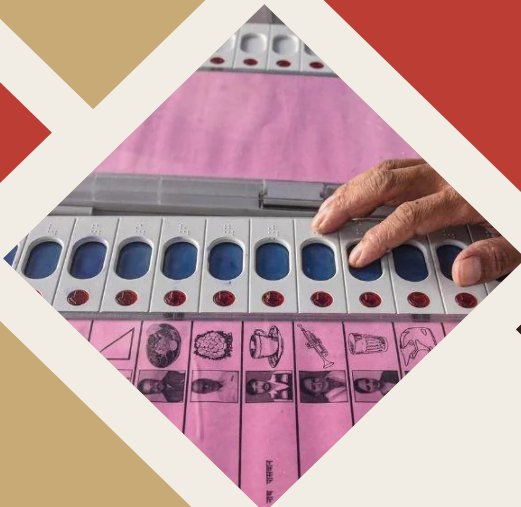
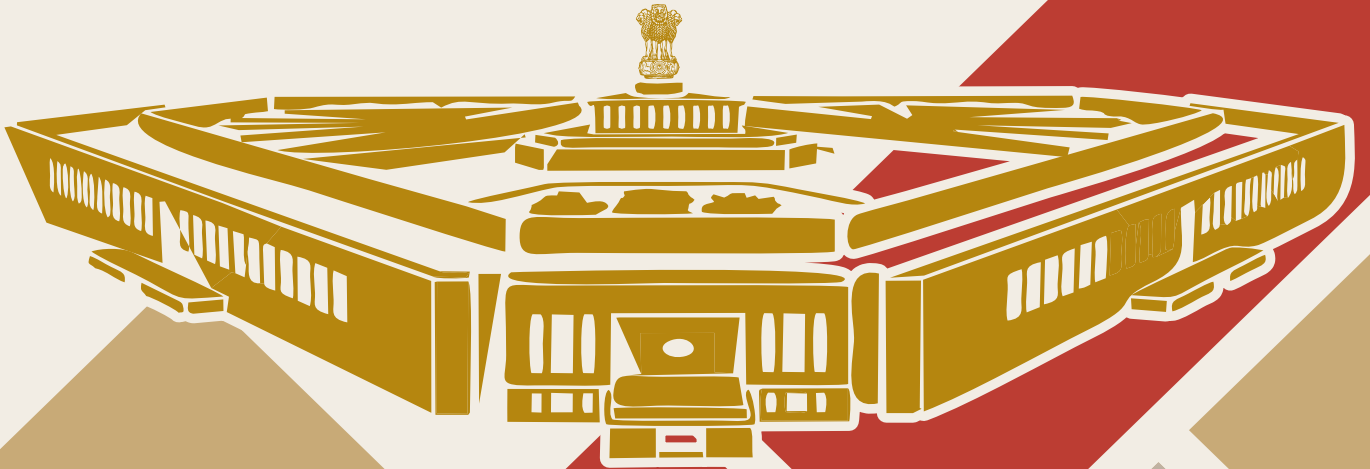




भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

विधि और न्याय मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE

वार्षिक रिपोर्ट ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025





सत्यमेव जयते

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अर्जुन राम मेघवाल
Arjun Ram Meghwal



विधि एवं न्याय राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)

व
संसदीय कार्य राज्य मंत्री
भारत सरकार, नई दिल्ली-110001

MINISTER OF STATE (I/C) FOR LAW & JUSTICE
AND

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI-110001

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आज़ादी का
अमृत महोत्सव

अर्जुन राम मेघवाल



विधि और न्याय राज्य मंत्री
भारत सरकार



संदेश

भारत के उच्चतम न्यायालय की संविधान पीठ द्वारा दिनांक 9 नवंबर, 2019 को निर्णय पारित किए जाने के साथ ही अयोध्या में श्रीराम जन्मभूमि पर प्रभू श्रीराम के भव्य मंदिर के निर्माण का मार्ग प्रशस्त हुआ। यह एक अद्भुत घटना है। इस मंदिर के निर्माण से देश ही नहीं बल्कि संपूर्ण विश्व का जनमानस आह्लादित है। लगभग 500 वर्षों की लंबी प्रतीक्षा के पश्चात् इस मंदिर के निर्माण के साथ देश ने अपनी आध्यात्मिक और सांस्कृतिक धरोहरों के संरक्षण और संवर्धन की दिशा में एक लंबी छलांग लगाई है। उच्चतम न्यायालय की संविधान पीठ द्वारा श्रीराम जन्मभूमि के मामले में पारित निर्णय के हिंदी अनुवाद के विमोचन के अवसर पर मैं अत्यंत प्रसन्नता का अनुभव कर रहा हूं। हिंदी जन-जन की भाषा है और हमारी राजभाषा भी है। राजभाषा हिंदी में यह निर्णय उपलब्ध करवाने के लिए मैं विधायी विभाग के अंतर्गत कार्यरत विधि साहित्य प्रकाशन की प्रशंसा करता हूं। आशा करता हूं कि हिंदी में अनुवादित इस निर्णय के अध्ययन से देश एवं दुनिया के सामान्य मानवी, बुद्धिजीवी एवं इतिहास, सांस्कृतिक विरासतों में रुचि रखने वाले हिंदी भाषी विद्वान लाभान्वित होंगे और इस मामले में अंतर्निहित समस्त कानूनी बिंदुओं को अपनी भाषा में भलीभांति समझ सकेंगे।

अर्जुन राम मेघवाल

नई दिल्ली
नवंबर, 2024

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डा. राजीव मणि
सचिव
विधायी विभाग



विधि और न्याय मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार



संदेश

माननीय उच्चतम न्यायालय की संविधान न्यायपीठ द्वारा श्रीराम जन्मभूमि बाबरी मस्जिद विवाद में पारित निर्णय एक ऐतिहासिक निर्णय है। इस निर्णय द्वारा माननीय उच्चतम न्यायालय ने विधि के अनेक जटिल प्रश्नों के उत्तर दिए जैसे कि बालक के रूप में विराजमान भगवान श्रीरामलला की अवयस्कता के आधार पर परिसीमा का प्रश्न, धर्म-पुस्तकों और यात्रा-वृत्तांतों के आधार पर श्रीराम जन्मभूमि को चिह्नित किए जाने का प्रश्न, लंबी अवधि तक किसी भूमि को धर्मस्थल के रूप में प्रयोग किए जाने के आधार पर उस भूमि को वक्फ संपत्ति के रूप में अभिनिर्धारित किए जाने का प्रश्न और भूमि के उत्खनन पर पाए गए पुरातात्विक अवशेषों के आधार पर भवन की प्रकृति के अभिनिर्धारण का प्रश्न। विधि साहित्य प्रकाशन ने पाठकों को इस निर्णय का हिंदी अनुवाद उपलब्ध कराकर निश्चित रूप से एक अद्वितीय कार्य किया है। मैं इस निर्णय के हिंदी पाठ के विमोचन के शुभ अवसर पर विधि साहित्य प्रकाशन के समस्त अधिकारियों और कर्मचारियों को बधाई देता हूँ।

राजीव मणि

डा. राजीव मणि
सचिव

नई दिल्ली
नवंबर, 2024

CHAPTER - I

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

The Legislative Department is primarily mandated to provide assistance to the Union Government in drafting of its legislations and processing the legislative business to be placed before the Houses of Parliament as per the priority of various administrative Departments and Ministries.

1. FUNCTIONS

1.1 The Legislative Department is concerned with the following matters, namely: -

- (i) Scrutiny of Notes for the Cabinet pertaining to all legislative proposals from drafting angle;
- (ii) Drafting and scrutiny of all Government Bills including Constitution (Amendment) Bills, translation of all the Bills into Hindi and forwarding of both the English and the Hindi versions of the Bills to the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha Secretariat as the case may be for introduction in Parliament; drafting of official amendments to the Bills; scrutiny of non-official amendments and rendering assistance to administrative Ministries/Departments to decide the acceptability or otherwise of non-official amendments;
- (iii) Rendering assistance to Parliament and its Joint/Select Committees at all stages through which a Bill passes before enactment. This includes scrutiny of, and assistance in preparation of reports and revision of Bills for the Committees;
- (iv) Drafting of Ordinances to be promulgated by the President;

- (v) Drafting of legislation to be enacted as President's Acts in respect of States under President's rule;
- (vi) Drafting of Regulations to be made by the President;
- (vii) Drafting of Constitution Orders, *i.e.* Orders required to be issued under the Constitution;
- (viii) Scrutiny and vetting of all statutory rules, regulations, orders, notifications, resolutions, schemes, etc., and their translation into Hindi;
- (ix) Scrutiny of State legislation in the concurrent list III of 7th Schedule, which requires assent of the President under article 254 of the Constitution;
- (x) Scrutiny of legislation to be enacted by the Union territory Legislatures;
- (xi) Elections to Parliament, the Legislatures of States and Union territories and Offices of the President and Vice-President;
- (xii) Determination of expenditure on elections between the Union and the States/Union territories having Legislatures;
- (xiii) Election Commission of India and electoral reforms;
- (xiv) Administration of the Representation of the People Act, 1950; the Representation of the People Act, 1951;
- (xv) Matters relating to the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023;

- (xvi) Matters relating to the Delimitation of Parliamentary and Legislative Assembly Constituencies;
- (xvii) Legislation on matters relating to personal laws, transfer of property, contracts, evidence, civil procedure, etc., in the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution;
- (xviii) Imparting training in legislative drafting to the officers of the Union/State Governments, etc.;
- (xix) Publication of Central Acts, Ordinances and Regulations and their authorised translations in Hindi and other languages specified in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution and also translation of legal and statutory documents.
- (xx) Publication of Hindi translation of selected judgments of the Supreme Court and High Courts on cases pertaining to Constitutional, civil and criminal laws in the form of law Journals (*Patrikas*).

1.2 Legislative Department does not have any statutory or autonomous body under its control. It has two other wings under it, namely, the Official Languages Wing (OLW) and Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan (VSP), which are responsible for propagation of Laws and Legal literatures in Hindi and other Official Languages.

(i) Official Languages Wing of the Legislative Department is responsible for preparing and publishing standard legal terminology and also for translating into Hindi, all the Bills to be introduced in Parliament, all Central Acts, Ordinances, Subordinate legislations, etc., as required under the Official Languages Act, 1963. This Wing is also responsible for arranging translation of the Central Acts, Ordinances, etc., into the Official Languages as specified in the Eighth Schedule

to the Constitution and also as required under the Authoritative Texts (Central Laws) Act, 1973.

(ii) **Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan** is mainly concerned with bringing out authoritative Hindi versions of reportable judgements of the Supreme Court and the High Courts with the objective of promoting the progressive use of Hindi in the legal field. Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan brings out various publications of legal literature in Hindi. It also holds exhibitions in various States for giving wide publicity to its publication of legal literature in Hindi and to promote their sales.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SET UP

The organizational set-up of the Legislative Department includes the officer at the rank of Secretary, Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel, Additional Legislative Counsel, Deputy Legislative Counsel and Assistant Legislative Counsel and other support staff. The works relating to legislative drafting in the case of principal legislation and scrutinizing and vetting of subordinate legislation have been distributed among various Groups. Each Group is headed by a Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel or Additional Secretary, as the case may be, who in turn are assisted by a number of Legislative Counsels at different levels. The Secretary of the Legislative Department acts as the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and the Additional Secretary is in charge of all subordinate legislation. The Organizational Chart of the Legislative Department is at **Annexure-I**.

3. LEGISLATIVE-I SECTION



Legislation is one of the major instruments of articulating the policy of the Government. In this context, the Legislative Department plays an important role to secure the policy objectives, which the Government may wish to achieve through legislation.

- (1) Legislative Department not only performs functions as the primary Department for drafting the legislation initiated by the administrative Ministries and Departments but also initiates legislative proposals in respect of the matters with which it is administratively concerned.
- (2) Legislative Department drafts the Finance Bill to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government every year. This exercise is undertaken in the Legislative Department on the budget proposals being brought before it by the Ministry of Finance. For the purpose of convenience, the various subjects on which Bills are drafted in the Legislative Department at the behest of administrative Ministries/ Departments can be broadly categorized as under:-

- (a) Constitutional amendments;
- (b) Economic and corporate laws;
- (c) Civil Procedure and other social welfare legislation;
- (d) Criminal laws;
- (e) Repeal of obsolete laws; and
- (f) Miscellaneous laws.

(3) During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024, this Department has examined seventy-one (71) Notes for the Cabinet/ legislative proposals in consultation with different Ministries/Departments for drafting Bill or Ordinances to be promulgated by the President for introduction in the Houses of the Parliament. Legislative Bills which are 29 in number were forwarded to Parliament for introduction during this period. The list of Bills forwarded to Parliament after the approval of the Union Cabinet during this period is as follows: -

Bills forwarded to Parliament for introduction

Sl. No.	Title of the Bills
1.	The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024
2.	The Finance Bill, 2024
3.	The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Bill, 2024
4.	The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024
5.	The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024
6.	The Appropriation Bill, 2024
7.	The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation Bill, 2024

8.	The Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 2024
9.	The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation (No. 2) Bill, 2024
10.	The Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Law (Amendment) Bill, 2024
11.	The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation (No. 3) Bill, 2024
12.	The Appropriation (No. 2) Bill, 2024
13.	The Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024
14.	The Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024
15.	The Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill, 2024
16.	The Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Bill, 2024
17.	The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024
18.	The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024
19.	The Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill, 2024
20.	The Bills of Lading Bill, 2024
21.	The Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2024
22.	The Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024
23.	The Boilers Bill, 2024
24.	The Finance (No. 2) Bill, 2024
25.	The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024
26.	The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024
27.	The Appropriation (No. 3) Bill, 2024

28.	The Constitution (129 th) Amendment Bill, 2024
29.	The Union Territories Law (Amendment) Bill, 2024

(4) Out of the Bills which were pending before Parliament and those introduced, 16 Bills have been enacted into Acts along with one Constitutional Amendment Act. The list of the Acts enacted during this period is as follow: -

Acts enacted

Sl. No.	Title of the Acts
1.	The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024(Act No. 1 of 2024)
2.	The Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Act, 2024(Act No. 2 of 2024)
3.	The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act,2024(Act No. 3 of 2024)
4.	The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Act,2024(Act No. 4 of 2024)
5.	The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024(Act No. 5 of 2024)
6.	The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Orders (Amendment) Act, 2024 - (Odisha) (Act No. 6 of 2024)
7.	The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Orders (Amendment) Act, 2024 – A.P. (Act No. 7 of 2024)
8.	The Finance Act, 2024(Act No.8 of 2024)

9.	The Appropriation (Vote on Account) Act, 2024(Act No. 9 of 2024)
10.	The Appropriation Act, 2024(Act No. 10 of 2024)
11.	The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation Act, 2024(Act No. 11 of 2024)
12.	The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation (No.2) Act, 2024(Act No. 12 of 2024)
13.	The Jammu and Kashmir Appropriation (No.3) Act, 2024(Act No. 13 of 2024)
14.	The Appropriation (No.2) Act, 2024(Act No. 14 of 2024)
15.	The Finance (No.2) Act, 2024(Act No. 15 of 2024)
16.	The Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024(Act No. 16 of 2024)

(5) One regulation has been issued under article 240 of the Constitution: -

Regulations issued

Sl. No.	Title of the Regulation
1.	The Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Co-operative Societies Regulation, 2024

(6) SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024, a total number of **2316** subordinate legislations including statutory rules, regulations, orders and notifications were scrutinized and vetted by this Department.

4. LEGISLATIVE II SECTION



ELECTION LAWS AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

1. The Leg. II Section, Legislative Department is administratively concerned with the following Acts in connection with the conduct of elections to Parliament, State/ UT Legislatures and to the offices of the President and the Vice-President, reform of laws/rules made there under and matters pertaining/incidental thereto:

- (i) The Representation of the People Act, 1950,
- (ii) The Representation of the People Act, 1951,
- (iii) The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952,
- (iv) The Delimitation Act, 2002,
- (v) The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council Act, 2005,
- (vi) The Tamil Nadu Legislative Council Act, 2010.

2. The electoral system of our country, which is also called the first-past-the-post system of elections, has completed seventy-one years. We have covered the journey of these seventy-one years after India became Republic with glory and exemplary successes in all the fields. This has been the result of the relentless toil and continuous struggle of the millions who have shaped the present and future of this great country with their sweat and blood. Undoubtedly, this journey has not been an easy sail and we have witnessed much turbulence and turmoil during this period. During this period, the political scenario and the electoral process of the country have undergone continuous epoch-making changes. With each election, the complexities of the electoral process and the election management have been increasing. Every single ballot has proved extremely valuable. Therefore, Electoral reforms are indispensable to strengthen India's democratic legitimacy, citizen trust, and institutional integrity. The Electoral Reforms are an ongoing and continuous process that involve a major policy decision in consultation with various stakeholders. By addressing systemic flaws and adopting robust electoral process the Government is committed to ensure that elections remain truly representative and fair.

3. The aforesaid scenario, which has been continuously changing, has necessitated reforms of electoral laws on several occasions. In the light of the experience gained during elections, recommendations of the Election Commission, the proposals received from different sources including political parties, eminent personalities in public life, the deliberations in the Legislatures and various public bodies, the successive Governments have taken a number of measures, from time to time, to bring about electoral reforms.

ONE NATION ONE ELECTION

4. Considering the significance of the synchronization of elections to the House of the People, State Legislative Assemblies and Local Bodies, a High-Level Committee

(HLC) was set up by the Government of India on 2nd September 2023 to examine the matter. After due examination of all the material available on record and the consultations held on the subject, the Committee submitted its recommendations to the Hon'ble President on 14th March, 2024. The Cabinet in its meetings held on 18-09-2024 accepted the recommendations of the HLC and also for taking further action for implementation of the said recommendations.

5. Accordingly, two Bills were prepared for implementation of the recommendations of HLC in the first stage, providing for amendment to the Constitution making provisions for holding simultaneous elections to the House of the People and all Legislative Assemblies and for making consequential amendment in the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963; the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.

6. Thereafter, the Cabinet in its meeting held on 12th December, 2024 approved the introduction of a Constitution Amendment Bill in Parliament for providing enabling provisions for holding simultaneous elections to the House of the People and all Legislative Assemblies and another Bill for making consequential amendments in the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963; the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019. Accordingly, the said Bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha on 17th December, 2024.

7. Salient features of the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Amendment) Bill, 2024: -

- It proposes to insert a new article 82A (Simultaneous elections to the House of the People and all Legislative Assemblies) and to amend article 83 (Duration of Houses of Parliament), article 172 (Duration of State Legislatures) and article 327 (Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures).

- As per the Bill, after its enactment, the President of India may issue a notification on the first sitting of the House of the People constituted after a general election on which the provisions relating to the simultaneous elections shall come into force. This date of the notification shall be called as appointed date.
- The term of the House of the People shall be five years from the first sitting of that House. The term of all Legislative Assemblies constituted in any general election held after the appointed date and before the expiry of the full term of the House of the People shall come to an end on the expiry of the full term of the House of the People.
- Thereafter, after the expiry of the full term of the House of the People, the Election Commission shall conduct general elections to the House of the People and all Legislative Assemblies simultaneously.
- If election of any Legislative Assembly cannot be conducted along with the general election of the House of the People, Election Commission may recommend to the President that the election to such Assembly may be conducted at a later date; and in that case the term of the Legislative Assembly shall end on the same date as the end of the full term of the House of the People.
- In case of dissolution of the House of the People or a Legislative Assembly before the expiry of the full term of the House of the People or Legislative Assembly, the term of that House or Assembly constituted pursuant to an election shall only be for the unexpired term (remainder) of that House or Assembly.

8. Salient features of the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024: -

The second Bill, namely, the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 proposes to make consequential amendments in section 5 of the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963; section 5 of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 and section 17 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 so as to align the provisions relating to Legislative Assemblies in Union territories with the proposed amendments to the Constitution.

GENERAL ELECTION TO THE LOK SABHA

9. As per clause (2) of article 83 of the Constitution, the House of the People, unless sooner dissolved, shall continue for five years from the date appointed for its first meeting and no longer and the expiration of said period of five years shall operate as a dissolution of the House. The term of the 17th Lok Sabha was expired on 16th June, 2024. According to section 14 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, for constitution a new House of the People on the expiration of the existing House or on its dissolution, the President shall, by one or more notifications published in the Gazette of India, on such date or dates as may be recommended by the Election Commission, call upon all Parliamentary Constituencies to elect members.

