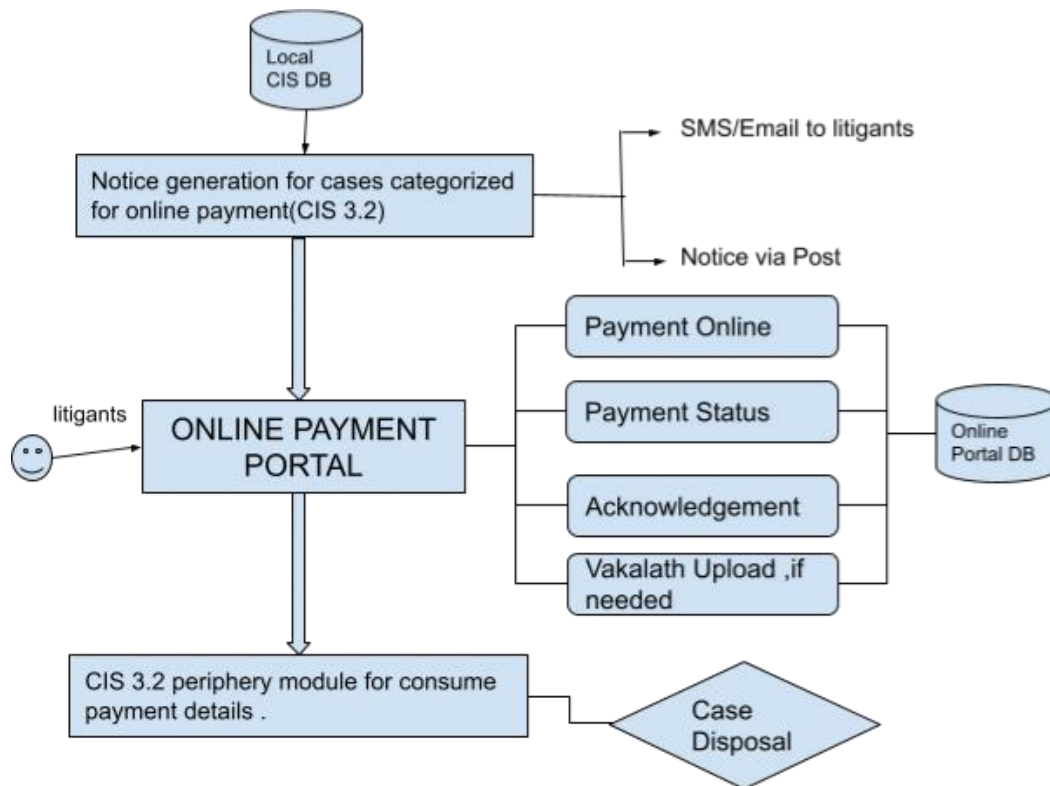
### **MACT CLAIM CALCULATOR**

The Module is developed for helping the MACT courts in the calculations of motor accident claims. The application is based on a predefined set of equations and lookup table data. The major objective of the module is to provide a facility for the court to have a uniform claim calculation support system. The feature for the Judge to adjudicate and feed the fine amount is provided and to tag the details with Case in CIS NC 3.2.

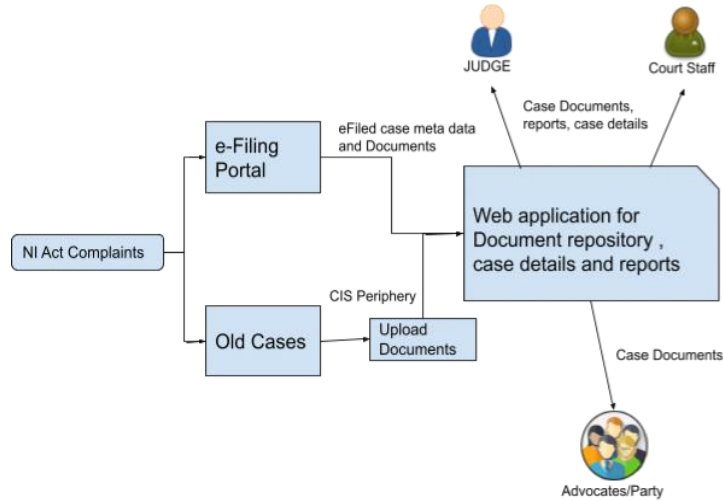


## EPAYMENT OF FINES IN MAGISTRATE COURTS (Ongoing Project)

ePayment for court fines is a proposed payment facility for Courts. An ePay system is a way of making transactions or paying for Court through an electronic medium, without the use of cheque or cash. The cases which are included in the category of cases which can be paid online and get disposed can use this facility. The Payment link and the instructions will be shared to the litigants by SMS /email. In case the mobile number and the email of the litigants is not given then the method of sending the notice by post can be followed.



