

The Government has launched the eCourts Integrated Mission Mode Project in the country for computerization of District and subordinate courts, which also includes digitization with the objective of improving access to justice using technology

Posted On: 16 DEC 2022 4:58PM by PIB Delhi

The Minister of Law and Justice, Shri Kiren Rijju in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha today informed that the Government has launched the eCourts Integrated Mission Mode Project in the country for computerization of District and subordinate courts, which also includes digitization with the objective of improving access to justice using technology. The Phase I of eCourts was concluded in 2015. Phase II of the project started in 2015 under which 18,735 District & Subordinate courts have been computerised so far.

In the phase-I of the project from 2011-2015, out of total outlay of Rs.935 crore, the Government incurred an expenditure of Rs. 639.41crore. In the phase- II of the project, which started in 2015, out of total outlay of Rs. 1670 crore, the Government has released a sum of Rs. 1668.43 crore till 31.03.2022 to various implementing agencies involved in the implementation of the project.As per information provided by eCommittee of Supreme Court of India total 18,735 District and Sub-ordinate courts have been digitised under the eCourts Project so far. 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:

1. Under the Wide Area Network (WAN) Project, 2973 courts sites have been commissioned with 10 Mbps to 100 Mbps bandwidth speed.
2. 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.
3. A new software patch and user manual for COVID-19 management has also been developed to help in smart scheduling of cases.
4. 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 21.74 crore cases and more than 19.80 crore orders / judgments (as on 01.12.2022). 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.

5. 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 1.50 cr. downloads till 31st October 2022) and JustIS app for judges (17,709 downloads till 31st November 2022). JustIS mobile app is now available in iOS as well.

6. 21 Virtual Courts in 17 States/UTs have been operationalized to handle traffic challan cases. More than 2.30 crore cases have been handled by 21 virtual courts and in more than 31 lakhs (31,67,080) cases online fine of more than Rs. 337.42 crore has been realised till 01.12.2022.

7. The Supreme Court of India emerged as a global leader by conducting 2,97,435 hearings (till 03.09.2022 since the beginning of lockdown period). The High Courts (75,80,347 cases and Subordinate Courts 1,65,20,791 cases) have conducted 2.41 crore virtual hearings till 03.09.2022. 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 courtrooms 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.

8. New e-filing system (version 3.0) has been rolled out for the electronic filing of legal papers with upgraded features. Draft eFiling rules have been formulated and circulated to the High Courts for adoption. A total of 19 High Courts have adopted the model rules of e-Filing as on 31.10.2022.

9. 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. A total of 16 High Courts have implemented ePayments in their respective jurisdictions. The Court Fees Act has been amended in 22 High Courts till 31.10.2022.

10. 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 28 States/ UTs.

11. 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.

12. To make effective use of database created through National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) and to make the information available to public 38 LED Display Message Sign Board System called Justice Clocks, have been installed in 24 High Courts.

13. Towards creating widespread awareness and familiarization of eFiling and eCourts services and to address “skill divide”, a manual on eFiling and a Brochure on “How to register for eFiling” has been made available in English, Hindi and 11 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 eFiling. The eCommittee of the Supreme Court of India has conducted trainings and awareness programmes on the ICT services. These programmes have covered nearly 5,13,080 stakeholders, including High Court Judges, Judges of the District Judiciary, Court Staff, Master Trainers among Judges/DSA, Technical Staff of High Courts, and Advocates.

As per data published on Electronic Transaction Aggregation & Analysis Layer (eTaal) portal, eCourts is leading among top 5 MMPs in India with total 639 Cr e-transactions in last one year.