10. The Election Commission of India (ECI), through its Press Note dated 16th March, 2024, announced the Schedule for General Election to the 18th Lok Sabha as well as to the Legislative Assemblies of the States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim. Thereafter, on the basis of proceedings, as recommended by the ECI, the notifications calling for elections by the specified Constituencies was published under sub-section (2) of section 14 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 with the approval of the President on the dates as recommended by the Commission and accordingly the General Elections to the Houses of People were held in seven phases on different dates as mentioned below:—

	Phase-1	Phase-2	Phase-3	Phase-4	Phase-5	Phase-6	Phase-7
Date for issue of notification	20.03.2024	28.03.2024	12.04.2024	18.04.2024	26.04.2024	29.04.2024	07.05.2024
Date of Poll	19.04.2024	26.04.2024	07.05.2024	13.05.2024	20.05.2024	25.05.2024	01.06.2024

RESERVATION OF SEATS FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES IN GOA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

11. The Government received multiple representations from various sources, with a request to direct the initiation of the process to identify and determine the seats to provide for reservation to the Scheduled Tribes community in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Goa, as the same is not presently available to them. Since, the exercise of delimitation was initiated in the year 2002, the population of the Schedules Tribes in the State of Goa was recorded at that time in the census figures of the year 2001 as only 566, whereas the total population of the State of Goa was more than thirteen lakhs, the Scheduled Tribes communities of Goa, were not able to avail the benefit of reservations of seats as per the Constitution for their communities in the Legislative Assembly.

12. Subsequently, three new communities, namely, Kunbi, Gawda and Velip were included in the List of Scheduled Tribes of the State of Goa *vide* the Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders) Amendment Act, 2003 which increased the number of Scheduled Tribes population in the State considerably. Thus, a peculiar situation had arisen in the State, wherein the population of the Scheduled Tribes in the State vis-à-vis the population of Scheduled Castes had been considerably higher (as per the Primary Census Abstract, 2011 for the State of Goa, the Total Population was 14,58,545; the population of Scheduled Castes was 25,449 and the population of Scheduled Tribes was 1,49,275) but no seats were reserved for Scheduled Tribes and they were unable to avail the constitutional benefit of reservation afforded to them by article 332.

13. Further, there is no provision in the Representation of the People Act, 1950 or in the Representation of the People Act, 1951, or in the Delimitation Act, 2002, enabling the Election Commission to carry out further delimitation of constituencies or to

determine constituencies for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in the States/Union territories where the delimitation exercise was carried out by the Delimitation Commission constituted under the Delimitation Act, 2002 and in terms of the provisions of the Constitution on the basis of 2001 census.

14. The Delimitation Commission since ceased to exist after completion of its assigned task in the year 2008. Under articles 82 and 170 of the Constitution, further delimitation stands frozen until the figures for the first census taken after the year 2026 have been published. Therefore, no readjustment of seats could be undertaken to provide the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Tribes in the State of Goa where the population of the Scheduled Tribes has increased considerably as per 2011 census vis-à-vis 2001 census figures.

15. Hence, in order to ensure that the Constitutional rights of the Scheduled Tribes in the State of Goa are safeguarded, it was imperative to enact a law to provide for enabling provisions empowering the Election Commission to make amendments in the Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order, 2008 and readjust the seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Goa for the Scheduled Tribes of the State. Hence, a Bill namely, the Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill, 2024 has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 5th August, 2024 by the Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C) Law and Justice.

AMENDMENT OF ELECTION LAWS

16. On recommendation of the ECI, the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 has been amended by the Conduct of Elections (Amendment) Rules, 2024 and the same has been published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, *vide* notification S.O995.(E), dated 1st March, 2024. Now, the age limit for senior citizen to be eligible for postal ballot has been increased from 80 to 85 years.

17. In order to safeguard the public interest without infringing the right of inspection/transparency or access to the statutory and non-statutory papers, the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 has been amended by the Conduct of Election (Second Amendment) Rules, 2024 and the has been published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, *vide* SO 5517(E), dated 20th December, 2024.

COURT CASES INVOLVING ELECTION LAWS

18. The Legislative Department, being administratively in-charge of various election laws has also to deal with various court cases involving validity of election laws. In the beginning of the year 2024, there were 155 cases pending in the Supreme Court and different High Courts on election related matters. During the said year, 30 fresh cases were received, in which appropriate actions have been taken. During the period (from January, 2024 to December, 2024), 10 cases have been disposed of. As on 1st January, 2025, there are about 175 cases are pending before the Supreme Court and various High Courts. All cases are being monitored.

CONDUCT OF PARLIAMENTARY WORK

19. During the year 2024-25, the Legislative Department, which has been allocated the work of coordination/conduct of parliamentary business of the Ministry of Law and Justice, dealt with the following items: -

S. No.	Item of Business	Figures for the Ministry of Law and Justice.
1.	Lok Sabha Questions	193
2.	Rajya Sabha Questions.	129
3.	Private Members' Bill in Lok Sabha.	6

4.	Private Members' Bills in Rajya Sabha	8
5.	Private Members' Resolutions	1
6.	Matter raised during Zero Hour (Lok Sabha)	9
7.	Matter raised during Zero Hour (Rajya Sabha)	4
8.	Matter raised under Rule 377 in Lok Sabha.	4
9.	Special Mention in Rajya Sabha.	10

5. LEGISLATIVE III SECTION



LEGISLATION IN CONCURRENT LIST

(1) As per the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, the following subjects which fall under List III - Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution have been allocated to this Department as regards legislation only:—

- (a) marriage and divorce, infants and minors, adoption, wills, intestate and succession, joint family and partition;
- (b) transfer of property other than agricultural land (excluding benami transactions, registration of deeds and documents);
- (c) contracts, but not including those relating to agricultural land;
- (d) actionable wrongs;
- (e) trusts and trustees, administrators - General and Official Trustees;
- (f) evidence and oaths;
- (g) civil procedure including limitation and arbitration;
- (h) charitable and religious endowments and religious institutions.

REPORTS OF THE LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA

(2) At present, the Legislative III is pursuing nine reports of the Law Commission of India on subjects mentioned in List III-Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution, with which this Department is concerned. The recommendations of the Commission are examined in consultation with the concerned Ministries/Departments of Central Government, State Governments/Union territories.

JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON OFFICES OF PROFIT

(3) A Parliamentary Joint Committee on Offices of Profit (JCOP) is constituted during the tenure of each Lok Sabha (since the Second Lok Sabha on 3rd August, 1959), which undertakes the work of continuous scrutiny in respect of nature, character and composition of Offices of Profit, statutory and non-statutory bodies under the Government of India or any State Government with a view to recommend the Government of India for amending the Schedule to the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959.

The Legislative Department examines references for the Secretariat of JCOP as to whether certain offices come within the purview of “Offices of Profit” and provides comments/opinion to the JCOP to enable them to arrive at an informed decision.

PETITIONS AND OTHER COURT CASES RELATING TO PERSONAL LAWS AND OTHER SUBJECTS

(4) The Legislative Department, being in-charge of personal laws (as regards legislation) and matters relating to List III- Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution, the Legislative-III Section handled various petitions and other court cases in the Supreme Court and different High Courts. During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024, twenty-seven fresh cases have been received. Necessary instructions, para wise comments, counter affidavits as per instructions have been prepared and conveyed to the Government Counsels.

STATE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

(5) State Legislative proposals relating to the subjects falling under concurrent list of the Constitution and allocated to this Department, which, by virtue of the provisions of clause (2) of article 254 of the Constitution, require assent of the President are scrutinized in the Department. During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024, forty-one (41) references relating to State Bills/Ordinances have been scrutinized.

Conduct of Parliamentary Work-

(6) During the year 2024, the Legislative-III Section has handled the Parliament Questions both starred and unstarred and other references in respect of the subjects allocated to the Section. The number of Parliamentary references dealt are as under:

Sl. No.	Item of business	Figures
1.	Lok Sabha Questions	9
2.	Rajya Sabha Questions	13
3.	Private Member Bills	8
4.	Matter of Public Importance	1

Further, replies to the Parliament Questions were also transmitted electronically in addition to forwarding their hard copies. All the RTI applications, Grievances received through CPGRAM portal and representations received in physical form were duly processed.

6. INSTITUTE OF LEGISLATIVE DRAFTING AND REASEARCH (ILDR)



Institute of Legislative Drafting (ILDR) was setup in January, 1989 under the aegis of the Legislative Department, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India to scale up the capabilities and availability of trained Legislative counsel to deal with legislative proposals. Since its inception, ILDR has been imparting theoretical, clinical, practical knowledge as well as offsite training in Legislative Drafting and Research to officers of Central Government Departments, State Government/Union territory Administrations, public institutions and government bodies.

The following courses are usually conducted by the ILDR annually:—

1. **Appreciation Course**:— The Institute of Legislative Drafting and Research (ILDR) offers 15 days Appreciation Course in Legislative Drafting for middle level officers of Central Government Ministries/Departments/Attached/Subordinate Offices and Central Public Sector Undertakings.
2. **Basic Course**:— The Institute of Legislative Drafting and Research (ILDR) offers 90 days Basic Course in Legislative Drafting for the middle level officers of the State Governments/Union territory Administrations.
3. **Structured Course**:— The Institute of Legislative Drafting and Research (ILDR) offers Structured Courses on Legislative Drafting specifically curated for officers of Central Government Departments, State Government/Union territory Administrations, Public Institutions and Government bodies on request.

Other initiatives of ILDR

1. **Internship/Fellowship**:— ILDR offers Internship to law students for a period of one month and upto a maximum three months and Fellowship to graduates in Law for a period upto three months.
2. **Conference, Seminars and Webinars for Legislative Department**:— ILDR conceives and executes National conferences, seminars and webinars on various topics including Legislative Drafting, Legal research, interpretation and any other subject.

3. **Capacity Building**:— The National Programme for Civil Service Capacity Building (Mission Karmayogi), a Capacity Building Unit was constituted by this Department to facilitate the preparation of Annual Capacity Building Plans for the Department.

Achievements pertaining to the year 2024

1. **Appreciation Course**:— So far 25 Appreciation Courses in Legislative Drafting have been completed and 444 officers of different Ministries/Departments have been benefitted. Recently, 25th Appreciation Course was conducted from 12th February, 2024 to 23rd February, 2024, wherein 38 officers attended the programme.
2. **Basic Course**:— So far 34 Basic Courses in Legislative Drafting have been completed and 438 officers of different State Governments/Union territory Administrations have been benefitted. 34th Basic Course was held from 29th July, 2024 to 25th October, 2024, wherein 20 officers attended the said programme.
3. **Structured course**:—
 - a. Lectures delivered by Dr. Manoj Kumar, Additional Secretary and Shri Diwakar Singh, Additional Secretary & Legislative Counsel at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy, Mussoorie on 19th March, 2024.
 - b. Dr. K.V. Kumar, Additional Legislative Counsel and Smt. Akali V. Konghay, Additional Legislative Counsel imparted 3 days training programme from 19th March, 2024 to 21st March, 2024 on 'Legislative Drafting' at Thiruvananthapuram for the officers of Government of Kerala.

- c. A 2 days' workshop to deliver lecture at FSSAI Headquarters on Drafting of sub-ordinate legislation, which would also cover interpretation of FSS Act 2006, drafting of Act/Rules/Regulations, procedure of legislation, is it related to FSSAI, simplification of legislation, proper use of punctuation in legislation, etc.
4. **Internship/fellowship**:— So far 538 students and law graduates have been benefitted by the Internship/Fellowship Scheme.
5. **Conference, Seminars and Webinars for Legislative Department**:—
- a. **National Conference on Constitution Day**:— A National Conference was organized by this Department on 26th November, 2024 to commemorate the 75th year of the Constitution of India to spread awareness about its importance and to acknowledge the contributions of its architect Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. In the said Conference, a book on *Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Judgment* in Hindi was released and launched an online course on the Constitution in Hindi.
- b. **Interaction and talks**:— This Department Head organized an interaction and talks programme with Shri **R. Venkataramani** Ld. Attorney General of India and the officers of Legislative Department on 27th March, 2024.
- c. **Workshop on Happiness**:— A lecture cum workshop on “Happiness-Building Capacity through Human values” was also conducted by Legislative Department on 22nd August, 2024 wherein Dr. Nanditesh Nilay, Author and Motivational Speaker was the resource person.

- d. **Workshop during National Learning Week:**— A two-hour session on the New Criminal Laws was conducted by this Department on 24th October, 2024, wherein Shri E. Chandrasekaran (Advocate) was the resource person.
6. **Guide/Manual on Simplification of Laws:**— A drafting guide/manual on Simplification of Laws had been prepared by this Department to use plain language in drafting for better understanding of laws by the citizens. Legislative drafts in plain English helps to promote transparency, fairness and accessibility in the legal system, which are essential for ensuring that law serves the needs of the citizens and the stakeholders.
7. **Capacity Building Unit:**— As of now 195 individuals have been successfully enrolled on the iGoT platform. A total 3,172 Courses for participation are enrolled out of these a total of 2,189 courses have been completed.

(6.1) Cyber, ICT, Information Technology Management and NIC Cell:— To monitoring for achieving a robust IT infrastructure and safe data management for the Department Compliance of E-Governance Policy under Information Technology in coordination with National Informatics Centre.

Achievements pertaining to the year 2024

- (a) **Implementation of e-Office:**— Implementation of e-Office (Lite), as part of good governance and being an important Mission Mode Projects of the Government, has been made operational in the Legislative Department.
- (b) **Implementation of Cyber Security:**— Implementation of Cyber Security measures were undertaken in order to thwart any possible cyber-attack and secure the Department's website as well as any data pilferage.

7. RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) APPLICATIONS



Consequent upon the enactment of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (22 of 2005), the Legislative Department constituted a Right to Information Cell with effect from the 12th August, 2005 with one First Appellate Authority, one Central Public Information Officer and one Central Assistant Public Information Officer. At present Shri Udaya Kumara, Additional Secretary, Shri P.C. Meena, Director and Ms. Meesala Padmalatha, Section Officer are functioning as the First Appellate Authority, Central Public Information Officer and the Central Assistant Public Information Officer respectively. This Department has launched a separate webpage under the caption “*RTP*” on the Department’s official website and maximum information pertaining to this Department have been disseminated therein in consonance with the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005 so as to ensure the object of proactive disclosure of information envisaged under the said Act. Further, contact E-mail addresses have been created in coordination with the NIC Cell for First Appellate Authority and Central Public Information Officer of this Department, so as to make this Department’s official website more user friendly for the public to utilize the provisions of the said Act. The

contact e-mail address of the First Appellate Authority is aarti-legis@nic.in and that of the Central Public Information Officer is cpio-rti-legis@nic.in.

Keeping in view, the various provisions of RTI Act, 2005, the applications received from the applicants are thoroughly examined and the available information collected from the concerned administrative units of the Legislative Department is provided to the applicants. Also, the applications which contain the subject matter pertaining to other Ministries/Departments of the central Government are promptly transferred to the concerned Ministries/Departments in consonance with the relevant provisions of the said Act. Further, in case of First appeals, the same are independently examined by the First Appellate Authority and disposed of within the prescribed time limit. During the year (1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024), One thousand Six hundred and Eighty-Four (1684) applications seeking information under the said Act were received, which were promptly attended as per the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005 and the rules made there under. One Hundred (100) first appeals were preferred before the First Appellate Authority out of which all the 100 (One Hundred) cases were duly disposed of on merits during the period of 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024.

8. CORRECTION SECTION AND INDIA CODE UPDATION UNIT



MAINTENANCE OF CENTRAL AND STATE ACTS

1. The Correction Section is responsible for maintenance and updation of the Central legislations, Orders issued under the Constitution of India, Central Ordinances, Regulations promulgated by the President's under article 240 of the Constitution, and compilation of State Acts for the use of officers in the Ministry of Law and Justice. This Section maintains Master copies of the India Code, which contains unrepealed Central Acts and acts as a reference for the Minister-in-charge, officers in the Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department and Department of Legal Affairs) and the Law Officers of the Government of India. These are valuable reference books and are also used for publishing the revised editions of Acts by the Central Government. The work of updating of Central Acts is an ongoing process and the enforced Central Acts of year 2025 have been updated in the Master copy of the India Code. A List of Central Acts, arranged both alphabetically and chronologically, has also been updated on the official website of the Legislative Department at www.legislative.gov.in under the heading "Documents", after each Session of Parliament.

2. In the year 2024-2025, this Section has downloaded Gazette copies of seventeen Acts of Parliament (including Two Finance Acts and seven Appropriation Acts), and one Regulation from the official website of the Directorate of Printing, Department of Publication at <http://www.egazette.nic.in>. This Section has prepared a folder of Central Acts passed by the Parliament in the year 2024-2025 and incorporated amendments in 36 Amending Acts, whose dates of enforcement were published in 2024. The details of Acts and Regulation downloaded are as follows:

Central Acts:

A. Principal Acts enacted and enforced in the year 2024 (excluding Appropriation Acts and Finance Act):

1. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 (1 of 2024)

2. The Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam, 2024 (16 of 2024)

B. Amendment Acts enacted and enforced in the year 2024:

1. The Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Act, 2024 (2 of 2024)

2. The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 2024 (3 of 2024)

3. The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Act, 2024 (4 of 2024)

4. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024 (5 of 2024)

5. The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Act, 2024 (6 of 2024)

6. The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Act, 2024 (7 of 2024)

Regulation under article 240 of Constitution promulgated in year 2024:

1. The Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Co-operative Societies Regulation, 2024 (1 of 2024)

Consequent to publication of the Gazette notification of the enforcement of the amending Acts of Parliament, the amendments have been carried out in the Master copies of thirty-six (36). During the year 2024-2025, the Acts which have been brought into force by the respective administrative Ministries, the date of enforcement and their notification numbers have been entered at the relevant places of Master copies of the Acts.

State Acts:

During the year 2024-2025, the Legislative Department received a total of 67 State Acts from 4 States, namely Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana and 2 Ordinances from 2 States, namely Kerala and Himachal Pradesh. All State Acts and Ordinances have been kept in folders and entries made in the registers.

India Code Updation Unit

Each year number of legislations (both principal Acts and amending Acts) are passed by the Parliament/State legislature and it is difficult for judges, lawyers as well as citizens to refer relevant and up- to-date Acts when required. To cater to the requirement, an exclusive repository of all the Acts and amendments and subordinate laws at one place has been created which is open to all. In fact, this is the most vital reason why India Code has been made available through web platform to all concerned. Keeping all these aspects in view, India Code Information System (ICIS), has developed as a one stop National Digital Repository of all the Central and State Legislations including their respective subordinate legislations. This facility has been developed with the help of NIC under the guidance of Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department). It is an important step in ensuing legal empowerment of all citizens.

SALIENT FEATURES:

The main object of this facility is to provide a one stop National digital repository of all the Acts and Legislations in India in the latest and updated format for information of the general public, lawyers, judges and all other interested parties. With the help of this facility, not only locating the relevant precedents and amendments have been highly simplified but also has been made user-friendly and accessible. This System has

promoted public knowledge on all laws made in India and helped as an effective information management to support the work of the administrative authorities and provision of ready access to it by the public in digital form.

This repository consists of all the Central Acts (existing and repealed) and State Acts. It is a central database repository which contains all laws made in India. As and when any new Acts, amendments to existing Acts are passed by Parliament and State Legislations and subordinate legislations are made, respective authority has been provided with the facility to upload on central repository.

Search facility on India Code Portal has been made available on the following fields:

1. Act Year
2. Act Number
3. Enactment Date
4. Short Title
5. Ministry
6. Department

A free “Text Search” is also available.

MAJOR e-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES

As an ongoing process of updating and uploading of Central Acts on the India Code website, 36 Central Acts have been uploaded; 230 repealed Acts were also uploaded. On the directions of the Hon’ble High Court of Delhi, the Hindi version of

150 Central Acts have been updated and uploaded on the portal. The State amendments in the Central Acts have also been updated and uploaded on the portal. As far as updating and uploading of subordinate legislations are concerned, all the administrative Ministries and Departments in the Government of India have been requested to make available the updated versions and many Ministries/Departments have completed the uploading of their subordinate legislations.

The ICIS is a major e-Governance initiative containing all existing Central and State Acts of country having largest democracy at one place. Therefore, available Acts are referred nationally as well as internationally by Law makers, Judiciary, Academicians, Law Students, etc. This web portal is accessed globally. The ICIS prevents the monopoly of private publishers who may claim copyrights of their publication.

9. PRINTING SECTION



1. Printing Sections of the Legislative Department, namely, Printing I and Printing II, undertake the processing of legislation for printing at various stages. These two Sections handle the work relating to the editing of manuscripts of Bills [including preparation of Arrangement of Clauses (A.O.C) and Annexures, wherever required], Ordinances, Regulations, Adaptation Orders, Constitution Orders, Delimitation Orders and other statutory instruments, and prepare the Camera-Ready Copy (CRC) of the same. The Printing Sections check the CRC proofs of the Bills, etc., at multiple stages and after approval, the same are sent to the Legislative I Section, which forwards them to the Rajya Sabha/Lok Sabha Secretariat for printing of ‘To be introduced in Rajya Sabha /Lok Sabha’ copies. Subsequently, the printed copies of the Bills are examined at various stages, namely, ‘To be introduced’ stage, ‘As passed by the Rajya Sabha/Lok Sabha’ stage, ‘As passed by the Houses of Parliament’ stage, ‘Assent copy’ stage, ‘Signature copy’ stage and at last, after assent of the President, the Act is prepared and processed for publication in the Official Gazette. Immediately, after the publication of the Act in the Gazette of India, Printing Sections scrutinize the Act and publish corrigenda, if required.