## **CONCEPT OF DIGITAL NI ACT COURTS (Upcoming)**



The concept of digital NI act courts is proposed to be developed and implemented for data management and analytics, Case progress monitoring and for maintaining a paperless court environment. Thereby ensuring the speedy disposal of NI act complaints. The judicial pendency of the NI act complaints can be closely monitored and analysed in order to achieve the goal of reaching the minimum judicial pendency in NI act complaints.

The integration of various applications can be done in order to accelerate the process of speedy disposal of NI Act complaints . The various organs of the project may consist of stage wise data analytics of NI Act complaints, mandatory eFiling of NI Act complaints with CIS 3.2 integration, Setting up of a mechanism for process monitoring and speedy delivery, Sharing of data and documents with magistrates and advocate/party concerned.

## **APPLICATION FOR THE SELECTION OF STATE BRIEF**

A web based application is developed to invite online applications from eligible advocates to be included in the Senior and Junior panels of State Brief. A State Brief is appointed by the Court to defend an accused person, who has not engaged an Advocate and who is under sentence of death or has been called upon to show cause why a sentence of death should not be passed on him or in an appeal filed under section 417 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 where a sentence of imprisonment is impossible, at the cost of State, as per Rule 183 of Rules of the High Court of Kerala, 1971.

Applications are invited based on the procedure laid down by the Honorable the Chief Justice in that regard. The selection to each Panel of State Brief is made by the Honorable the Chief Justice based on the recommendation of the Committee of the Honorable Judges. The suitability of Advocates who submit their application is decided by a Committee of the Honorable Judges.

#### **AN ONLINE APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYEES' WELFARE FUND.**

Kerala High Court Employees' Welfare Fund was established in November, 1993. The Hon'ble Chief Justice is its Patron and the Registrar General is the Chairman. The income for the Fund is the monthly subscription from the members (about 1500 employees). The fund provides Medical Loan upto `Rs 5 lakhs to its members and Death Benefit of Rs `5 lakhs to the legal heirs of employees who die while in service.

With the launch of the online application the employees can join the fund, apply for medical loan, upload medical certificates and other supporting documents like medical bills, view the status of their loan application, their subscription details and medical loan details. They can view the statement of accounts of the Welfare Fund and various notices and information provided by the welfare fund. All intimations to the stakeholders are through Sandes (GIMS) integrated to the application. A total digital transformation of the work flows and processes of the Welfare Fund is envisaged without any duplication/copying of database and made available to the stakeholders under single sign in to the official web portal of the High Court. This module is in testing mode and will be implemented shortly.

#### **QUICK E-FILING- An Additional option for e-filing.**

In order to reduce the time taken for e filing, the IT Directorate has implemented Quick e-filing Mode in addition to the existing e-filing module reducing the number of steps to four. It will enable the entry of all metadata in the first stage, uploading of all case file documents in the second stage, E-payment in third stage and OTP Authentication in the fourth stage.

## **TICKETING AND TASK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The new CMS, which was rolled out in the month of May 2021, has been running effectively in the High Court of Kerala. As with any organization intensive system, CMS also has its fair share of challenges and issues raised by the section users. Issues are presently being raised by end-users through phone calls, direct walk-up to the IT section, emails, or in whatsapp groups. This requires the programmers to deviate their valuable time to attending countless phone calls and searching different whatsapp groups for any new issues, instead of devoting their time to programming.

To rise above these challenges and approach the issue redressal in a systematic and orderly manner and hence stay ahead of the curve, a ticket management system is hereby proposed by the IT Section, High Court, with the active participation and cooperation from the section users, which can prove to be a real game-changer for the High Court of Kerala. We can handle our current ticket load, scale our operations with ease, and monitor our progress at every step of the way. A ticket management system can be defined as a robust software used to register, organize, prioritize, and resolve support tickets. These tickets can be issues or requests raised by various users. An online ticket management system works by creating a unique ticket that records interactions pertaining to an issue. This ticket is shared among the agents as well as the section user and acts as an important point of reference for both parties. Once a ticket is generated, the agents can track its progress right from the start to the point when the desired solution is shared with the section user. Now, depending on the nature and the complexity of the issue, it can be prioritized, escalated, or assigned to a different department. Once the issue has been resolved,