2. Besides the aforesaid works, Printing Sections also perform the work relating to proof reading of the Constitution of India and vetting of the other Central Acts with the updated official records of the Correction Section for uploading on India Code website and other publication purposes.

3. The Printing Sections have also successfully implemented the new process of preparing Camera Ready Copy (CRC) of all Government Bills since Budget Session-2024 (February) of Parliament. In this process, Printing Sections prepare final standardized and ready to print format of the draft Government Bills as provided by Legislative Draftspersons. Earlier, CRC of Government Bills were used to be prepared by Government of India Press (Minto Road) at every stage of Parliamentary Legislative process. The adoption of CRC process has reduced the steps of getting the proofs of Bills printed multiple times which resulted into less paper usage,

significant budgetary savings and less movement and handling of Bills between Press and Printing Sections which diminish the chances of error and facilitates the Government's endeavor in ease of doing business. The implementation of CRC process has enabled this Department to use the human and machine resources more efficiently.

4. During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024 the Printing I and Printing II Sections have performed the following works, namely:—

- (a) edited manuscripts, checked the proofs and scrutinized copies of 54 Bills, and 1 Presidential Regulation, and published 16 Acts, and 1 Presidential Regulation in the Gazette of India;
- (b) vetted 102 Acts consisting of 2261 pages with official records for uploading on the India Code website and 36 Acts consisting of 2757 pages for other publication purposes; and
- (c) prepared CRC copies for 54 Government Bills and processed for onward transmission to Parliament.

10. GENERAL STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS (GSRO) SECTION



G.S.R.O Section is a reference Section which maintains rules, orders, etc., made under the Acts enacted by the Parliament and also uploaded on the website of India Code portal. The subordinate legislations, namely, general statutory rules and orders, notifications, etc., under an enactment is prepared and issued by the Ministry or Department which is administratively concerned with the Act, after getting them vetted by the Legislative Department. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Subordinate Legislation, the administrative Ministries are required to upload all statutory rules, regulations, orders, notifications, etc., framed by them in their website and India Code portal and update the status on e-Samiksha Portal.

Further, this Section has been collecting and compiling reports on rules, regulations, statutes and ordinances framed under the Acts of Parliament from the administering Ministries/Departments for the Acts administered by them and submitting a Quarterly Report to the Cabinet Secretariat. Beside this, this Section is also monitoring the progress of framing of subordinate legislations being made under the Acts of Parliament within stipulated time by the administering Ministries/Departments in synchronization with the Cabinet Secretariat and a Monitoring Group constituted by PMO.

This Section provides information on Gazette notifications to all the officers of this Department as well as other Departments/Ministries, as and when necessary. Also, the Section has been maintaining registers with data relating to Part-II, Section 3, Sub-sections (i) and (ii) of various Ordinary and Extraordinary Gazette notifications.

Apart from dealing with various receipts pertaining to Parliament Questions and related Reports, this Section has also been dealing with correspondences on fulfillment of Parliament Assurances such as seeking necessary inputs/requisite information from various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India, compiling Reports based on available information, seeking extension of time from Committee on Government Assurances of Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha Secretariat towards fulfillment of these

Assurances and submission of Implementation Report thereof. Also, timely monitoring of the OAMS (Online Assurance Monitoring System) portal regarding transfer of Assurances and CPGRAMS portal is undertaken.

11. INTEGRATED FINANCE AND BUDGET AND ACCOUNTS SECTION
(IFD)



The Integrated Finance and Budget & Accounts Section is responsible for the work relating to preparation of Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates for all the three Departments of the Ministry of Law and Justice, namely, Department of Legal Affairs, Legislative Department and Department of Justice. Further, the work relating to finalisation of Budget, Pre-Budget Discussion and seeking supplementary/ additional funds are also looked after by this Section. The preparation of the Detailed Demands for Grants of the whole Ministry and compiling of Demands for Grants in respect of Election Commission of India and Supreme Court of India, is also done by Budget & Accounts Section. Apart from

this, the Section is also dealing with the proposals which involve financial implications for concurrence of Financial Advisor and wherever specific opinion is required to be taken from the Ministry of Finance, the same is also processed before forwarding to Ministry of Finance. The work relating to Parliamentary Standing Committee on Demands for Grants for the Ministry of Law and Justice is also co-ordinated by this Section.

(2) IF and B&A Section is also responsible for the work relating to release of funds to the States/Union territories of India (having Legislatures) on account of Election related expenditure.

12. PUBLICATION SECTION



1. Publication Section brings out, from time-to-time, latest editions of the Central Acts and other important publications like Constitution of India, Manual of Election

Law, Orders issued under the Constitution of India, Index to Statutory Definitions and Annual Volume of the Acts of Parliament, etc., for dissemination of general public.

2. During the year 2024-2025, the Publication Section compiled and scrutinized the Constitution of India (English version) incorporating the latest amendments including the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023, along with the footnotes. The updated version has been made available on the official website <https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india/> of this Department. Further, the manuscript for the latest edition 2024 of the Constitution of India was prepared and forwarded to the Official Language Wing for publication in diglot edition (English and Hindi). The same has since been published.

3. The latest edition of the Manual of Election Law, 2024 duly incorporating the latest amendments was published in diglot form by this Department in March, 2024.

4. The Publication Section prepares the manuscripts (English version) of the Central Acts duly incorporating the latest amendments which are then forwarded to the Official Language Wing for publication in bilingual version. During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024, manuscripts of the following Central Acts were prepared, namely: -

- (i) The Divorce Act, 1869 (4 of 1869).
- (ii) The Special Marriage Act, 1954 (43 of 1954).
- (iii) The Right to Information Act, 2005 (22 of 2005).
- (iv) The Notaries Act, 1952 (53 of 1952).
- (v) The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 (26 of 1996).
- (vi) The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 (10 of 1994).

- (vii) The Advocates' Welfare Fund Act, 2001 (45 of 2001).
- (viii) The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (42 of 2005).
- (ix) The Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 (47 of 2023).
- (x) The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (45 of 2023).
- (xi) The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (46 of 2023).
- (xii) The Family Courts Acts, 1984 (66 of 1984).
- (xiii) The Scheduled Caste and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (33 of 1989).
- (xiv) The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961).
- (xv) The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 (70 of 1971).
- (xvi) The Indian Succession Act, 1925 (39 of 1925).
- (xvii) The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (57 of 1994).
- (xviii) The Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 (15 of 1992).
- (xix) The Specific Relief Act, 1963 (47 of 1963).
- (xx) The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (59 of 1988).
- (xxi) The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 (25 of 1955).
- (xxii) The Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 (34 of 1948).
- (xxiii) The Border Security Force Act, 1968 (47 of 1968).

(xxiv) The Apprentices Act, 1961 (52 of 1961).

The Publication Section also deals with other miscellaneous works relating to RTI applications/appeals, Representations, Public Grievances and Parliament Questions, etc.

13. THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE SECTION



The **Official Language Section** of the Legislative Department is administratively responsible for the implementation of the Official Language Policy of the Union of India; the Official Language Act, 1963 and the Official Language Rules, 1976. This Section is also responsible for increasing the progressive use of Hindi for official purposes of the Union of India in addition to translation work from English to Hindi and vice-versa.

(i) Implementation of the Constitutional and other provisions of the Official Language Policy.

During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024 the Legislative Department has taken the following steps to implement the Official Language Policy in all its manifestations: -

As per the provisions of the Official Language Rules 1976, at present, more than 71.89%, 64.82% and 55.61% letters to regions 'A', 'B' and 'C' are being sent in Hindi respectively. Constant efforts are being made to achieve the targets stipulated in the Annual Programme issued by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs. The replies to the letters, applications, representations, etc., received in Hindi are being sent invariably in Hindi. The same received in English are also being answered in Hindi as per the Official Language Policy. All the Resolutions, General Orders, Rules, Notifications, Administrative Reports, other Reports, Contracts, Notices and the Documents to be laid before the Parliament are prepared and issued bilingually as per sub-section (3) of section 3 of the Official Language Act, 1963.

Legislative Department was notified on 29th April, 1979 under sub-rule (4) of rule 10 of the Official Language Rules, 1976 for conducting the official business in Hindi. The officers and employees who are proficient in Hindi have been directed to submit the drafts, etc., only in Hindi.

(ii) The Quarterly Progress Reports for the Progressive Use of Official Language Hindi:

The Quarterly Progress Reports of Hindi are regularly sent to the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs. Through these Reports, position of employees regarding Hindi training and their overall work in Hindi is reflected and it is ensured that the percentage of correspondence as well as noting and drafting in Hindi

increases as per the Annual Programme issued by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs.

(iii) Meetings of the Official Language Implementation Committee:

An Official Language Implementation Committee has been constituted in this Department under the Chairmanship of the Joint Secretary and Legislative Counsel. The meeting of this Committee is held once in every three months regularly to assess the progressive use of Hindi for official purposes. The agenda and minutes of these meetings are sent to the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs. The minutes are also circulated to all the officers and Sections of the Department for compliance. The meetings of this committee were held on 28th June, 2024 and 20th December, 2024 respectively. This Committee provides effective means to identify problems and suggests the solutions with regard to the progressive use of Hindi. In the meetings of this Committee, the Annual Programme issued by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs for transacting the official work of the Union in Hindi, is also discussed and every effort is made to achieve the prescribed targets therein. The orders, circulars, directives, notifications, resolutions, recommendations, etc., regarding the implementation of Official Language Policy of the Union of India are also discussed in these meetings.

(iv) The Hindi Advisory Committee of the Ministry:

As per the guidelines issued by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, the existing Hindi Advisory Committee of the Ministry was constituted on 11th May, 2023 under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Law and Justice. This Committee has jointly been constituted for Department of Legal Affairs and Legislative Department. The Committee comprises Hon'ble Members of Parliament, nominated by Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and the Committee of Parliament on Official Language, the nominees of Kendriya Sachivalaya Hindi Parishad, nominees of prominent All India Hindi Voluntary Organizations, nominees of the Ministry of Law

and Justice and those of Department of Official Language as non-official members. The Secretaries, Additional Secretaries and the concerned Joint Secretaries of the Department of Legal Affairs, Legislative Department and Department of Official Language are the official members of this Committee.

(v) Hindi Training:

This Department nominates its officers/employees for the various training courses of Hindi conducted by Hindi Teaching Scheme, Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs. These Hindi Language Courses are Prabodh, Praveen and Pragya. There are training courses for Hindi typing and Hindi Shorthand also. The nomination to these Hindi courses is a continuous process as the officers/employees get recruited, promoted and transferred on regular basis. The Official Language Section also organized workshop on the subject of **“The Quarterly Progress Report of Hindi”** on 13th December, 2024 which was attended by 20 officials of the department.

(vi) Hindi Fortnight:

A ‘Hindi Fortnight’ from **17th September, 2024 to 3rd October, 2024** was organized in this Department. Various Hindi competitions were held during this period and a large number of officers and employees participated in these competitions. Out of these, three competitions were organized exclusively for non-Hindi speaking personnel. A total amount of Rs.68,200/- has been sanctioned as prize money for the winners of the competitions.

14. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION SECTION

To carry forward the Vision, Mission and Objective of the Legislative Department at international level, the following key areas have been identified for deliberation, research and training with several countries:—

- i. Legislative Drafting-emerging challenges;
- ii. Legislative Drafting and Artificial Intelligence (AI);
- iii. Legislative Drafting and Access to Law;
- iv. Legislative Drafting and Rule of Law;
- v. Simplification of Laws;
- vi. Use of simple language in Legislative Drafting.

Various Memorandum of Understandings, Protocols and Agreements were entered by the Ministry of Law and Justice, with the Governments of Russian Federation, Turkey, Qatar, Uzbekistan and United Kingdom, *inter alia*, on mutual assistance in the drafting of legislations, exchange of information on drafting of laws, law-making process and to promote meetings, holding and organizing symposiums, conferences and joint courses, etc.

It is the endeavor of the Legislative Department to continue deliberations, research and training jointly by the India and other countries for mutual benefit in dispensation of justice and rule of law in addition to capacity building in respective countries.

Legislative Department is working towards upskilling the drafting techniques by use of simple and plain language in drafting of legislations so as to enable easy access and understand to the public at large/all stakeholders. Since the Republic of Maldives, being a member of the Common Law, the following initiatives/programmes were proposed for consideration:

I. Attachment Programme in ILDR for Legislative/Legal Officers of Republic of Maldives: Inviting officers of the Republic of Maldives dealing with drafting legislations to the Institute of Legislative Drafting and Research, Legislative Department, India for three-day workshop/training on:

Day 1: Principles of Legislative Drafting and understanding the process of Legislation making in India

Day 2: Simplification of Laws and use of plain language in Legislative Drafting

Day 3: Drafting new legislations in the Digital Era, i.e., data privacy, Artificial Intelligence and Algorithmic Governance, etc.

II. Deputing Legislative Officers of Legislative Department, Government of India for a 3-days workshop to impart training in Republic of Maldives–To impart training to the officers of the Legal and Legislative Department, Republic of Maldives (as given above) and also to understand the legislation making process in Maldives.

It was also proposed that such workshops can be taken up by the Indian and Maldives Governments in India and Maldives in every alternate year.

15. SOCIAL MEDIA UNIT

The Legislative Department has established a Social Media Unit on 27th January, 2024 comprising of the existing Officers of this Department. The Social Media Unit plays a pivotal role in enhancing outreach, engagement and communication with respect to Legislative Department. This Unit is responsible for dissemination of information about the Legislative Department and promoting its activities and events in various social media platforms. The Unit also works with several Ministries/Department of the Government of India in order to increase the outreach of this Department among the general public. This is involved in content creation, platform management and engagement strategies for social media.

Activities covered by the Social Media Unit:

- Appreciation Course in Legislative Drafting conducted by the Institute of Legislative Drafting and Research from 12th February, 2024 to 23rd February, 2024.
- Interaction and talk of Ld. Attorney-General for India Shri R. Venkataramani with the Officers of Legislative Department on 27th March, 2024.
- Workshop on Plain Language in Legislative Drafting from 9th May, 2024 to 11th May, 2024.
- 34th Basic Course in Legislative Drafting conducted by the Institute of Legislative Drafting and Research from 29th July, 2024 to 25th October, 2024.
- Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign-2024 from 15th September, 2024 to 2nd October, 2024.
- Tree plantation under the Swachhata Hi Seva Campaign-2024 by Secretary, Legislative Department on 20th September, 2024.
- *Shramdan* event at Ghazipur Roundabout, an identified black spot, led by Secretary, Legislative Department on 20th October, 2024.
- National Conference on the 75th Year of the Constitution held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 26th November, 2024.

In Addition to the above-mentioned coverage, the Social Media Unit also covers various days/events of national and international importance and promotes various Government awareness campaign through the social media handles of the Ministry. In the calendar year 2024, the Social Media Unit has created content for 54 posts, including creation of illustrative contents, captions and shortlisting of photographs, and shared 8 posts regarding campaigns of different Ministries/Departments of the Government on the various social media handles of the Ministry of Law and Justice.

16. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES WING

Introduction—Official Languages Wing (OLW) of Legislative Department came into existence in the year 1976 as a successor Organization of the Official Languages (Legislative) Commission as a part of Legislative Department. Functions which were being discharged by the Official Languages (Legislative) Commission, were entrusted to this Wing with effect from the 1st October, 1976.

(1) Functions

The OLW has been entrusted with the following functions: -

- (i) Preparation and publication of a standard legal terminology for use, as far as possible, in all Official Languages;
- (ii) Preparation of authoritative texts in Hindi of all Central Acts and Ordinances and Regulations promulgated by the President;
- (iii) Preparation of authoritative texts in Hindi of all Rules, Regulations and Orders made by the Central Government under any Central Act or any Ordinance or Regulation promulgated by the President;
- (iv) Preparation of authoritative texts of all Central Acts and Ordinances and Regulations promulgated by the President in the respective Official Languages of the States and to arrange for the translation of all Acts passed and Ordinances promulgated in any State into Hindi, if the texts of such Acts or Ordinances are in a language other than Hindi; and
- (v) Preparation of Hindi texts of deeds, legal documents like contracts, agreements, leases, bonds, mortgages, etc., of different Departments;

- (vi) Preparation of Hindi texts of statutory Rules issued by Governments of States under Presidential Rule;
- (vii) Preparation of Hindi texts of all the Parliament Questions/Answers, Assurances, etc., relating to the Ministry of Law and Justice;
- (viii) Training in Legislative Drafting in Hindi to Officers from Hindi speaking States;
- (ix) Work relating to Coordination Committee of Hindi speaking States for ensuring effective coordination in the evolution of uniform legal phraseology and model of standard clauses in Hindi and publication thereof;
- (x) Work relating to Hindi Salahkar Samiti of the Ministry of Law and Justice;
- (xi) Work relating to providing Grants-in-Aid to voluntary organizations for promotion of Official Languages in the field of law;
- (xii) Publication of diglot editions of Central Acts (with legislative history) and popularization thereof;
- (xiii) Preparation and maintenance of India Code in Hindi (Bharat Sanhita) and also in diglot form;
- (xiv) Publication of regional language versions of the Constitution of India and their release; and
- (xv) To perform such other duties as may be assigned to it by the Government of India from time to time.

(2) Legal Glossary

Since the inception of Official Languages (Legislative) Commission in 1961, seven editions of Legal Glossary have been brought out and every successive edition is larger in size. While the first edition (1970) contained 20,000 entries, the sixth edition (2001) of Legal Glossary contained approximately 63,000 entries spread over in eight parts. The 7th Edition of Legal Glossary published in the year 2015 and contained approximately 65,000 entries spread over in seven parts. The Legal Glossary brought out by the Official Languages Wing, which is one of the most important and prestigious publications, has received wide acclaim by discerning men of law and letters. The preparation of 8th Edition of Legal Glossary is currently under process.

(3) Constitution of India

The translation of the Constitution of India has been brought out in 18 Regional Languages, *i.e.* Assamese, Bengali, Dogri, Gujarati, Kannada, Maithili, Malayalam, Marathi, Manipuri, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Sindhi, Nepali and Konkani in addition to Hindi (the Official Language of the Union). The First Diglot Edition (English-Manipuri) of Constitution of India in Manipuri language (MeeteiMayek Script) was also published.

(4) Bharat Sanhita

All the Central Acts have been compiled and brought out in the form of India Code in handy volumes. The last edition of India Code consisting of eight volumes was published in 1959. Action has already been initiated for bringing out Bharat Sanhita (Revised Edition of India Code) in diglot form in chronological order.

One of the salient features of the Code is that the statement of objects and reasons appended to the principal Bills have also been added at the end of each Act and included

in the revised edition of India Code. Volume I to XXXI of the revised editions of India Code have already been published.

(5) Preparation and Publication of Authoritative Texts of Central Acts

During the period under report, authoritative texts of 28 Central Acts have been published in the Official Gazette under Section 5(1)(a) of the Official Languages Act, 1963.

(6) Publication of Diglot Editions of Central Acts

Central Acts, for which there is likelihood of public demand, are published by the Official Languages Wing in diglot form. When there is a public demand for a particular Act, the same is published in diglot form (Hindi & English) for sale to general public.

(7) Authorized Hindi Text of Bills, Ordinances, etc.

As per Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 apart from several other works, the work related to Preparation of authoritative texts in Hindi of all Central Acts and of Ordinances promulgated and Regulations made by the President and of all rules, regulations and orders made by the Central Government under such Acts, Ordinances and Regulations is also allocated to legislative Department. This work is being handled by Official Languages Wing. During the period under report—

(i) Bills/Cabinet Notes/Acts-25 Bills were handled by this Wing and prepared Hindi version of the Bills to be laid before the Houses of Parliament. In addition, Hindi version of 2 Notes for Cabinet and 92 Acts, were also prepared by this Wing.

(ii) Notifications/Recruitment Rules/Regulations/Parliament Questions/Statutory Rules Etc.-References are received in this Wing for preparation of General Statutory Rules, Notifications, Recruitment Rules etc. from various Ministries/Departments for

subordinate legislation. During the period under report following work was accomplished by this Wing in different Sections—

- (a) 989 proposals relating to preparation of Hindi version of statutory rules/notifications etc. were received from different Ministries/Departments of the Central Government.
- (b) 317 proposals relating to preparation of Hindi version of Recruitment Rules were received from different Ministries/Departments of the Central Government.
- (c) During the period under report, Hindi versions of various Parliament Questions Answers/Assurances of this Ministry were also prepared on priority basis.

(8) Maintenance Of Central Acts, Etc.

The Correction Section of the Official Languages Wing is primarily concerned with maintaining and updating the Hindi text of the Central Legislations passed by the Parliament and in force. It also keeps Constitution of India and Manual of Election Laws up-to-date. The Section is responsible for carrying out the amendments made by the amending Acts passed by the Parliament in the Master folders of Central Acts.

Besides, it also prepares the manuscripts of Hindi text of the Central Acts proposed to be published in Diglot form. During the year this section has prepared the manuscript of 3 Criminal Acts, i.e. (i) Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 (ii) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and (iii) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 and finalized them for publication.

During the Year 2024, the Correction Section has started to upload the Hindi texts of un-repealed Central Acts in the India Code portal maintained by Legislative Department (Main Secretariat) alongside the English texts of respective Central Act. This process is done in coordination with the National Informatics Centre. At present,

Hindi texts of about 736 Central Acts have been uploaded in said India Code portal. This is an on-going and continuous process and the Acts uploaded therein are also made up-to-date by incorporating the amendments in the respective Act(s), if any.

In addition to above, the Correction Section—

- (a) Assisted the Regional Languages unit of the Wing in connection with preparation of translation of Central Acts in Regional Languages and also assisted said Unit in conducting the Working Group (Regional Languages) meetings for deciding and approving the words to be included in glossary in respective Regional Languages; and
- (b) Supplied information regarding publication of e-Gazette copies of Central Acts to various State Governments for translation into their respective regional languages.

(9) Editing Of Manuscripts of Bills, Acts, Ordinances, Diglot Editions, Etc., And Publication Thereof

The Printing Section of the Official Languages Wing is primarily concerned with the editing of manuscripts and checking of proofs of Bills, Ordinances, Regulations, President's Acts etc; issued under the Constitution of India, Delimitation of Council Constituencies orders, etc; Bills, which are required to be introduced in a short time, are also printed on behalf of the Houses of People or the Council of States. Editing and Proof-Checking of the publication in diglot form of the Constitution of India, Manual of Election Law, revised Edition of India Code, modified diglot edition of Central Acts, statutory Rules and Orders, Annual Reports, etc. are also done in this Section. This Section is also responsible for the printing and publication of Central Acts, Ordinances, Regulations, President's Act, etc., and their subsequent reprints in diglot form as publication for sale. This Section discharged all its responsibilities during the year under review. The Printing Section of the Official Languages Wing is also performing the

duties of the Publication Section. During the period under report, 28 Acts were authenticated and Diglot edition of Manual of Election Laws and Constitution of India were also printed and published. Apart from this, works related to printing and publication of Hindi and English versions of two booklets i.e. (i) *Making of the Constitution of India: A Glimpse* and (ii) *Making of the Constitution of India and its glorious journey*, were also done by the Printing Section.

(10) Preparation And Publication of Standard Legal Documents

As per section 3(3)(iii) of the Official Languages Act, 1963 both Hindi and English Languages are to be used for agreements, contracts, leases, bonds, tenders etc., issued by or on behalf of the Central Government or any Ministry, Department or office thereof. In order to comply with the requirement of the said Act, the Official Languages Wing has prepared Hindi version of the documents in eight volumes for various Ministries and Departments of the Central Government with a view to achieve uniformity in their translation.

(11) Establishing the Indian Languages in The Sphere of Law

The Regional Languages Unit of the Official Languages Wing, is constantly undertaking the work of translation of the Regional Languages Unit of the Central Acts into respective regional languages as specified in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. So far as the regional languages are concerned, this work is being done with the co-operation of respective State Governments.

The Official Languages Wing has also published the authoritative texts of Central Acts in regional languages as envisaged under section 2 of the Authoritative Texts (Central Laws) Act, 1973 (50 of 1973). During the period under report, 73 Central Acts in Regional Languages and in Hindi have been authenticated as authoritative texts by the

President of India. Besides the Authoritative texts of the Constitution of India in addition to Hindi, it has been brought out in 19 regional languages, namely, Assamese, Bengali, Dogri, Gujarati, Kannada, Kashmiri, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Sindhi, Nepali and Konkani.

(12) Wide Distribution of Constitution of India, Etc.

On the occasion of “Samvidhan Diwas”- 75th Anniversary of adoption of Constitution of India, the copies of ‘Making of the Constitution of India and its glorious journey’, ‘Making of the Constitution of India: A Glimpse’ and latest updated edition of Constitution of India, in Hindi and English were widely distributed. The copies of Manual of Election Laws were also widely distributed.

(13) Work Relating to the Hindi Salahkar Samiti

The Hindi Salahkar Samiti of this Ministry is constituted vide Resolution No. E.4(1)/2019-O.L.(L.D.) dated 11th May, 2023 for three years. The functions of the Samiti are normally to advise the Central Government on matter relating to: -

- (i) preparation of Hindi version of Central Acts and statutory rules;
- (ii) the evolution of common legal terminology;
- (iii) the production of standard law books in Hindi for imparting legal education in Hindi in law colleges and Universities;
- (iv) publication of law journals and reports in Hindi;
- (v) matters ancillary and incidental to any of the above items; and
- (vi) suggest ways and means for the propagation and development of Hindi in the field of law for official use.

(14) Grants in Aid to Voluntary Organisations

There is a scheme for the promotion of Official Languages of the Union and States for propagation and development of Hindi and other Indian languages in the field of law. Under the scheme, Voluntary Organizations and institutions are provided with financial aid. Since 1985, the Official Languages Wing has been implementing this scheme to give financial assistance to those Voluntary Organizations which are engaged in the activities for development and propagation of literature in the field of law and other regional languages which could be in the form of proposed commentaries, treatises, books on legal subjects, law journals, law compendium and other publications as are conducive to enrichment, propagation and development of Hindi and other regional languages of the State. A High-Powered Committee has been constituted w.e.f. 23rd November, 2022 for three years under the Chairmanship of Justice Dr. Satish Chandra (Retd.) Judge of High Court of Allahabad. Other members of the Committee are Prof. Dr. Vaibhav Goel, Sardar Patel Subharti Institute of Law (Faculty of Law), Meerut, Uttar Pradesh and Shri K.G. Aggarwal, Advocate, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi.

(15) Special Steps Adopted for The Progressive Use of Official Languages

The material and information pertaining to Official Languages Wing has been hosted on the website <https://legislative.gov.in>. Apart from this, the important Acts of Parliament in various regional languages have also been hosted under the respective languages on the website of this Department. In order to facilitate printing of various Bills, Notifications, Orders, Recruitment Rules, etc., the O.L. Wing has started using the Unicode fonts and provides soft copies of the Hindi Texts to the concerned Ministries/Departments etc.

During the period under report, Bill Section, Translation-I Section, Translation-II Section, Legislative- I, Legislative-II Section, Printing Section, Correction Section,

Administration Section, Cash Section and Library of O.L. Wing were made IT enabled. The Camera-Ready copies of all the Bills were prepared during the period under report. For ease of working, the O.L. Wing has started using *Mangal* font which has universal functionality in Hindi Language.

The E-Office has been fully implemented in O.L. Wing. Along with this e-HRMS 2.0 has also been implemented.

The Legal Glossary which has been hosted on the home page has been replaced with searchable PDF format for its wide spread and user-friendly use.

An updated list of Names, Addresses, e-mail address and Contact Numbers of all the Group 'A' officers of the O.L. Wing in English and Hindi has also been hosted on the home page of this Department's website.

The Scheme for Assistance to Voluntary Organizations for promotion of Official Languages of the Union and the States in the field of Law has also been hosted on this Department's website.

All the sections of O.L. Wing have been I.T. enabled and equipped to use Hindi as well as English for data processing. O.L. Wing is making efforts to digitalize all its record to reduce carbon foot prints and reduce dependency on physical files.

17. VIDHI SAHITYA PRAKASHAN

In the year 1958, the Committee of Parliament on Official Languages recommended that arrangements be made to bring out authorized translation of the judgments of Supreme Court of India and High Courts and this work be entrusted to a Central Office under the supervision of Law Department. Thereafter, on the recommendations of the Hindi Advisory Committee, a "Journal Wing" was set up in the Legislative Department in the year 1968 with the object of promoting use of Hindi

in the legal field. This “Journal Wing” was subsequently named as “**VIDHI SAHITYA PRAKASHAN**” (VSP).

The Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan, a wing under the Legislative Department, Ministry of Law and Justice is devoted and dedicated for promotion of Hindi in the legal field and for this purpose, publishes three monthly Hindi Law journals wherein Hindi version of the judgments passed by Supreme Court and High Courts are published. Beside the three Law Journals, this Prakashan also publishes high quality law text books in Hindi written by the eminent jurist. This Prakashan is also mandated to manage sale of the diglot editions of Central Acts, Constitution of India, Election Manual, Legal Glossary etc.

During the year 2024, Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan published Hindi version of the landmark judgment, passed by Supreme Court in Shri Ram Janmabhumi Babri Masjid dispute in book form. This book was released by Hon’ble Ministry of Law and Justice (Independent Charge) Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal on the occasion of Constitution Day i.e., 26th November, 2024 at Vigyan Bhawan.

18. THE CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER AND OTHER ELECTION COMMISSIONERS (APPOINTMENT, CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND TERM OF OFFICE) ACT, 2023

Article 324(1) of the Constitution provides that superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to the Parliament and to the Legislatures of every State and of elections to the offices of President and Vice-President, to be vested in the Election Commission. Article 324(2), *inter alia*, provides that the appointment of the CEC and the ECs be made by the President, subject to any law made in that behalf by Parliament.

2. Earlier, the matters regarding conditions of services of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners (ECs), the procedure for transaction of business of the Election Commission, etc., were governed under the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991 (1991 Act).

3. The Hon'ble Supreme Court, in the final relief portion of the judgment, in *Anoop Baranwal v. UoI* [Writ Petition (Civil) 104 of 2015, etc.], declared that the appointment of CEC and ECs shall be done by the President on the basis of the advice tendered by a Committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition (LoOP) in the Lok Sabha (LS), and in case, there is no such leader, the leader of the largest party in the opposition in the LS having the largest numerical strength; and the Chief Justice of India.

4. Thus, in accordance with the provisions of article 324(2) of the Constitution and in conformity with the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the aforesaid case, the Parliament has replaced the said Act of 1991 with the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 which has been brought into the force with effect from 2nd January, 2024 to regulate the Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners, the procedure for transaction of business by the Election Commission and for matters connected herewith or incidental thereto.

5. As per the Act, appointment of the following Election Commissioners has been made with effect from 15th March, 2024:—

(1) Shri Gyanesh Kumar

(2) Shri Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.

19. RESERVATION FOR THE SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES, OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES, EX-SERVICEMEN AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS IN SERVICE POSTS.

Officers of the level of Deputy Secretary/Director are functioning as Liaison Officers for the three Administrative Wings of the Legislative Department, viz., Legislative Department (Main), Official Languages Wing and Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan to oversee the implementation of Orders/Instructions of the Government on reservation for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Ex-servicemen and Physically Handicapped persons in service/posts in respective units.

A Statement showing the total number of employees in the Legislative Department (Main), Official Languages Wing and Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan and number of employees belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Ex-servicemen and Physically handicapped persons and the female employees amongst them as on 31st December, 2024 is enclosed as **Annexure-II** and **Annexure-III**.

20. CELEBRATION OF SWACHHATA PAKHAWADA AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

This Department has organized celebration of Swachhata Pakhawda, 2024 from 1st April, 2024 to 15th April, 2024. During this period Swachhata Pledge has been administered by Secretary. Tree plantation was also taken place in Shastri Bhawan compound headed by Secretary and other senior officers. Nukkad Natak activities, quiz competition and other Swachhata events were organized during this period. International Yoga Day, International Women's Day, celebration of Run for Unity/Rashtriya Ekta Divas and Sports Day under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav from time to time. The Department has also celebrated Special Campaign 3.0 as per DAPARG guidelines. (**Annexure-IV**)

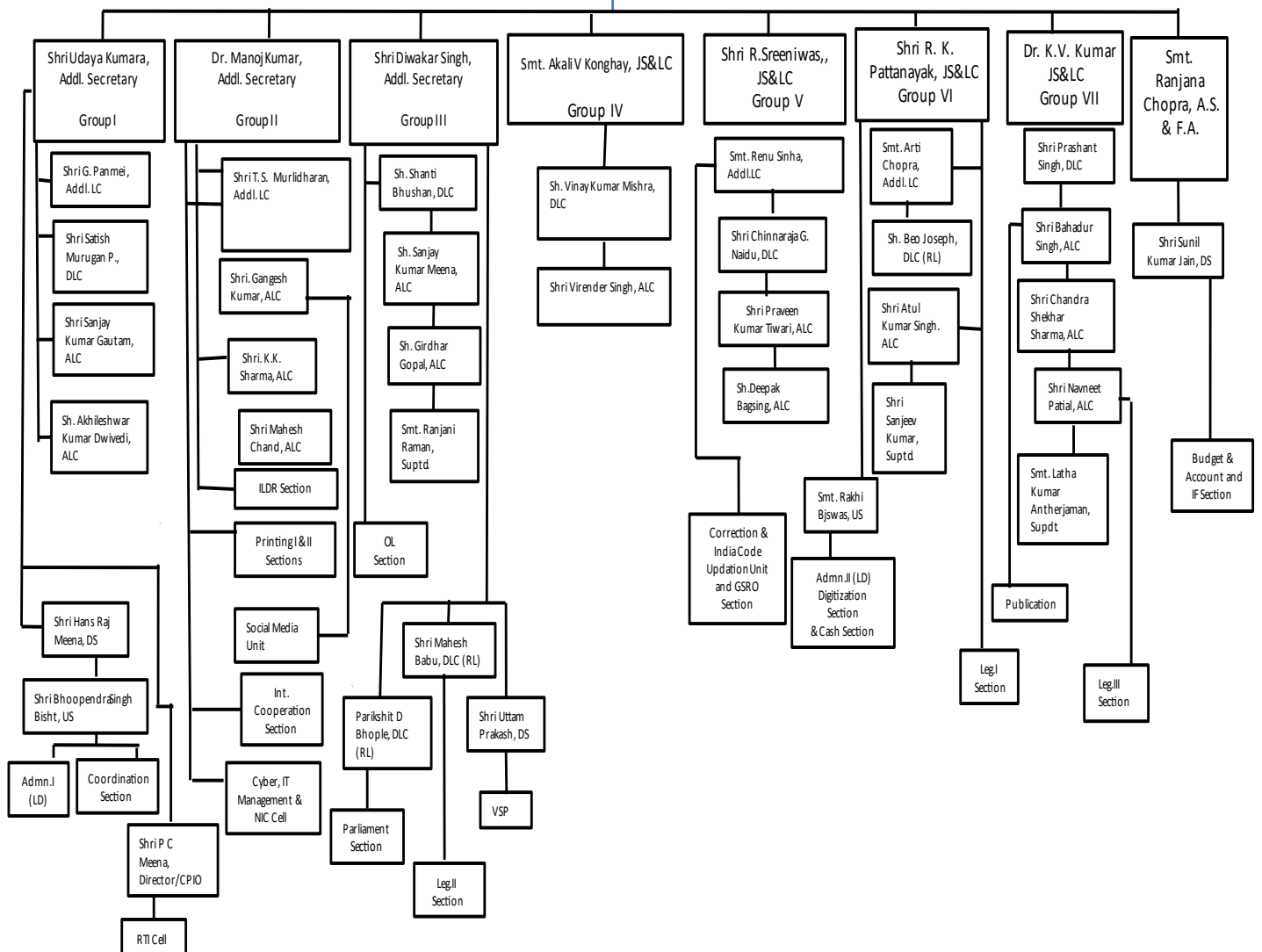


21. PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

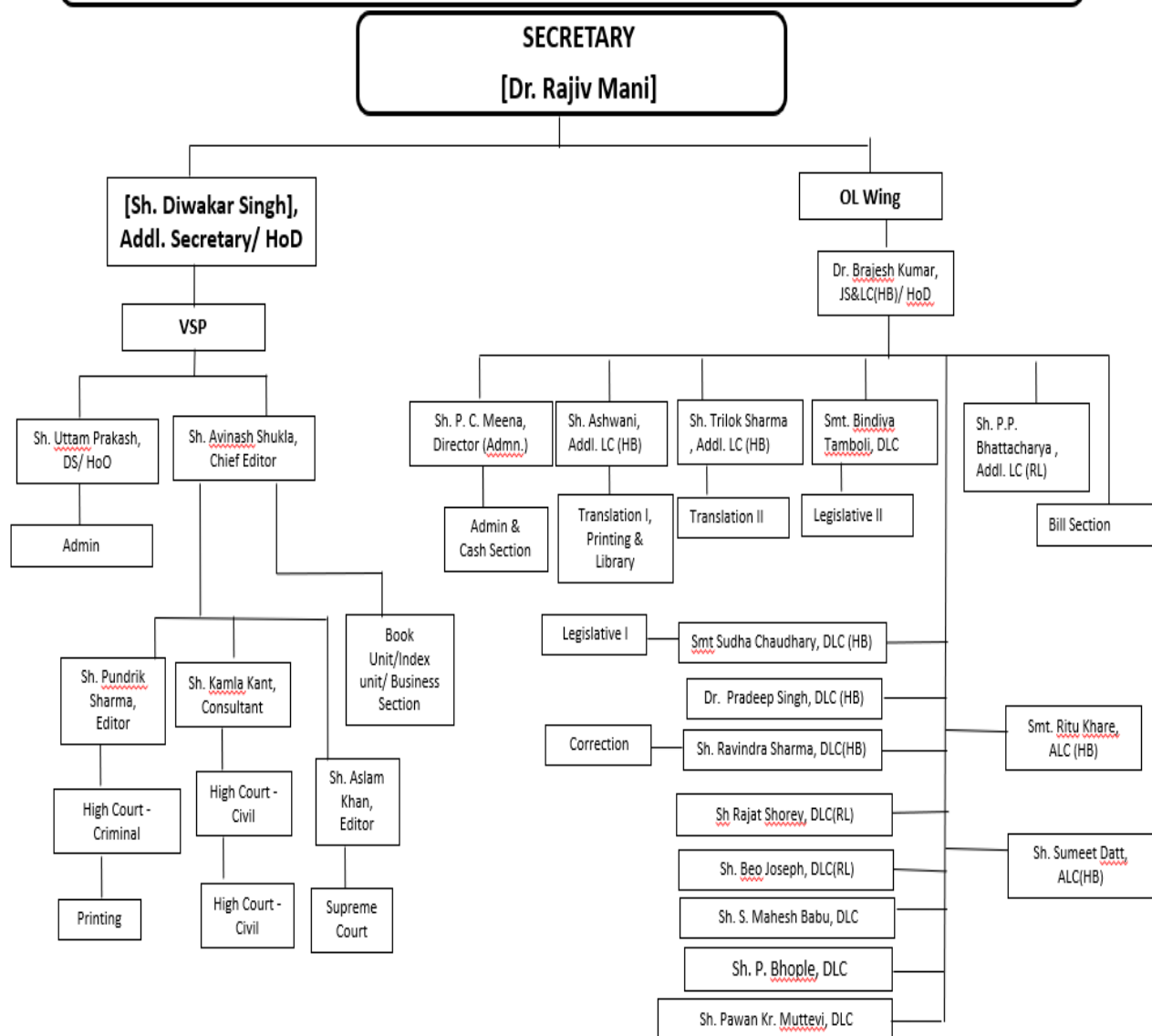
During the period from 1st January, 2024 to 31st December, 2024, Legislative Department received 840 public grievances on CPGRAMS portal. Further 98 public grievances were pending before 1st January, 2024. During the said period 861 grievances have been disposed of and action is being taken for disposal of remaining grievances on priority basis.

ORGANISATION CHART OF THE LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT- MAIN
(As on 31.12.2024)

SECRETARY
[Dr. Rajiv Mani]



ORGANISATION CHART OF THE LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT- VSP & OL WING (As On 31.12.2024)



ANNEXURE-II

(See Chapter- I, 19)

STATEMENT SHOWING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AND THE NUMBER OF SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES, OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES, EX-SERVICEMEN AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AMONGST THEM AS ON 31st DECEMBER, 2024.

Group	No. of Employees	SC	%	ST	%	OBC	%	Ex-Service-men	%	Physically Handicapped	%
A	73	08	10.95%	08	10.95 %	16	21.92%	-	-	4	5.48%
B	88	15	17.05%	03	3.41%	20	22.73%	-	-	1	1.13%
C	105	25	23.81%	07	6.67%	21	20%	1	0.95%	-	-
Total	266	48	18.05%	18	6.77%	57	21.43%	1	0.37%	5	1.88%

ANNEXURE-III

(See Chapter- I, 19)

REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN THE LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AS ON 31st DECEMBER, 2024.

GROUP	Total No. of Employees	No. of Female Employees	Percentage (%)
Group 'A'	73	18	24.65
Group 'B'	88	21	23.86
Group 'C'	105	18	17.14
Total: -	266	57	21.42

ANNEXURE-IV

(See Chapter- I, 20)













Annexure-V

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA Inputs for Annual Report (2024-25) CONTENTS

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1. Introduction

Election Commission of India (ECI), came into existence on 25th January, 1950 and since then it has been instrumental in ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections in India. There is a separate chapter in Part XV of the Constitution of India containing Articles 324 to 329, which define the functions, responsibilities, structure and powers of the Election Commission of India. These Articles mandate the Commission to conduct elections to the Lower and Upper Houses of Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies and to the High offices of the President and Vice-President of India at regular intervals.