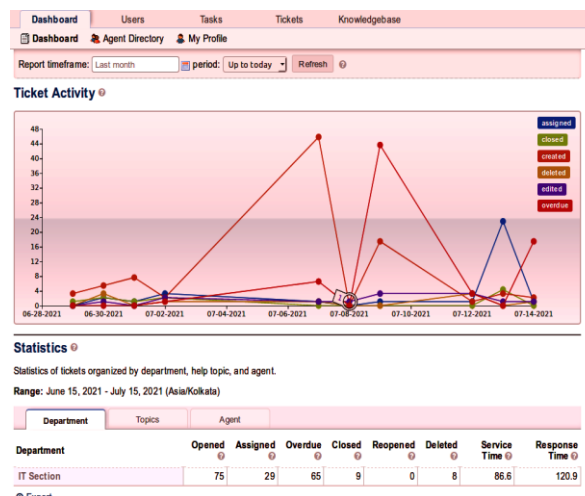
the agents can mark the ticket as 'Resolved' or 'Closed'. However, these tickets can be reopened in the ticket management system if the user encounters a similar issue again or initiates follow-up requests.

We propose to use 'osTicket', which is a widely-used open source support ticket system. It seamlessly integrates inquiries created via email, phone and web-based forms into a simple easy-to-use multi-user web interface. It can effectively manage, organize and archive all support requests and responses in one place while providing users with accountability and responsiveness they deserve.

1. A login ID and password shall be provided for all users.
2. The designated admin can monitor the status of tasks and tickets and evaluate the progress in their dashboard. The team lead or the assigned person can assign the tasks to the corresponding agent. All agents can login and see their pending tasks and tickets in the dashboard and work on them and close them . Once the issue is closed a mail is sent to the user who reported the issue.

## Benefits

- Helps to manage the processes like ticket categorization and prioritization, ticket routing, alerts and notifications, and ticket status management
- Will support the agents to spend more time resolving the actual support issues.
- Also enables the requests to be prioritized according to the requirement and difficulty of a query, instead of being handled in the order they are received.
- As the ticketing system is organized centrally there is no need of phone calls or emails trying to figure out the issues and their resolution processes.
- The strict implementation of the Ticketing and Task Management system among all the teams will improve the efficiency of all sections in our esteemed institution.
- Admin Dashboard



- When the users login they can see the tickets opened by them and the status.

Smitha | Profile | Tickets (33) - Sign Out

Support Center Home Open a New Ticket Tickets (33)

Search Help Topic: All Help Topics

Tickets Open (30) Closed (3)

Showing 1 - 25 of 30 Open Tickets

Ticket #	Create Date	Status	Subject	Department
835072	7/9/21	Open	difference in taking interim order for wpc a...	IT Section
952603	7/9/21	Open	IN DBP, DBAR, SSCR Amicus curiae not sho...	IT Section
663641	7/9/21	Open	S seat for PIL and R seat for Registrar party	IT Section
831736	7/7/21	Open	Connected case in judgement upload	IT Section
116394	7/7/21	Open	IA, vakalath, counter	IT Section
590935	7/7/21	Open	Defect case should display defect cured by...	IT Section
831927	7/7/21	Open	Again Orders - option to edit orders from p...	IT Section
425305	7/7/21	Open	Decree odt work	IT Section
628671	7/7/21	Open	Case search web - facility to view case aris...	IT Section
437344	7/7/21	Open	Appendix add option for un-numbered cases	IT Section
666801	7/7/21	Open	Save button while entering Appendix	IT Section
293610	7/7/21	Open	email alert and sms alert - urgent memo - f...	IT Section
153938	7/7/21	Open	Interim order - pending format	IT Section
908804	7/7/21	Open	Cause list email	IT Section
268331	7/7/21	Open	User menu @ CMS	IT Section
765644	7/7/21	Open	Cause list XML	IT Section
778339	7/7/21	Open	Sub-subject searchable format	IT Section
535983	7/7/21	Open	Organization registration issues	IT Section
538131	7/7/21	Open	Uploading additional orders	IT Section
773764	7/7/21	Open	Preview button for already uploaded order	IT Section
314187	7/7/21	Open	If IA allowed, system should add party and ...	IT Section
706422	7/7/21	Open	Order upload without Bench ID and cause l...	IT Section