Election Commission is a permanent constitutional body. It consists of Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners. Over the past 75 years, the ECI has conducted 18 General Elections to the Lok Sabha and more than 400 elections to State Legislative Assemblies, in addition to 17 elections to the High office of the President and Vice-President. As a result of the sustained reform, India's electoral democracy has been a defining benchmark of electoral integrity at global level.

Since the first General Elections in 1951-52, the ECI has meticulously managed the entire election process, including planning, preparation, conducting, counting, and result declaration. The Commission in the last 75 years of its journey has achieved many milestones. Every election provided an opportunity and an occasion for the institution to enhance its services in ensuring a free, fair, transparent, inclusive, accessible, participative and an inducement free election. Akin to a science laboratory, where experiments and research never cease, the Commission is constantly on the quest for innovations and improvement in electoral management.

The Commission in past few years, has adopted many initiatives and innovative measures to extend special facilitation to women, PwD and senior citizens such as Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF), ramps, wheelchair and volunteer assistance, priority voting, all women managed polling stations, all PwD managed polling stations, and the more recent amendments by which - home voting facility has been made available to senior citizens 85+, and PwD electors so they can vote from the comfort of their homes. All this, with one goal in mind, "No Voter to be left behind".

2. Parliamentary & Assembly Elections in 2024:

ECI handled a busy electoral year in the year 2024, as it conducted the General Election to Lok Sabha, 2024 and General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in Eight States i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana, Maharashtra and Jharkhand.

2.1 General Election to Lok Sabha, 2024 and simultaneous election in four States: -

The Election Commission of India conducted the General Elections to the 18th Lok Sabha along with State Assemblies of four states from March 16, 2024 to June, 6 2024. Termed as **“Chunav ka parv Desh ka Garv”**, it was a unique celebration of the democracy, largest in the world, that engaged about 97 crore electors spread over more than 10.5 lakh polling stations in the country. Enhanced participation of the electorate was the utmost priority during the said elections and the same was achieved through focused initiatives aiming at making our elections voter friendly and accessible; inclusion of all categories of voters through Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP), innovation and integration of state of-the-art technology in election process and operating procedure.

The Election Commission of India announced the schedule of General Election to Lok Sabha, 2024 and legislative assemblies of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha & Sikkim, 2024 on 16th March, 2024. The Lok Sabha Elections, 2024 were held in seven phases commencing from 19th April, 2024 to 1st June, 2024 and result for all 543 constituencies was announced on 4th June, 2024. The total number of registered Electors for Lok Sabha Elections was 97,97,51,847 in 2024 as compared to 91,19,50,734 in 2019. Out of 543 Parliamentary Constituencies (PCs) seat, 84 seats are reserved Scheduled Caste (SC) and 47 seats are reserved for Scheduled Tribe (ST). A brief summary of electoral statistics is given below:-

Electors/Voters:

- A total of 64.64 crore votes were polled in 2024, compared to 61.4 crore in 2019.
- EVM + Postal Votes: 64,64,20,869
- PC with the highest turnout: 92.3% Dhubri (Assam)
- PC with the lowest turnout: 38.7% Srinagar (J&K), compared to 14.4% in 2019.
- NOTA got 63,71,839 (0.99%) votes in 2024, compared to 1.06% in 2019.
- 27.09% voter turnout of transgender voters (third gender)

Polling Stations:

- 10,52,664 polling stations in 2024, compared to 10,37,848 in 2019
- Re-poll only in 40 Polling Stations [0.0038% of Total Polling Stations] compared to 540 in 2019
- Average number of Electors/Polling Station: 931
- State with the highest number of PS: Uttar Pradesh (1,62,069 PS)
- State/UT with the lowest number of PS: Lakshadweep (55 PS)
- No. of Parliamentary Constituencies (PCs) with less than 1000 PS: 11
- No. of Parliamentary Constituencies (PCs) with more than 3000 PS: 03
- State with the highest increase in number of Polling Stations in 2024 as compared to that in 2019: Bihar (4739 PSs), followed by West Bengal (1731 PSs).

Women Power:

- 47,63,11,240 Women electors out of 97,97,51,847 in 2024, compared to 43,85,37,911 in 2019.
- 48.62% Female Electors in 2024 compared to 48.09% in 2019.
- State with the highest percentage share of Female electors in 2024: Puducherry (53.03%) followed by Kerala (51.56%).
- In 2024, the number of female electors per 1000 male electors made a new high i.e. 946, as compared to 926 in 2019.
- Females outnumbered men in 2024 again like in 2019; this is only the second time in the history of GE to Lok Sabha.
- The Parliamentary Constituency with the highest Voter Turnout of Female voters: Dhubri (Assam) with 92.17% female voting, followed by Tamluk (West Bengal) with 87.57%.
- Number of Female Contesting Candidates was 800, compared to 726 Female Contesting Candidates in 2019.
- State with the highest number of Female Contesting candidates: Maharashtra [111] followed by Uttar Pradesh [80] and Tamil Nadu [77].
- No Female Contesting candidates in 152 PCs out of all 543 PCs.

Results:

- 6 National Parties participated in the Lok Sabha Elections - 2024. Total vote share of these 6 parties was 63.35% of Total Valid Votes.
- 7190 candidates forfeited their deposits, compared to 6923 in 2019.
- One PC - Surat (Gujarat) was uncontested.
- A total of 3921 Independent candidates contested and only 7 of them were elected. 3905 independent candidates forfeited their deposits. Vote Share (%) polled by independent candidates was 2.79% of Total Valid Votes.
- There were 279 Independent Female candidates.

Date change of Polling

- Poll date for 03-Anantnag Rajouri PC of Jammu and Kashmir was shifted from 3rd Phase to 6th Phase;
- Poll Date for 29-Betul PC of Madhya Pradesh was shifted from 2nd phase to 3rd Phase.

2.1.2 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh

- Polling was held in the State of Andhra Pradesh in Single Phase on 13.05.2024 and counting was held on 04.06.2024
- In Andhra Pradesh out of 175 AC Seats, 29 seats are reserved for Scheduled Caste (SC) and 7 seats are reserved for Scheduled Tribe (ST).
- There were a total 46389 Polling Stations in the state.
- Total 4,14,01,887 Electors out of which 2,03,39,851 were Male; 2,10,58,615 were female and 3,421 TG Electors.
- A voter turnout of 81.79% has been recorded across the 175 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly Elections 2024.

2.1.3 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh

- Polling was held in the State of Arunachal Pradesh in Single Phase on 19.04.2024 and counting was held on 02.06.2024
- In Arunachal Pradesh out of 60 AC Seats, 59 seats are reserved for Scheduled Tribe (ST).
- There were a total 1795 Polling Stations in the state.

- Total 7,09,697 Electors out of which 3,50,293 were Male; 3,59,400 were female and 4 TG Electors.
- A voter turnout of 86.89% has been recorded across the 60 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Elections 2024.

2.1.4 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Orissa

- Polling was held in the State of Orissa in four Phases on 13-05-2024, 20-05-2024, 25-05-2024 & 01-06-2024 and counting was held on 04.06.2024.
- In Odisha, 24 seats are reserved for Scheduled Caste (SC) and 33 seats are reserved for Scheduled Tribe (ST) out of 147 seats.
- There were total 38041 Polling Stations in the state
- Total 3,37,16,965 Electors out of which 1,70,97,142 were Male; 1,66,16,359 were female and 3,464 were TG Electors.
- A voter turnout of 74.79% has been recorded across the 147 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the Orissa Assembly Elections 2024.

2.1.5 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Sikkim

- Polling was held in the State of Sikkim in Single Phase on 19.04.2024 and counting was held on 02.06.2024
- In the State of Sikkim 2 seats are reserved for Scheduled Caste (SC) out of 32 AC Seats.
- There were total 624 Polling Stations in the state
- Total 4,66,643 Electors out of which 2,34,871 were Male; 2,31,769 were female and 3 TG Electors.
- A voter turnout of 83.43% has been recorded across the 32 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the Sikkim Assembly Elections 2024.

2.2 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Haryana

- Polling was held in the State of Haryana in Single Phase on 05-10-2024 and counting was held on 08-10-2024.

- There are 90 ACs in the Legislative Assembly out of which 17 seats are Reserved for SC.
- There were a total 20,629 Polling Stations in the State.
- Total 2,04,63,567 Electors out of which 1,08,80,383 were Male; 95,82,717 were female and 467 were TG Electors.
- A voter turnout of 67.9% has been recorded across the 90 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the Haryana Assembly Elections 2024.

2.3 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Jammu & Kashmir

- Polling was held in the State of Jammu & Kashmir in Three Phases on 18-09-2024, 25-09-2024 & 01-10-2024 and counting was held on 08-10-2024.
- There are 90 ACs in the Legislative Assembly out of which 07 seats are reserved for SCs and 09 Seats are reserved for STs.
- There were a total 11,838 Polling Stations in the UT.
- Total 88,03,020 Electors out of which 44,89,058 were Male; 43,13,794 were female and 168 were TG Electors.
- An overall voter turnout of 63.88% has been recorded across the 90 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the J&K Assembly Elections 2024.

2.4 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Jharkhand

- Polling was held in the State of Jharkhand in two Phases on 13-11-2024 & 20-11-2024 and counting was held on 23-11-2024.
- There are 81 ACs in the Legislative Assembly out of which 09 seats are reserved for SCs and 28 Seats are reserved for STs.
- There were a total 29563 Polling Stations in the State.
- Total 26145399 Electors out of which 13205516 were Male: 12939435 were female and **448** TG Electors.
- An overall voter turnout of 68.34 % has been recorded across the 81 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the Jharkhand Assembly Elections 2024

2.5 General Election to Legislative Assembly of Maharashtra

- Polling was held in the State of Maharashtra in single Phases on 20-11-2024 and counting was held on 23-11-2024.
- There are 288 ACs in the Legislative Assembly out of which 29 seats are reserved for SCs and 25 Seats are reserved for STs.
- There were a total 1,00,427 Polling Stations in the State.
- Total 9,70,25,119 Electors out of which 5,00,22,739 were Male: 4,69,96,279 were female and 6,101 TG Electors.
- An overall voter turnout of 66.05% has been recorded across the 288 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in the Maharashtra Assembly Elections 2024.

3 Preparation and initiatives undertaken for General Elections, 2024 and Electoral Management

Elections to the world's largest democracy poses immense challenges with respect to logistics and men and material management and the Commission's endeavor in this direction has been to consult all stakeholders, invite inputs from relevant departments/ organizations and evolve a coordinated framework for smooth delivery of General Election to the Lok Sabha-2024.

To begin with, the Commission held a Conference of the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of all the States and Union Territories to deliberate on all aspects of election preparedness and issue relevant instructions to ensure efficient conduct of the elections.

The Commission updated/consolidated its documents including Handbooks, Manuals, Compendium of Instructions, Checklists, DO's and DON'Ts on conduct of elections in terms of present context to ensure clarity on tasks and responsibilities. All relevant instructions were updated for facilitating the election machinery so as to avoid any kind of confusion in the field during the election process.

The full Commission visited States/UTs to review poll preparedness, and in the process interacted with political parties, enforcement agencies, District Election Officers, SSPs/SPs, Divisional Commissioners, Range IGs, CS/DGPs and other senior officers of the States/UTs.

Conduct of General Elections in the entire country requires considerable deployment of Central and State Police Forces to ensure peaceful, free and fair elections with fearless participation of electors, especially in vulnerable areas/pockets. Five Regional Conferences were organized at Chandigarh, Chennai, Guwahati, Ahmedabad and Lucknow with the Chief Electoral officers and State Police Nodal Officers, to review Poll preparedness. The Senior Officers from the Commission reviewed law and order situation and based on that assessed the quantum of CAPF Coys required in each State/UT. Several rounds of consultations with the senior officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs/ CAPFs/ Police Nodal Officers of the States/ UTs were held to ensure effective mobilization, deployment and disengagement of these forces with minimum criss cross movement and optimal utilization.

The Commission also held discussions with the Union Home Secretary to highlight the areas of coordination for effective deployment of these forces. Meetings were also held with the Chairman, Railway Board and other senior officials of the Ministry of Railways for smooth and timely movement of CAPF Companies and other police forces across States/ UTs, including their intra-State shifting during the election period. Indian Railways was directed to mobilize rolling stocks with appropriate facilities, ensure timely movement, ensure cleanliness and quality food for the forces on the move.

The Commission, before the commencement of parliamentary elections, 2024, held a conference of Chief Electoral Officers, State Police Nodal Officers, senior officers of all States and Union Territories to sensitize the election machinery and to gear up the efforts in order to deliver free, fair and transparent elections.

The Commission also held a Video Conference with Chief Secretaries, Director Generals of Police, other State Officials, and Enforcement agencies. The said meeting was also attended by Director Generals of CRPF, BSF, SSB, ITBP, Coast Guard and officials of M/o Home Affairs and Railways. During the said meeting, the Commission reviewed the overall situation for smooth conduct of elections.

The Commission taking due cognizance of likeliness of weather events during election process held meetings with India Meteorological Department and formed a task force comprising of officials from ECI, IMD, NDMA and MoHFW to review the forecast of weather events and heat impact during every phase of election and suggest mitigate measures to reduce its impact during election period.

3.1 Model Polling Station and Polling Stations Managed by Women, Persons with Disabilities -

As part of its firm commitment towards gender equality and greater constructive participation of women in the electoral process, the Commission also directed that, to the extent possible, at least one polling station each managed exclusively by women and Persons with Disabilities shall be set up in every Constituency in all poll going States/UTs. In such women managed Polling Stations, all election staff, including police and security personnel, will be women. Minimum one Model Polling Station per Constituency shall also be set up using and depicting local materials and art forms.

3.2 Candidates with Criminal Antecedents:

i) Candidates with criminal antecedents are required to publish information in this regard in newspapers and through television channels on three occasions during the campaign period. A political party that sets up candidates with criminal antecedents is also required to publish information about criminal background of its candidates, both on its website and also in newspapers and television channels on three occasions.

ii) Commission vide its letter No. 3/4/2019/SDR/Vol.IV dated 16th September, 2020 has directed that the period specified will be decided with three blocks in the following manner, so that electors have sufficient time to know about the background of such candidates:

(a) Within the first 4 days of the date of withdrawal of Nominations.

(b) Between the next 5th- 8thdays.

(c) From 9th day till the last day of campaign (the second day prior to date of poll).

(Illustration: If the last date for withdrawal is 10th of the month and poll is on 24th of the Month, the first block for publishing of declaration shall be done between 11th and 14th of the Month, second and third blocks shall be between 15th and 18th and 19th and 22nd of that Month, respectively.)

iii) This requirement is in pursuance of the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Writ Petition(C) No. 784 of 2015 (Lok Prahari Vs. Union of India & Others) and Writ Petition(Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr).

3.3 Political Parties Setting Up Candidates with Criminal Antecedents:

i) In pursuance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court Order dated 13th February, 2020 in

Contempt Petition (C)No. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) No. 536 of 2011, it is mandatory for political parties (at the Central and State election level) to upload on their website detailed information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases (including the nature of the offences, and relevant particulars such as whether charges have been framed, the concerned Court, the case number etc.) who have been selected as candidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates. The reasons as to selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate concerned, and not mere "winnability" at the polls.

ii) This information shall also be published in:

a) One local vernacular newspaper and one national newspaper;

b) On the official social media platforms of the political party, including Facebook & Twitter.

iii) These details shall be published within *48 hours of the selection of the candidate and not prior to two weeks before the first date of filing of nominations*. The political party concerned shall then submit a report of compliance with these directions with the Election Commission within 72 hours of the selection of the said candidate. If a political party fails to submit such a compliance report with the Election Commission, the Election Commission shall bring such non-compliance by the political party concerned to the notice of the Supreme Court as being in contempt of this Court's orders/directions. The Commission's instructions issued vide letter no. 3/4/2020/SDR/Vol.III dated 6th March, 2020 available on the Commission's website may be seen.

iv) The Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Brajesh Singh v. Sunil Arora &Ors.* [Contempt Petition (C) No. 656/2020 in Contempt Petition (C) No. 2192/2018 in WP(C) No. 536/2011]) issued some additional directions vide judgment dated 10.08.2021, which has been circulated vide Commission's letter No. 3/4/SDR/VOL.I dated 26.08.2021, which is available on the Commission's website. Following are the directions which are concerned with the political parties: -

a) *Political parties are to publish information regarding criminal antecedents of candidates on the homepage of their websites, thus making it easier for the voter to get to the information that has to be supplied. It will also become necessary now to have on the homepage a caption which "candidates with criminal antecedents";*

b) *We clarify that the direction in paragraph 4.4 of our Order dated 13.02.2020 be modified and it is clarified that the details which are required to be published, shall be published within 48 hours of the selection of the candidate and not prior to two weeks before the first date of filing of nominations; and*

c) *We reiterate that if such a political party fails to submit such compliance report with the ECI, the ECI shall bring such noncompliance by the political party to the notice of this Court as being in contempt of this Court's Orders/directions, which shall in future be viewed very seriously.*

3.4 Eco-Friendly Elections:

The Election Commission has issued advisories on several occasions urging political parties and candidates to use only environment-friendly material and to avoid single-use plastic and non-biodegradable material in their election campaign activities. Protecting the environment is not an individual task but a collective responsibility and hence the Commission urges all the political parties to avoid the use of plastic/polythene and similar non-biodegradable materials for preparation of posters, banners, etc. during election campaigns in the interest of environment and human health. In this connection, on 18th August, 2023, the Commission issued a compiled instruction to all CEOs and political parties to make our elections eco-friendly.

Further, NGT has also asked all concerned for close monitoring of Election Commission of India's instructions in this regard.

3.5 Prohibition of Child Labour:

As per Section 3(1) of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 as amended vide the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016, no child shall be employed or permitted to work in any occupation or process. The Commission has also taken strong exception to the use of children in any way in election related work, instruction has been issued in this regard on 5th February, 2024, to all political parties and CEOs.

3.6 Videography/ Webcasting/CCTV Coverage:

To conduct free, fair, inclusive and transparent election, in polling stations, where

CAPF is not deployed due to non-availability or otherwise, one or more of the following civil (non-force) measures are kept to watch the polling process:

- (i) Micro Observer
- (ii) Video Camera
- (iii) CCTV
- (iv) Webcasting

The videography is done during filing of nomination papers and scrutiny thereof, allotment of symbols, First Level Checking, preparations and storage of Electronic Voting Machines, important public meetings, processions etc. during election campaign, process of dispatching of postal ballot papers, polling process in identified vulnerable polling stations, storage of polled EVMs and VVPATs, counting of votes etc. The videographer shall record events like any attempts of intimidation of voters, attempts of inducement/ bribing of voters, canvassing within 100 meters of Polling Stations, Positioning of voting compartment, Mock Poll, Sealing of EVMs and VVPATs, Voters in queues, length of queue at the time fixed for close of poll, any dispute of any nature at the Polling Station etc.

CCTV coverage is provided for the poll processes happening inside rooms/halls like nomination, scrutiny, withdrawal, symbol allotment, EVM/VVPAT related processes, Border Check Posts and Static Check Points for effective monitoring and surveillance etc.

Minimum 50% webcasting of total polling stations and all critical polling stations and all polling stations in vulnerable areas whichever is higher is done during the poll. Such live stream data of webcasting on poll day is monitored at Integrated Control Rooms of Chief Electoral Officer and District Election Officer.

Video/CCTV coverage is also ensured at every stage of counting. This coverage includes the randomization process for counting personnel, opening of Strong Rooms, transfer of CUs from Strong Room to Counting Hall, Counting Hall arrangements, process of counting and tabulation counters, checking of two CUs per round by the Observers, security arrangements in and outside the Counting Hall/Centre, presence of candidates and their agents, declaration of results, handing over of Certificate of Return of Election, placing VVPAT slips in black envelopes and sealing of EVM/VVPATs after counting and any other significant events of the counting process.

3.7 Measures to Prevent Public Nuisance:

- i) The Commission has directed that the use of public address system or loudspeakers or any sound amplifier, whether fitted on vehicles of any kind whatsoever, or in static position used for public meetings for electioneering purposes, during the entire election period starting from the date of announcement of election and ending with the date of declaration of results, shall not be permitted at night between 10:00 PM to 06:00 AM.
- ii) No loudspeakers fitted on vehicles of any kind or in any other manner whatsoever shall be permitted to be used during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of the poll in any polling area.

3.8 Increased Remuneration of Polling Personnel:

Polling parties on the ground are the epitome of grit and resilience. Their determination to keep the spirit of democracy reigning supreme truly is an inspiration to one and all. Further, in view of the arduous and difficult journey that polling teams have to undertake to ensure that no voter is left behind, ECI has recently doubled the remuneration of polling officials heading for election duty three days or more in advance to reach polling stations located in remote and difficult areas. Till now, the remuneration for polling Officials used to be uniform per diem amount for all polling personnel.

4 IT Initiatives -

The Commission has enhanced usage of IT Applications, to usher in greater citizen participation and transparency.

4.1 cVIGIL App for filling Model Code of Conduct Violation cases by Citizen: *cVIGIL* provides time-stamped evidentiary proof of the Model Code of Conduct/ Expenditure Violation by empowering every citizen to click a photo or video using his or her Smartphone. The application is based on GIS technology and the unique feature of auto location provides fairly correct information which can be relied upon by flying squads to navigate to the right spot of incidence and take prompt action. This app prioritizes the speedy and effective actions by authorities and promises users status reports within 100 minutes. The application is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store.

4.2 Suvidha Portal: This portal provides different facilities to candidates/ political parties as given below-

- **Candidate Online Nomination:** To facilitate filling of nominations, the Election Commission has introduced an online portal for filling the nomination & affidavit. The Candidate can visit <https://suvidha.eci.gov.in/> to create his/her account, fill nomination form, deposit the security amount, check availability of time slot and appropriately plan his visit to the Returning Officer. Once the application is filled through the online portal, the candidate only needs to take a printout, get it notarized and submit the application along with relevant documents to the Returning Officer in person. The Online Nomination Facility is an optional facility to facilitate ease of filing and correct filing. The regular offline submission as prescribed under the law shall continue too.

- **Candidate Permissions module:** The permission module allows the candidates, political parties or any representatives of the candidate to apply online for the permission for meetings, rallies, loudspeakers, temporary offices, and others through SUVIDHA Portal <https://suvidha.eci.gov.in/>. The Candidates can also track their application status through the same portal.
- **Candidate App: Suvidha:** The SUVIDHA mobile application is available during elections for Candidates / Political Parties / Agents to download and use to track the nomination and permission status from the Google Play store.

4.3 Candidate Affidavit Portal: Candidate Affidavit portal <https://affidavit.eci.gov.in/> is a web portal that allows citizens to view the complete list of Candidate Nominations who have applied for the elections. The citizen, political parties and media houses can access this portal to know about the candidates. A complete candidate profile with photo and affidavit is made public as and when the Returning Officer enters the data. The Complete list of Contesting Candidates with their profile, nomination status and the affidavits will be available for public view through Candidate Affidavit Portal.

4.4 Know Your Candidates (KYC): The Election Commission of India has developed a dedicated app for Know your Candidate (KYC) for informing about “Criminal Antecedents” status and other details of candidates. This empowers the citizens to know the criminal antecedents of the candidates, if any. The application is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store.

4.5 Voter Turnout App: Voter Turnout App is used to display estimated provisional voter turnout trends of each Assembly Constituency/ Parliamentary Constituency entered by the Returning officer. The media can also use the same application to capture estimated voter turnout data. Approximate voter turnout data of each phase of the elections was displayed through this app. The application is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store.

4.6 Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot Management System (ETPBMS) for Service Voter: It is an upgraded version of ETPBS having enhanced features and Dashboard & Reporting modules for all stakeholders. The system is used to generate and transmit Postal Ballot through Electronic means to the Service Voters. **The system has also been integrated with the Department of Post so that**

Service voter can send his/her Ballot after casting vote, through speed post without paying any charges. Detailed instructions are sent, along with Postal Ballot, to each service elector. On the day of counting, the same system will be used to validate the Postal Ballot received by post to verify whether the received ePostal Ballot is generated by the system or not. The Postal ballots sent to service electors electronically are called Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballots (ETPBs). The return of ETPB is through postal services. Earlier, the envelopes for postal ballot were forwarded by the CEOs to the Record Officers in order to dispatch polled ETPBs by the service voters through post. Now, the Commission has decided that the CEOs are not required to send envelopes to the Record Officers for this purpose. The Record Officer/Unit Officer/Commandant or any other competent authority, as the case may be, shall procure the envelopes and provide them to the Service Voters for dispatching their polled ETPBs to the respective Returning Officers. The URL of the system is <https://etpbms.eci.gov.in/>.

4.7 ENCORE Portal: The ENCORE portal is an end-to-end application for all election officials (CEO, DEO, RO & ARO) that has a well-defined responsibility for each official to perform various activities in multiple modules. Brief introduction of different modules of this portal is given below:

- a) Candidate Nomination Module:** The Returning Officer will fill all the required details to register the profile of a candidate in the system that will be used at multiple levels of conduct of election process. For all received nominations, the Returning Officer needs to upload the affidavits. This is also applicable in case of multiple nominations by one candidate.
- b) Candidate Scrutiny & Finalization Module:** This system provides facility of marking nominations as Accepted / Rejected during scrutiny and marking of withdrawal if any candidate withdraws his candidature. After the last date of withdrawal, the returning officer can also generate form 7A through the system.
- c) Election Permission Module:** The permission module allows the election officials to process the permission request received from the candidates, political parties or any representatives of the candidate who applied for any permission using SUVIDHA portal or submitted the permission request physically to the election office.
- d) Election Counting Module:** The ENCORE counting application is an end-to-end application for AROs/ROs to digitize the votes polled in EVM and through Postal Ballot, tabulate the data of each round to declare the result of the election. The same data of the election counting is used to prepare various statutory reports of counting.

e) **Index Card:** A facility has been provided to the Returning Officer to fill the Index card online after counting. It contains each detail of elections from the schedule of elections to the declaration of results such as data on nomination, turnout, counting etc.

f) **Expenditure Monitoring:** This expenditure-monitoring module provides facility to all the DEOs to feed the data of DEO Scrutiny reports prepared in respect of each candidate.

4.8 Results Website and Results Trends TV: The timely publication of the round-wise information is vital for establishing a single source of authentic data. The counting data entered by respective Returning Officers is available as 'Trends and Results' for public view through 'ECI Results website' <https://results.eci.gov.in/> **The result website has been upgraded with enhanced features including map view for better users' experience.** The results are shown with the Info graphics and displayed with auto-scroll panels through large display screens outside the counting hall or any public place through Trends TV. The trends & results are also available on VHA mobile App.

4.9 EVM Management System (EMS 2.0): EVM Management System 2.0 is designed to manage inventory of EVM units. One of the important modes to ensure a fair and transparent process in EVM management is the administrative protocol of the two sets of randomizations of the machines before they are deployed in the Polling stations. The randomizations of EVMs/VVPATs are done through EMS 2.0 in the presence of recognized political parties/ contesting candidates/representatives and ECI Observers.

4.10 Voter Service portal: Through (<https://voters.eci.gov.in>), a user can avail and access various services such as access the electoral list, apply for voter id card, apply online for corrections in voter's card, view details of Polling Booth, Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary Constituency and get the contact details of Booth Level Officer, Electoral Registration Officer among other services.

4.11 Voter Helpline Mobile App (VHA): Citizens can avail and access various services such as apply for a voter ID card, apply online for corrections to voter's card, view details of the Polling Booth, Assembly Constituency, and Parliamentary Constituency, and get the contact details of the Booth Level Officer, Electoral Registration Officer among other services. The mobile app is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store.

4.12 Persons with Disability Application (Saksham App): Saksham app is meant for Person with Disabilities. The PwD elector can make requests for marking them as PwD, request for new registration, request for migration, request for correction in EPIC details, request for wheelchair. It utilizes the Accessibility features of mobile phones for voters with blindness and hearing disabilities. The application is available on the Google Play Store and Apple App store.

4.13 BLO App: BLO App (erstwhile GARUDA App) is a dedicated Mobile App for BLOs to perform their tasks digitally. The application is available on both the Google Play store and Apple App store. The following are the main features of the BLO App:

- a) Checklist/Field Verification of Forms
- b) Collection of AMF (Assured Minimum Facility)/EMF (Essential Minimum Facility)
- c) Capturing of GIS coordinates of Polling Stations.
- d) Updation of Photos of Polling Stations
- e) Form Submission on behalf of Electors
- f) House to House Verification and BLO Register

4.14 ERONET: ERONET is a web-based system for Electoral officials, in 14 languages and 11 scripts, to handle all processes pertaining to Form 6/6A/7/8. It provides standardise forms processing, standard database schema, and a standard template for E-Roll printing. It automates the process of electoral roll management starting from elector registration, field verification of electors, decision support system for Electoral Registration Officers and for providing extensive integrated value-added services. All 28 States and 8 UTs are sharing common infrastructure at the National Level. UNPER (Unified National Photo Electoral Roll) is a common database for all States and UTs with data of more than 98 crore electors. The URL of the system is <https://officials.eci.gov.in/>.

4.15 National Grievance Services Portal (NGSP): The Election Commission has developed a National Grievance Service Portal (NGSP). This system is developed in such a manner that in addition to providing redress to the complaints of the Citizens, Electors, Political Parties, Candidates, Media and Election Officials at National, State and District levels, it also serves as a common interface for providing services through a common interface. The application provides a single interface for handling complaints by the Election officials. All Electoral Officers, District Election Officers, CEO and ECI Officials are part of the system. Thus, issues are directly assigned to the respective user upon registration. The citizen can use this service using <https://voters.eci.gov.in>.

4.16 Election Seizure Management System (ESMS): In order to ensure inducement-free elections, the Election Commission of India has embedded technology into the monitoring process through the Election Seizure Monitoring System (ESMS) Mobile App which is proving to be a catalyst, as it brings a wide array of Central and State enforcement agencies together for better coordination and intelligence sharing. ESMS Mobile App is being used to digitize data for intercepted/Seized items (Cash/Liquor/Drugs/ Precious Metal/ Freebies/Other Items) direct from field. This enables stakeholders to automate desired reports in the required format, avoid duplicate data entry by Agencies and analyse received data at the CEO Level.

4.17 Integrated Election Expenditure Monitoring System (IEMS): Integrated Election Expenditure Monitoring System (IEMS) is a user-friendly, secure online platform which enables Political Parties to submit online prescribed documents like Contribution report (From 24A), Annual Audit Account, Election Expenditure. Key features for IEMS are as follows:

- Digitize details of contribution received and submit online
- Real-time compliance status on Dashboard
- Capture Mandatory Info/ Validations/Verification to increase data quality
- Bulk import feature to quickly upload data through Excel format
- Email/ SMS based alerts / acknowledgements to increase compliance
- Aadhaar based e-Sign

4.18 Election Planning Portal: The Election Planning Portal is the new initiative taken by the Election Commission of India to provide a digital platform to the election management process. This portal will be accessed by the CEOs of all the States and UTs, Planning division and zonal divisions in ECI. This portal has various features that cover almost all-important aspects related to vacancy management, bye-elections, election scheduler, holiday management, security management etc. This application has a well-informative dashboard that provides a quick snapshot of the electoral data to the CEOs and ECI users. This application uses an auto alert algorithm to intimate the CEOs about the plan and overdue activities of their state and parliamentary planner. The ECI user can also communicate with the state officials via SMS and mail using this portal.

4.19 Media Voucher Online (<https://timevoucher.eci.gov.in>): The Election Commission of India's "Go Green" initiative is a commendable step towards a more environmentally responsible and efficient electoral system. By adopting digital vouchers, the Commission is demonstrating its commitment to sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and modernization. This initiative not only benefits the environment but also enhances the experience for political parties involved in the electoral process. It sets a positive example for other governmental bodies and organizations to follow, highlighting the importance of embracing digital solutions and eco-friendly practices in a rapidly changing world.

4.20 Observer Portal: Observer portal is an online portal for data management of all types of observers i.e. general observer, police observer and expenditure observes. The deployment schedule of the observer, report submission and many other activities are completed with the help of this portal. The observers also get multiple facilities like filling & submission of reports, notification from the commission, downloads of all the required documents and many more. Parallel to the web portal, a mobile app is also provided that includes all the features that are available in the web application.

4.21 Enhanced Security and Management: A Security Operation Center (SOC) was made operational for monitoring of IT infrastructure, including networks, servers, and applications for signs of security incidents. They also analyze threats, respond to incidents, and set up security measures to prevent future threats. Following are the main advantages of SoC:

- **Asset protection:** The proactive monitoring and rapid response capabilities of SOC's help prevent unauthorized access and minimize the risk of data breaches. This will safeguard critical systems, sensitive data and intellectual property from security breaches and theft.
- **Business continuity:** By reducing security incidents and minimizing their impact, SOC's ensure uninterrupted business operations.
- **Enhanced incident response:** The rapid response capabilities of SOC's reduce downtime by containing threats to minimize disruptions.
- **Improved risk management:** By analyzing security events and trends, SOC teams can identify potential vulnerabilities.
- **Proactive threat detection:** By continuously monitoring networks and systems, SOC's quickly identify and mitigate security threats. This minimizes potential damage and data breaches.

5 Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)

Following summary captures the key developments and updates related to EVMs & VVPATs in India:

1. Evolution of Voting Systems in India: Initially, separate ballot boxes with symbols were used in 1952 and 1957 Lok Sabha Elections, raising concerns about tampering. A marking system on the ballot papers replaced this in 1960-61 and was used until the 1999 elections.

2. Legal Sanction for EVMs: Following the Supreme Court's Judgment in **A.C. Jose v. Sivan Pillai, 1984** SCR (3) 74, ECI recommended legislative amendments to legalize EVMs. Consequently, **Section 61A was added to the Representation of the People Act, 1951, in 1989.** In 1977, ECI explored electronic voting. By 1979, a proto-type was developed and demonstrated to political parties. EVMs first appeared in a 1982 Kerala bye-election, but their use was nullified by the Supreme Court due to the lack of legal provision. The law was amended in December 1988 to include Section 61A, effective March 15, 1989. EVMs were used nationwide in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections, replacing paper ballots. Since 2000, EVMs have been used in 156 State Assembly Elections and 5 General Elections to the Lok Sabha (2004, 2009, 2014, 2019 and 2024) where votes were cast and recorded using the EVMs.

3. Manufacturing: EVMs are produced by Bharat Electronics Limited and Electronics Corporation of India Limited, under the guidance of the Technical Expert Committee.

5.1 Procurement of EVMs and VVPATs for the General Election to Lok Sabha & Legislative Assemblies

1. Procurement: The Commission had procured 13.26 Lakh Ballot Units, 9.09 Lakh Control Units & 8.58 Lakh VVPATs in 2023-24 and the same were deployed for the conduct of General Elections – 2024. All the above said machines supplied by the manufacturers were also deployed in the elections held in 2024-25 and shall also cater to the future elections.

2. Deployment in 2024 Elections

For use in General Elections to Lok Sabha and simultaneous elections in the State of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Odisha-2024 approximately 5.5 million units of EVMs (Ballot Units, Control Units and VVPATs) were available.

3. Milestones of EVMs: In 2004, the EVMs were used in all 543 PCs for the elections to the

Lok Sabha. Technological upgrades to EVMs occurred in 2001, in 2006 and again in 2013-14. EVMs manufactured before 2006 are referred to as 'M1 EVMs', while those made between 2006 and 2010 are called 'M2 EVMs'. The latest 'M3 EVMs', produced since 2013, incorporate the Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) to enhance more transparency and verifiability. VVPATs were first used in the 2013 by-election for the 51-Noksen AC in Nagaland and in all polling stations throughout the country during General Elections to Lok Sabha 2019.

5.2 Technical Features of EVMs andVVPATs

Technical Security Features		
Features	Purpose	Ruled Out
Standalone	EVM used by the Commission is a stand-alone non-networked machine which can be connected to EVM components only (e.g. CU, BU, VVPAT, SLU, P-FLCU).	Any connection with external world through wire or wireless
One Time Programmable (OTP) Chip	The machine is electronically protected to prevent any tampering/manipulation. The programme (software) used in these machines is burnt into a One Time Programmable (OTP) chip so that it cannot be altered or tampered with.	Any alteration or tampering
Unauthorized Access Detection Module (UADM)	Software as well as polled data is stored in the micro-controller of the Control Unit of EVM, which is protected by a Secure Module. Any attempt to open the Secure Module at any time whether the machine is on or off, renders the machine in factory mode and the machine becomes inoperative.	Any access to microcontroller or memory
No Radio Frequency Transmission or Reception Capability	Any tampering of ECI-EVM by coded signals by wireless, Bluetooth or WiFi is ruled out as EVM does not have any radio frequency (RF) communication capability, hence, cannot communicate through Wifi, Bluetooth etc.	Any tampering by coded signals by wireless like Bluetooth or Wifi
Dynamic Coding of Key Presses	Every key press is coded dynamically making it impossible for anyone to decode the signals between Control Unit and Ballot Unit.	Any decoding of the signal between Control Unit, Ballot Unit and VVPAT

Most Advanced Encryption Techniques	Standards used are proven to work effectively in modern systems	Any deciphering by tapping cables
Strong Mutual Authentication Capability	The strong mutual authentication capability ensures that any unauthorized devices cannot interact with EVMs	Any interaction with any unauthorized devices
Real Time Clock for date and time stamping key presses	Every authorised or unauthorised key press is recorded with date and time stamps on a real time basis.	Any malpractice

5.3 Summary of EVM-VVPAT Related Administrative SoP and Involvement of the Recognized Political Parties/Candidates:

Involvement	Activities	Remarks
Recognized Political Parties/Candidates	Storage	- EVM-VVPATs are stored under custody of the District Election Officer (DEO) in a double lock system with minimum ½ section armed security plus CCTV coverage, log-book etc. - Opening and closing of EVM warehouse/strong room during non-election period till finalization of list of the contesting candidates is done in the presence of the Recognized Political Parties and from finalization of list of the contesting candidates, in the presence of candidates. - Opening and Closing of EVM warehouse/strong room is done under videography.
Recognized Political Parties	First Level Checking	- First Level Checking of EVMs and VVPATs is conducted before every election by the authorized engineers of the manufacturers (BEL/ECIL) at District Election Officer (DEO) level in the presence of the Recognized Political Parties. - During FLC cabinet of EVMs are opened in the presence of political party to check there is no spurious component. The cabinets are then sealed with pink paper seals to rule out access to the circuit boards. - Further, casting of 6 votes against each of the candidate buttons (i.e. total 96 votes), observation of result and clearing of mock poll data are done for each EVM & VVPAT. - In addition, higher mock polls are conducted in 5% randomly selected EVMs and VVPATs by the

		representatives of the recognized political parties (i.e. 1200 votes in 1% EVMs, 1000 votes in 2% EVMs and 500 votes in 2% EVMs). The electronic result of EVM is tallied with the VVPAT slips count. List of FLC OK EVMs and VVPATs generated from EMS is shared with all Recognized Political Parties. • FLC-OK machines are stored in Strong Rooms having double lock; CCTV coverage and minimum 1 section Armed Security.
Recognized Political Parties	Training and Awareness	• After completion of FLC, up to 10% EVMs and VVPATs are taken out for awareness and training purposes in the presence of Recognized Political Parties. • The list of awareness and training of EVMs and VVPATs is shared with the political parties. • EVMs & VVPATs taken out for training & awareness are stored separately in a separate designated warehouse. • EVM Demonstration Centers (EDC) are set up at district election offices and at the returning officers headquarters/revenue sub-division offices till the announcement of election. • Mobile Demonstration Van (MDV) are deployed for every assembly constituency/segment to cover all polling locations/electoral literacy clubs.
Recognized Political Parties/Candidates/their representatives	Randomizations	• Randomisation of EVMs and VVPATs are done using EVM Management System (EMS) developed by ECI. • First randomization is conducted in the presence of Recognized Political Parties to allocate EVMs and VVPATs Assembly constituency/ segment-wise. • List of first randomized EVMs and VVPATs (AC/AS-wise) is shared with National and State Recognized Political Parties. The list is also shared with contesting candidates after finalization of list of contesting candidates. • Second randomization is conducted, before commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs, in the presence of contesting candidates and General Observer to allocate polling station wise and reserve machines. • The list of second randomized EVMs and VVPATs is shared with contesting candidates.
Candidates/their representatives	Commissioning (Candidate setting)	• Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs for use in polls is done in the presence of contesting candidates, by the district official. • Symbol loading in every VVPAT is done with help of

		BEL /ECIL engineers using Symbol Loading Unit (SLU). Symbols being loaded in VVPATs are simultaneously displayed on the monitor/TV screen for viewing by candidates/their representatives. • During Commissioning every EVM & VVPAT is checked by casting 1 vote to each candidate button including NOTA. • In addition, higher mock poll of 1000 votes is done in 5% randomly selected EVMs and VVPATs and electronic result of EVM is tallied with the VVPAT slips count. Candidates/their representatives are allowed to pick 5% EVMs and VVPATs randomly and also to do mock poll.
Candidates/their representatives	Dispersal	• On dispersal day EVM-VVPAT strong room is opened in the presence of candidates under videography and dispersal of EVMs and VVPATs is done in their presence.
Candidates/Polling Agents appointed by candidates	Poll Day	• On Poll day 90 minutes before the Actual Poll start time, a mock poll of at least 50 votes (minimum 1 vote to each candidate including NOTA) is conducted at every polling station in the presence of the polling agents nominated by the contesting candidates. Electronic Result of mock poll is tallied with the VVPAT slip count. • Mock poll data is cleared from the Control Unit and mock poll VVPAT slips are kept in the black envelope and sealed with Pink Paper Seal. • Before starting the actual poll, the Control Unit is sealed with Green Paper Seal, Special Tag and Address Tag. VVPAT drop box (Ballot compartment) is also sealed using Address Tags. • On completion of Poll, presiding officer presses the 'CLOSE' button of Control Unit to close the poll. EVM & VVPAT are kept in the respective carrying cases and sealed with address tags. • Polling Agents are allowed to sign the seals used in sealing EVMs and VVPATs (before commencement of poll and on close of poll). • Polling Agents nominated by the contesting candidates are allowed to remain in polling stations to observe the polling process. • A copy of Form 17C containing details of voters, EVM-VVPAT & seals used, vote polled including votes polled in EVM etc. is provided to polling agents.

Candidates/Polling Agents	Transportation of polled EVMs and VVPATs	- After completion of poll, EVMs & VVPATs are transported from polling station to collection center under escort. - Candidates/Polling agents are allowed to follow vehicles carrying polled EVMs and VVPATs.
Candidates/their representatives	Storage of polled EVMs and VVPATs	- Polled EVMs and VVPATs are stored in the strong room in the presence of Candidates/their representatives and ECI Observer. - Candidates/their representatives are also allowed to put their seals on the locks of the strong room. - Polled EVM Strong Room has minimum 1 platoon of armed security (CAPF) and CCTV coverage. - Polled EVM Strong Room has two-cordon security. Inner cordon under CAPF and outer cordon under State Armed Police. No one is allowed to enter the inner cordon. - Candidates/their representatives are allowed to stay to watch the Strong Room, if the entrance of the strong room is not visible, CCTV display facility is provided.
Candidates/ Counting Agents	Counting of votes	- Polled Strong Room is opened in the presence of Candidates, Returning Officer, ECI Observer on counting day under videography. - On the counting day, Control Units of EVMs are brought to the counting table from the strong room under CCTV coverage, and the result is seen on the display of the CU by pressing the 'RESULT' button on the Control Unit after Seal verification by the Candidates/Counting Agents. - EVM wise result is recorded by the Counting Supervisor in Form 17 C and sent to RO for compilation and declaration of round wise result. - After completion of counting of votes, mandatory verification of VVPAT slips of randomly selected 5 polling stations per assembly constituency/segment is conducted. - Thereafter, EVMs are kept in the EVM Strong Room and sealed envelopes of VVPAT slips are kept with the statutory documents in a separate trunk.

Additionally, ECI has introduced water and shock-proof ergonomically efficient backpacks for EVM-VVPAT machines and polling materials, improving safety and mobility for polling parties in challenging terrains.

6. Engaging Voters through voter education and awareness for General Elections, 2024:

SVEEP is designed according to the socio-economic, cultural and demographic profile of the state as well as history of electoral participation in previous rounds of elections. SVEEP works on the three pronged strategy of Information, Motivation & Facilitation (IMF). The core interventions like Situation Analysis through Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) Surveys and existing data, chalking out targeted interventions like urban apathy, youth, women, PwD voters, inclusive, accessible and ethical elections etc., both communication and facilitation related, monitoring and evaluation, some of the recent and past initiatives taken towards improving voter experience and voter participation in the electoral process are as follows:-

- a) **National Level launch programme of Special Summary Revision-2024 for 18th Lok Sabha Elections 2024, with the theme "*Chunav ka Parv, Desh ka Garv*".:-**
Special Summary Revision is an important annual activity of ECI whereby, enrolment of eligible young voters, de-duplication activities and purification of electoral rolls is ensured. It's an important event of its kind, as purification of electoral rolls enables ECI to conduct Free, Fair and Inclusive elections in the country.
- b) **National Voters' Day (NVD) celebration:-** NVD was started in 2011 and since then, NVD has been institutionalized as an annual feature to celebrate democracy and electoral participation in the country. NVD, which marks the Foundation Day of the Election Commission of India, is celebrated on 25th January. On National Voters Day, people across India celebrate their right to vote by celebrating democracy, exercising their civic duty, and participating in the democratic process. The celebrations take place at over ten lakh locations across the country, including polling stations, areas, sub divisions, divisions, district and state headquarters. The theme for this year's NVD is **"NOTHING LIKE VOTING, I VOTE FOR SURE"**.
- c) **Matdata Junction:** Commission has successfully collaborated with All India Radio for production & Broadcast of Matdata Junction series 1.0 and 2.0 respectively. The wider aim is to generate voter awareness throughout the country through the infotainment medium of AIR. The Targeted listeners are the rural population and people on the move in the urban areas especially youth. Matdata Junction series 1.0 is a 52 and 2.0 is a 27 weekly programme of 15 minutes each. It is broadcasted over 29 FM (25 FM

Rainbow + 4 FM Gold) and 42 Vividh Bharati Stations, 159 Primary Channel/ Local Radio Stations in programme. Every episode is broadcast in 23 languages, including Hindi, English, and other regional languages. The programme has received a widespread response from the listeners. The programme is highly interesting and utilizes various formats of engagement for listeners including quiz, whereby every winner during the episode is rewarded with a certificate and ECI merchandise.

- d) **Pocket size-Voter Guide Booklet:** A pocket size version of the voter guide is being provided to every household in Poll Going States for ease of information on election related queries like searching name in the voter list, information on EVM-VVPAT, helpline numbers, Assured Minimum Facilities at polling stations and COVID safety measures amongst others.
- e) **Electoral Literacy Clubs:-**On the 8th National Voters' Day of January 25, 2018, the Election Commission of India (ECI) took a landmark step towards the cause of electoral literacy with its initiative - 'Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy through Educational Institutions, Organizations and Communities in India', under its Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Programme. Formed in schools & colleges (Electoral Literacy Clubs), Communities (Chunav Pathshalas) and organizations (Voter Awareness Forums) across the country, these clubs of learning taught the value of democracy and one's role in it through hands on experience to develop and strengthen the culture of electoral participation. As reported by the States/UTs, till now **9,08,019** (total ELCs as on 28.2.2023) ELCs have been established across the country.
- f) **Voter Awareness Forum:** Voter Awareness Forums (VAFs) are informal forums for generating discussions and awareness around the electoral process, on the how, what and where of registration & voting, through the medium of real-time activities. Through VAFs in Government Departments, Government & Non-Government Organizations, Industrial establishments etc. The Election Commission of India was created to spread voter awareness and facilitate voter education.
- g) **Engagement of National Icon:-**ECI associates itself with renowned Indians from various fields and designates them as ECI's national icons to motivate voters for participation in the festival of democracy. **Sh. Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar**, Cricketer & **Sh. Rajkummar Rao**, Actor has been engaged as National Icon.

h) Turnout Implementation Plan (TIP): In order to enhance voter turnout, the Commission has introduced a concept of Assembly Constituency wise **Turnout Implementation Plan(TIP)**, as a major SVEEP Intervention/ strategy across the Country. In this, CEOs/ DEOs compile a comprehensive gap analysis template, and accordingly prepare targeted SVEEP intervention for the concerned Assembly Constituency. These templates serve as the foundation for developing the TIP i.e. SVEEP interventions for the area. The Commission has signed MoUs with various Ministries to promoting voter education programmes across the country by utilizing the huge infrastructure through following activities:-

- i) Ministry of Education:** To formalize a mutual partnership to promote voter education, facilitate voter registration and embed electoral literacy as an integral part of curriculum, co-curricular and extracurricular at school and college level. The MoU was signed to incorporate voter education and electoral literacy formally into the Schools and Colleges education system to prepare future and new voters for greater electoral participation. Every senior secondary school must be designated as a 'Democracy Room' for displaying voter awareness material on a regular basis and conducting continuous Electoral and Democracy education (CEDE) activities around the year.
- ii) Indian Bank Association:** All member institutions under IBA will establish Voter Awareness Forum to engage employees and customers in discussions and initiatives related to voter education. Sensitize about training modules on SVEEP in the regular orientation Programmes of employees of IBA. Members and affiliated institutions/units will display voter education messages prominently on their websites, directing visitors to learn more about the electoral process. Voter education messages will be displayed in the form of posters, flex, and hoardings at office infrastructure/premises at major locations, reaching customers at key touch-points.
- iii) The Ministry of Petroleum** was directed to place informative hoardings, posters, leaflets, digital screens at petrol pumps to raise awareness about voting, polling locations, and important election dates during the period of enforcement of Model Code of Conduct. Using the petroleum network for voter education could involve leveraging gas stations or petroleum companies'

existing infrastructure to disseminate voter information. Petrol pumps could be an effective platform to spread voter education due to their widespread presence and high volume of people who visit them regularly.

- iv) **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting** to screen various voter awareness films under Public Service Awareness (PSA). Screening the voter awareness films “My Vote My Duty” in Hindi and English version of 45 Seconds duration each, in all cinema theatres across the country before screening and during interval of each film under Public Service Awareness (PSA) system. AIR and DD to produce an air programme on voter education on a pro-bono basis e.g. interactive session, discussion, promos, etc.
- v) **Ministry of Communications** by utilizing its extensive network of approximately 1.60 lakh Post Offices across urban, suburban, and rural areas, India Post has ensured that voter awareness messages reach every corner of the country. By incorporating voter awareness messages into its daily mail operations, India Post has played a pivotal role in educating and encouraging citizens to participate in the democratic process. Through informative posters, announcements, digital displays, and social media, India Post has significantly enhanced the visibility and impact of voter engagement initiatives.

Voter education content will be disseminated through various promotional channels such as social media and customer outreach platforms of member institutions, ensuring widespread awareness among stakeholders and the public.

7. Ensuring Maximum Voting through initiatives for PwDs:

Following major initiatives for the Lok Sabha Elections 2024 were taken for maximum voting by PwDs:

1. Home Voting :The facility was offered for the first time in General Elections this time. Voters above 85 years of age and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) with 40% benchmark disability could vote from home. Polling teams went to their doorstep, often making arduous trips, to ensure that they are not denied the opportunity to participate in the electoral process simply due to physical or other kinds of barriers.

2. Assured Minimum Facilities :To make voting a welcoming and pleasant experience, polling stations were located on the ground floor, a ramp with an appropriate gradient, drinking water, adequate furniture, proper lighting, signage for voter guidance, toilet facilities, shade, posters and booths for voter assistance. Beyond AMF, polling stations were provided with medical/ first-aid kits, wheelchairs for PwDs and senior citizens via the Saksham-ECI app, transport for senior citizens and those with disabilities, and separate queues for men, women, senior citizens, and PwDs.

3. Diverse Thematic Polling Stations: In an endeavour to make polling stations a place of festivity and democratic fervour, 'Model Polling Stations' were set up, wherever feasible using depicting local materials and depicting local art forms in tribal themed polling stations of PVTGs.

4. Polling stations managed by women, persons with disabilities: As part of its firm commitment towards gender equality and greater constructive participation of women in the electoral process, the Commission had directed that, to the extent possible, at least one polling station each managed exclusively by women and Persons with Disabilities was to be set up in every constituency.

5. Appointment of National PwD Icon and prominent personalities as ECI's Ambassadors:The Commission has appointed **Ms. Sheetal Devi**, Arjuna Awardee and Para Archer, as the National Icon for PwD on 15th March, 2024, and **Shri. Rakesh Kumar**, Para Archer, as the National Icon for PwD in September, 2024 to motivate the PwD electors to exercise their franchise in the Lok Sabha Election-2024. Ms. Devi's appointment is a

significant step towards ensuring inclusive and accessible elections. Further, the Commission had appointed eleven (11) eminent PwD personalities as **“Ambassadors of ECI”** to enhance voter outreach among Persons with Disabilities (PwD). The Ambassadors, recognized for their achievements and advocacy, have played a crucial role in promoting voter awareness and participation in the electoral process.

6. Launch of a dedicated Voter’s Guide for PwD and Sr.Citizen Electors: The Commission had launched a comprehensive voter guide book specifically designed to cater to the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and senior citizen electors. This guidebook, available in English, Hindi as well as certain regional languages, aims to assist them in the registration of their names in the electoral roll and provide essential information on various available aids and services. Key features include guidance on using apps like Saksham, which offers support and resources for PwD voters. Additionally, the guide book details poll day assistance such as booking requests for wheelchairs and pick-and-drop facilities, ensuring a seamless and inclusive voting experience.

7. Accessibility Audit: The Commission had also directed the CEOs of all the States/UTs to conduct an accessibility audit in their respective States/UTs for the Lok Sabha Election – 2024 and ensure 100% compliance of the following:

- (a) Accessible infrastructure and facilities at Polling Stations for PwDs
- (b) Accessibility of website/Apps and social media content for the benefit of PwDs
- (c) Availability of SVEEP communications and outreach content in accessible format

In response to the above direction, all the CEOs had confirmed that an accessibility audit had been conducted and appropriate steps had been taken to comply with the Commission’s direction.

The number of PwD voters at the time of final publication of SSR data had increased from 45,63,905 in 2019 to 90,28,696 in 2024 General Elections. As a result of the above initiatives, in Lok Sabha Elections 2024, there were 90,28,696 registered PwD Electors whereas in GE to Lok Sabha- 2019, there were 61,67,482 PwD Electors. There is an increase of almost 46.4% in total number of PwD Electors in 2024 as compared to that of in 2019.

8. Knowledge Sharing : As the Electoral Management Body that conducts the world's largest democratic exercise, ECI is uniquely poised to share learnings and insights with the world through training and capacity building programmes. Following important activities provide a glimpse of initiatives undertaken by IIIDEM for the gigantic exercise done for Lok Sabha Elections 2024, General Elections for various Legislative Assemblies and Bye-Elections for various PCs & ACs.

A. National/Domestic Trainees trained by IIIDEM through Physical and Online modes from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024

S.No.	Mode of training	No. of domestic participants trained
1	Physical Training	11288
2	Online Training	8340
	Total	19628

B. International Trainees trained by IIIDEM through Physical and Online modes from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024

S.No.	Mode of training	No. of international participants trained
1	Physical Training	289
2	Online Training	0
	Total	289

C. Total of National & International participants trained by IIIDEM through Physical and Online modes (01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024)

S.No.	Mode of training	Total participants trained
1	Physical Training	11577
2	Online Training	8340
	Total	19917

D. Summary of National/Domestic Training programmes (from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024)

(i) Orientation Programme for experience sharing and knowledge transfer

In preparation of 2024 General Elections, IIIDEM organised an Orientation Programme for 94 newly appointed Chief Electoral Officers/Addl. Chief Electoral Officers/Jt. Chief Electoral Officers/Dy. Chief Electoral Officers on March 12, 2024 at IIIDEM campus, New Delhi. The Orientation programme focussed on Election Law-Nomination Process, Election Planning & Security Management, MCMC-Media Paid News and SVEEP, IT Applications (ENCORE, C-VIGIL

& ETPBS), E-Roll Summary Revision, Model Code of Conduct, Postal Ballot, Expenditure Monitoring and EVM/VVPAT.

IIIDEM also conducted 2 more such Orientation Programmes for newly appointed Chief Electoral Officers/Addl. Chief Electoral Officers/Jt. Chief Electoral Officers/Dy. Chief Electoral Officers on 9th August, 2024 and 3rd December, 2024 respectively.



Chief Electoral Officers/Addl. Chief Electoral Officers/Jt. Chief Electoral Officers/Dy. Chief Electoral Officer's one-day training programme on 3rd December, 2024

(ii) State Police Nodal Officers for polling booths ,vulnerability assessment and Law & Order

In preparation of 2024 General Elections, IIIDEM organised two training programmes for 74 newly appointed State Police Nodal Officers (SPNOs) on 9th February, 2024 and 13th March, 2024. For the Poll going States in 2024, IIIDEM also conducted 4 training programmes for Police Officers on 27th August, 2024, 3rd October, 2024, 7th October, 2024 and 10th December, 2024. The focus of the training programme was on Preparatory work before declaration of Election & Categorization of polling booth sand vulnerability assessment and criticality analysis; Induction, deployment and de-induction & state police deployment, Law & Order including relevant issues related to MCC; Electoral Offences- Classification, Monitoring & Progress, Assessment of CAPF requirement and Welfare and Security arrangements for pre-poll, polling day and post poll period.



Maharashtra Police Officer training programme conducted at Pune on 7th October, 2024



NCT of Delhi Police Officers training programme conducted at IIIDEM on 10th Dec, 2024

(iii) Study Visit for IP&TFAS Officers

IIIDEM conducted one-day study visit to 9 officers of IP&TFAS (Group-A & B) on 14th August, 2024 at IIIDEM. The IP&TAFS officers are appointed as Expenditure Observers (EOs) and Asst. Election Observers during election process for election expenditure monitoring. These officers have been trained to gain competency on this role as well as election overview; election process; overview of election expenditure, monitoring mechanism & its importance; election machinery-role & organisation; constitutional provisions regarding ECI and Houses of Parliament/State Legislatures, Representation of People Act, 1951 and

Conduct of Election Rules, 1962; Seizures during elections - Role of various law enforcement agencies (LEAs).



IP&TFAS (Group-A & B) Officers from National Institute of Communication Finance (NICF) on Study Visit to IIDEM on 14th August, 2024

(iv) Training Programme for Indian Statistical Service (ISS) Officers from National Statistical Systems Training Academy (NSSTA)

IIDEM conducted a one-day training programme for 27 probationary officers of Indian Statistical Service (ISS) and 6 officers from National Statistical Systems Training Academy (NSSTA) on 16th February, 2024. The focus of the training programme was to give insightful exposure to the functions of the Election Commission of India; election processes and systems; observe the collection, analysis and dissemination of electoral data; use of statistical tools and techniques in election planning and analysis.



Indian Statistical Service (ISS) Officers from National Statistical Systems Training Academy (NSSTA) on one-day training programme to IIDEM on 16th February, 2024

(v) Study Visit for Indian Revenue Service (IRS) Officer (77th Batch)

IIIDEM conducted Study Visit for 91 officer trainees of Indian Revenue Service (IRS) including 2 officer trainees from Royal Bhutan Service of National Academy of Direct Taxes, Nagpur on 14th & 15th March, 2024 at IIIDEM to get exposure on election and its expenditure related matters. The focus of the study visit was to enhance their exposure to overview of Election Commission of India; Conduct of Election; Overview of Election Expenditure, Monitoring mechanism & its importance; Role of Expenditure observer in Electoral Process; Seizures during elections - Role of various law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and Maintenance of documents in Election Expenditure - Monitoring process & EO's role.



Indian Revenue Service (IRS) Officer Trainees officer trainees from Royal Bhutan Service from National Academy of Direct Taxes, Nagpur on Study Visit to IIIDEM on 14th & 15th March, 2024

(vi) Study Visit for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officers (2023 Batch)

IIIDEM conducted a one-day Study Visit to 38 officers of Indian Foreign Service (IFS) on 18th March, 2024 to give holistic exposure on the topic of “Role of the Election Commission of India”, ECI Functions and also its collaboration with other countries. The focus was on Overview of ECI; Electoral Reform in India and Role of Civil servants in organizing free and fair elections followed by interaction with Hon’ble CEC on the Commission’s role & functions and its collaboration with other Election Management Bodies/ Organisations.



Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officer Study Visit on 18th March, 2024

(vii) Training of ECI Officials at IIIDEM

IIIDEM conducted a two weeks training programme from 30th Sep to 11th Oct, 2024 of ECI officials in the grade of PPS/PS/PA for promotion to the above grade. The topics covered in the training programme were related to elections process, establishment, accounts and administration matters.



**Two-weeks training of ECI Officials in the grade of PPS/PS/PA at IIIDEM
from 30th Sep to 11th Oct, 2024**

(viii) Workshop for National Level Master Trainers (NLMTs) and Officials from ECI

Workshop on 10 modules (developed by IIIDEM in collaboration with IFES) was conducted for 62 Officials (NLMTs and officials from ECI) on 24th and 25th October, 2024. The workshop covered various topics from IFES modules viz Voter Education, Voter Registration, Election Management, IT Applications, Election Planning, Political Finance and Expenditure

Monitoring and the use of IFES modules to tailor to the target audience of the future international training program.



Group Photograph during Workshop on 10 modules (developed by IIIDEM in collaboration with IFES), for 62 Officials (NLMTs and officials from ECI) (24th and 25th October, 2024)



Session by Shri Pankaj Srivastava, Director during Workshop on 10 modules (developed by IIIDEM in collaboration with IFES), for 62 Officials (NLMTs and officials from ECI) (24th and 25th October, 2024)

E. Summary of International Training Programmes (from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024)

I) Delegation Visits:

(A) Study Tour for 5 member delegation from Independent National Electoral Commission of Madagascar conducted from 29th to 31st January, 2024

IIIDEM conducted two-days Study Visit for five member delegation from Independent National Electoral Commission of Madagascar from 29th to 31st January, 2024. The delegation was led by H. E. Mr. Dama Andrianarisedo Retaf Arsene, President, CENI. The focus was on overview of ECI, importance of Planning in Elections, Legal Framework for Elections in India, Polling Management Technologies in India, Guiding Principles for Voter Registration, Free and Fair Election Tree & International Electoral Standards, Guiding Principles underpinning Good Electoral Management and Processes and Electoral Cycle.



Group photograph during Study Tour of 5 member Delegation from Independent National Electoral Commission of Madagascar (29th and 31st January, 2024)



Shri Dharmendra Sharma, Director General, IIIDEM, is warmly welcoming H.E. Mr. Dama Andrianarisedo Retaf Arsene, President of CENI from Madagascar, by presenting a bouquet during a Study Tour for the delegation from the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) of Madagascar (29th and 31st January, 2024)

(B) Briefing session for the officials of Parliament & other departments of Papua New Guinea conducted on 6th May, 2024

IIIDEM conducted a one day briefing session for the nine officials of Parliament & other departments of Papua New Guinea on 6th May, 2024. The focus was on overview of ECI and IIIDEM and unfolding of Indian election process and administrative procedures involved in Election



Interaction during briefing session for the officials of Papua New Guinea (6th May, 2024)



Group photograph with the nine officials of Papua New Guinea (6th May, 2024)

(C) Study visit of one member delegation from Electoral Commissioner's Office of Mauritius conducted on 4th June, 2024

IIIDEM conducted a one day study visit of one member delegation from the Electoral Commissioner's Office of Mauritius on 4th June, 2024. The focus was on overview of Election Process viz Electors' Registration, Voters' Awareness, Process of counting of votes etc.



Interaction during visit of one member delegation from Electoral Commissioner's Office of Mauritius (4th June, 2024)

(D) Visit of Civil Servants, from Bangladesh, undergoing Mid-Career Training Program at NCGG, conducted at IIIDEM on 15th February, 14th March and 25th July, 2024 respectively

IIIDEM conducted a one day visit of Civil Servants of three batches, from Bangladesh, undergoing Mid-Career Training Program at NCGG on 15th February, 14th March and 25th July, 2024 respectively. The focus was on overview of ECI and IIIDEM, role of civil servants in organizing free and fair elections and electoral reform in India.



Group photograph during visit of Civil Servants, from Bangladesh, undergoing Mid-Career Training Program at NCGG (14th March, 2024)

(E) Training programme for the Officials of Electoral Commission, Ireland conducted on 22nd and 23rd October, 2024

IIIDEM conducted Training programme for the four Officials of Ireland on 22nd and 23rd October, 2024. The delegation was led by H.E. Justice Marie Baker, Chairperson, Electoral Commission, Ireland. The focus was on overview of ECI & brief about IIIDEM, Misinformation & Disinformation, raising awareness, communication and public engagement, Electoral Reform, Electoral Registration & Integrity in the Election Process, Alternative Voting Mechanisms including EVMs and Consultative Mechanisms for engagement with government and political parties



Interaction during Training programme for the Officials of Electoral Commission, Ireland (22nd and 23rd October, 2024)

(F) Training programme for the Officials of Election Commission of Malaysia conducted on 6th and 7th November, 2024.

IIIDEM conducted Training programme for the three Officials of Election Commission of Malaysia conducted on 6th and 7th November, 2024. The delegation was led by Dr. Azmi Sharom, Deputy Chairman of Election Commission of Malaysia. The focus was on overview of ECI & brief about IIIDEM, Introduction and implementation of the Election Model Code of Conduct and code of ethics, Regulation of election campaigns on social media, Implementation and enforcement of election silence period and best practices in election management.



**Group Photograph during Training programme for the Officials of Election Commission of Malaysia
(6th and 7th November, 2024)**

(G) Training programme for the Officials of National Election Commission, Korea conducted on 12th November, 2024.

IIIDEM conducted Training programme for the five Officials of National Election Commission, Korea conducted on 12th November, 2024. The delegation was led by Mr. Mincheol LEE, Director, NEC & Head of Regional Election Commission, Korea. The focus was on overview of ECI & brief about IIIDEM, process to secure election management manpower and the voting/counting procedure ECI follows and how the citizen residing outside of India get information about the contesting candidates and political parties



**Interaction during Training programme for the Officials of National Election Commission,
Korea
(12th November, 2024)**

II) ITEC Programme:

(A) Capacity Development Programme on 'Election Planning' for the 13 Officials of ITEC Partner countries conducted from 8th to 12th January, 2024

IIIDEM conducted a Capacity Development Programme on 'Election Planning' for Officials of ITEC Partner countries from 8th to 12th January, 2024. Total thirteen officials from the seven ITEC partner countries participated in the training programme. The training covered the topics namely, Planning for Voter Education, introduction to election planning, communication plan, planning for introduction of technologies in election management, What and why of Democracy, Risk Management and Contingency Planning & Engagement with Stakeholders, Strategic Planning and Operational Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Planning, Planning for Grievance Redressal/Complaint management, Planning for voter registration and polling station demarcation followed by the country presentation.



Inaugural Session on 8th January, 2024, during Capacity Development Programme on 'Election Planning' for the 13 Officials of ITEC Partner countries (8th to 12th January, 2024)



Group photograph during Capacity Development Programme on 'Election Planning' for the 13 Officials of ITEC Partner countries (8th to 12th January, 2024)

(B) Capacity Development Programme on 'Election Administration' for the Officials of Election Commission of Nepal was held from 10th to 21st June, 2024

IIIDEM conducted a Capacity Development Programme on 'Election Administration' for the 30 Officials (27 participants and three training observers) of Nepal from 10th to 21st June, 2024. The training covered the topics namely-What and why of Democracy, Risk Management and Contingency Planning & Engagement with Stakeholders, Guiding Principles of Election Management, Party Finance and Campaign Expenditure, Election Day Monitoring, Vulnerability Mapping & Electoral Risk Management Tool, Media in Elections – Monitoring social media; addressing hate news, fake news, paid, Voting Process & Methods, Poll Day Arrangement, Voter Registration- Guiding Principles, Electoral Reform, EVM-VVPAT Hands-on and Administrative procedure: Indian Experience, Various IT Application/ Apps for E-Roll & citizens Voter Education, Counting and Result Transmission, Use of Technology in Elections: Indian Experience, Strategic Planning and Operational Planning, Electoral Dispute Resolution, Political Association & Registration of Political Party, Risk Management and Contingency Planning & Engagement with Stakeholders, Electoral Integrity, Electoral District and Polling Station Area Boundary Demarcation and Gender & Inclusion



Inaugural Session on 10th June, 2024, during Capacity Development Programme on 'Election Administration' for the 30 Officials of Election Commission of Nepal (10th to 21st June, 2024)



Group Photograph during Capacity Development Programme on ' Election Administration' for the 30 Officials of Election Commission of Nepal (10th to 21st June, 2024)

9. International engagements of ECI during 2024

i. ECI, being the then Chair of the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA), held the meeting of the Executive Board (EB) on 24th January, 2024 at New Delhi. The Election Management Bodies (EMBs) from Taiwan (RoC), Maldives, Sri Lanka, Russian Federation, Uzbekistan and Philippines attended the said EB meeting.





ii. ECI organized the International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP), 2024 from 4th-9th May, 2024 alongside India's Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly elections of 2024. The initiative aimed to enhance transparency and share best electoral practices with foreign Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and organizations. On May 5, 2024, the ECI hosted a briefing session for the largest-ever global delegation at New Delhi with 75 delegates from 23 countries observing India's elections. Members from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and media teams from Bhutan and Israel also participated in the event.





During the said program, foreign delegates visited various poll-going states

Delegates were divided into groups to visit six poll-going states—Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh to witness election preparations first-hand. The programme concluded on May 9, 2024, successfully acquainting international participants with India's electoral system and best practices in Indian elections.



Foreign delegates visited Goa to witness Election process



Foreign delegates during their visit to Gujarat to witness Election process



Foreign delegates at dispatch center in Karnataka to witness Election process



Foreign delegates at dispatch center in Maharashtra to witness Election process



Foreign delegates at Polling station in Agra, Uttar Pradesh to witness Election process



Briefing by District Election officer to International Delegates at Belagavi, Karnataka

iii. Commission's International Visits and MoUs

- a. **Kazakhstan:** Shri Rajiv Kumar, Chief Election Commissioner, visited Kazakhstan in June, 2024 to have bilateral meetings with the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan with a view to enhance mutual Cooperation in the field of Election management. During the visit Hon'ble CEC also interacted with Indian Mission officials to sensitize them about the online Voters' Registration System and ETPBS.



- b. **Mongolia:** On the invitation of GEC, Mongolia, Shri Rajiv Kumar, CEC, visited Mongoliato observe their 2024 Parliamentary Elections in June, 2024.



- c. **Hong Kong:** Shri Rajiv Kumar, CEC, visited Hong Kong in June, 2024 to sensitize Indian Mission officials about the online Voters' Registration System and ETPBMS.
- d. **United Kingdom:** Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, Hon'ble Election Commissioner visited the UK to attend 19th Cambridge Conference on Electoral Democracy on 18-19 July, 2024 and also interacted with the officials of High Commission of India at London on 22nd July, 2024, on the Online voter registration System.
- e. **Uzbekistan:** Mr. Rajiv Kumar, Hon'ble Chief Election Commissioner of India visited Uzbekistan to participate as an international observer during the elections to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan held on 27th October, 2024. During the visit, Hon'ble CEC also signed a MoU with CEC-Uzbekistan for Cooperation in the field of electoral Management and Administration.





Government of India
Ministry of Law and Justice
Department of Justice

1. ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONS:

The Department of Justice forms part of the Ministry of Law and Justice. It is headed by the Minister of State (Independent Charge), Law and Justice. The Secretariat is headed by Secretary (Justice). The organizational setup includes 4 Joint Secretaries, 8 Deputy Secretaries/Directors and 11 Under Secretaries. The sanctioned strength of the Department of Justice is 102, out of which, 42 posts are lying vacant. Out of 60 in-position incumbents, 07 women officers/officials are working in this Department. The Organizational Chart of the Department of Justice is at **Annexure-I**.

1.1 As per the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, (as amended from time to time), the subjects handled by the Department of Justice, inter-alia, include the following:

- i. Appointment, resignation and removal of the Chief Justice of India and Judges of the Supreme Court of India; their salaries, rights in respect of leave of absence (including leave allowance), pensions and travelling allowances;
- ii. Appointment, resignation and removal etc., of Chief Justice and Judges of High Courts in States; their salaries, rights in respect of leave of absence (including leave allowances), pensions and travelling allowances;
- iii. Appointment of Judicial Commissioners and Judicial Officers in Union Territories;
- iv. Constitution and organization (excluding jurisdiction and powers) of the Supreme Court (but including contempt of such Court) and the fees taken therein;
- v. Constitution and organization of the High Courts and the Courts of Judicial Commissioners except provisions as to officers and servants of these courts;
- vi. Administration of justice and constitution and organization of courts in the Union Territories and fees taken in such courts;
- vii. Courts fees and Stamp duties in the Union Territories;
- viii. Creation of All India Judicial Service;
- ix. Conditions of service of District Judges and other Members of Higher Judicial Service of Union Territories;
- x. Extension of the Jurisdiction of a High Court to a Union Territory or exclusion of a Union Territory from the Jurisdiction of a High Court;
- xi. Legal Aid to the poor;
- xii. Administration of Justice; and
- xiii. Access to Justice, Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms;

2. APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFER OF JUDGES

2.1 SUPREME COURT OF INDIA:

As on 31.12.2024, 33 Judges are working in the Supreme Court, against the sanctioned strength of 34 Judges, including 02 women Judges. During the period from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024, 04 Judges were appointed to the Supreme Court.

2.2 HIGH COURTS:

(i) As on 31.12.2024, the Sanctioned Strength of Judges in the High Courts was 1122 against which 752 Judges are working, with 370 vacancies. 174 recommendations for appointment of Judges received from various High Court Collegiums were under process with the Government and the Supreme Court Collegium. Recommendations against the remaining 196 posts are yet to be received from High Court Collegiums.

(ii) During the period from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024, 34 fresh appointments of Judges were made in the High Courts and 78 Additional Judges were appointed as Permanent Judges. 16 Additional Judges were given a fresh term. Further, appointment of 20 Chief Justices of High Courts were also made. 08 Judges of High Courts were transferred from one High Court to another.

(iii) The Judge strength of Gauhati High Court was enhanced from 24 to 30 Judges. The Judge strength of J&K and Ladakh High Court was enhanced by 08, thus increasing the approved Judge Strength from 17 to 25 Judges.

3. FAMILY COURTS:

3.1 The Family Court Act, 1984 provides for establishment of Family Courts by the State Governments, in consultation with the High Courts concerned, with a view to promote conciliation and secure speedy settlement of disputes relating to marriage and family affairs and for matters connected therewith. Under section 3(1)(a) of the Family Courts Act, it is mandatory for the State Governments to set up a Family Court for every area in the state comprising a city or a town, whose population exceeds one million. In other areas of the State, Family Courts may be set up, if the State Government deems it necessary.

3.2 The main objectives for setting up of Family Courts are to create a Specialized Court to deal with family matters exclusively, through instituting a mechanism for conciliation of the disputes relating to family expeditiously, to provide an inexpensive remedy and to have flexibility and an informal atmosphere in the conduct of proceedings.

3.3 A scheme of central financial assistance was started in the year 2002-03 for setting up of Family Courts. As per the Scheme, Central Government provided 50 percent of the cost of construction of the building of the Family Court and residential accommodation of the Judge, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 10 lac, as a one-time grant as Plan support and Rs. 5 lac annually as the recurring cost under the Non-Plan component. The State Government is required to provide the matching share. A grant of Rs. 11.50 Cr. was released to the State Governments till the year

2012-13. The component provided for grant for construction of building of Family Courts and residential accommodations of the Judges, has since been subsumed in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Development of Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary. **912 Family Courts are functional in 29 States/UTs (as on 31.12.2024).**

4. FAST TRACK COURTS:

Fast Track Courts (FTCs) are set up by the State Governments, as per their need and resources in consultation with the High Courts concerned. The 14th Finance Commission recommended 1800 FTCs for dealing cases of heinous nature, cases related to women, children, senior citizen etc. and urged State Governments to utilize enhanced fund made available through tax devolution. **As on 31.12.2024, 863 FTCs are functional in 21 States.**

5. SPECIAL COURTS FOR TRIAL OF CRIMINAL CASES INVOLVING ELECTED MPs/MLAs:

In compliance with the Hon'ble Supreme Court Judgment in Ashwini Kumar Vs UoI [WP(C) 699 of 2016], 10 Special courts (02 Special Courts in Delhi and 01 each in the State of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) are functional for expeditious trial and disposal of criminal cases, involving elected MPs/MLAs.

6. FAST TRACK SPECIAL COURTS:

6.1 Pursuant to the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2018, the Central Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for setting up of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs), including exclusive POCSO (e-POCSO) Courts since October, 2019 for expeditious trial and disposal of pending cases pertaining to Rape and Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, in a time-bound manner.

6.2 The scheme which was initially for one year, has been extended twice. Latest extension is up to March, 2026, at a total outlay of Rs. 1952.23 cr. with Rs. 1207.24 cr. as Central Share to be incurred from the Nirbhaya Fund.

6.3 As per the data submitted by High Courts, **747 FTSCs including 406 exclusive POCSO Courts are functional in 30 States/UTs. These courts have disposed off more than 2,99,000 cases as on 31.12. 2024.**

6.4 For operationalization of these FTSCs, during the period January-March, 2024, an amount of Rs.9.77 cr. and during the current FY 2024-25 up to 31/12/2024, an amount of Rs.173.59 cr. has been released by this Department. Further central assistance amounting to Rs.26.41 cr. is proposed to be released during the remaining period of the current FY 2024-25.

7. NATIONAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY:

7.1 The National Judicial Academy (NJA), Bhopal is an autonomous body established in 1993 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. This independent body functions with its office at the Supreme Court of India and its campus at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. This is an Apex body which imparts judicial training to Judges / Judicial Officers of the country and provides facilities for training of ministerial officers working in the Supreme Court, study of court management and administration of justice in the State/ Union Territories, organizing conferences, seminars, lectures and research in matters relating to court management and administration. The core objectives of the said Academy have been to foster development of national judiciary in the country and strengthen administration of justice, judicial education, research and policy formulation.

7.2 The Academy also organizes the Academic programs for the judges from foreign countries;

7.2.1 In line of Memorandum of Undertaking (MoU) executed by the Academy on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and;

7.2.2 In addition to the above, the Academy also organizes the programs for foreign countries, as per request of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India from time to time.

7.3 The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India (CJI) is the Chairman of the General Body of the NJA as well as of the Governing Council of the Executive Committee and the Academic Council of NJA. The affairs of the Academy are managed by a Governing Council. The Academy is fully funded by the Government of India. It has a Director as the Principal Executive Officer. During the period January-March, 2024, an amount of Rs.8.50 cr. and during the current FY 2024-25 an amount of Rs.18.54 cr. has already been released to National Judicial Academy till 31.12.2024. An amount of Rs.2.24 cr. is proposed to be released during the remaining period of current FY 2024-25. NJA, Bhopal has conducted 31 programs during the period January-March, 2024 and 39 programs during the current FY 2024-25 (till December, 2024). As per their calendar, 22 programs are projected during the period of 1.1.2025 to 31.3.2025.

8. eCOURTS MISSION MODE PROJECT:

As part of the National eGovernance Plan, the eCourts Mission Mode project is under implementation for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development of the Indian Judiciary, based on the "National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in the Indian Judiciary". Its vision is to transform the judicial system of the country by ICT enablement of courts and to enhance the judicial productivity, both qualitatively & quantitatively, making the justice delivery system accessible, cost effective, reliable and transparent. The Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India is implementing eCourts Project in close coordination with

the eCommittee of Supreme Court of India, in a decentralised manner through the respective High Courts.

Phase I of the e-Courts Project (2011 - 2015) was primarily focused on basic computerization and internal connectivity in courts (LAN). As a result, 14,249 Courts were computerized and LAN was installed at 13,683 courts.

Phase II (2015 - 2023) focused on ICT facilitation of judicial services to citizens. The components included computer hardware, computerization of DSLAs/ TLCs, Wide Area Network (WAN) connectivity, trainings of stakeholders, establishment of eSewa Kendra, etc. Development of an advanced CIS software, portals that enable people to access information about pendency of cases (National Judicial Data Grid) and systems for digital filing and payments, which revolutionized the way public accessed the services provided by the judiciary. 18,735 District & Subordinate courts were computerized till 2023.

The Government has demonstrated its commitment in modernizing the judiciary with advanced digital infrastructure by significantly increasing budget allocations since 2015. For Phase II, it allocated ₹1670 crore, a notable rise from the ₹639 crore disbursed during Phase I. Furthermore, Phase III (2023-2027) has been approved by the Cabinet in Sep'2023 at an outlay of ₹7,210 crore, which is over four times the funding for Phase II. The following are the major programmes/projects under eCourts phase II project along with the current status of implementation:

i. **WIDE AREA NETWORK (WAN) CONNECTIVITY:**

The Wide Area Network (WAN) Project under e-Courts project is aimed at connecting all District and Subordinate court complexes, spread across the country using various technologies like OFC, RF, VSAT. So far, 99.5% court complexes have been connected with 10 Mbps to 100 Mbps bandwidth speed. This forms the backbone for the eCourts project, ensuring data connectivity in courts across the length and breadth of the country.

ii. **CASE INFORMATION SYSTEM (CIS):**

Case Information System (CIS) Software which forms the basis for the eCourts services is based on customized Free and Open-Source Software (FOSS) 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.

Every single case has been provided a Unique Identification code which is called CNR number and QR Code. This has led to the development of National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), as a new communication pipeline for judicial data transmission.

iii. **NATIONAL JUDICIAL DATA GRID:**

National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) is a statistical and analytical tool where all the information pertaining to every case is available. It acts as a repository of the cases and fetches all the information automatically from the CIS software, which is used by various stakeholders at different stages of a particular case. Using NJDG platform, the litigants can access case information and over 28.73 crore orders / judgments, and thereby, this provides real-time data and analytics on case pendency via parameters like case type, age of the case, stage, disposal nature, reason for delay, etc. This helps in the efficient management of court dockets, aids in judicial reforms and informed data driven decision-making. 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. This will allow the institutional litigants to access the NJDG data for their evaluation and monitoring purposes.

iv. **VIRTUAL COURTS:**

Virtual Courts is a concept, aimed at eliminating the presence of litigant or lawyer in the court and for adjudication of cases on a virtual platform. The concept of virtual court has been evolved in order to efficiently utilize court resources and to provide litigants with an effective avenue to settle petty disputes. It also eliminates physical presence of offender/violator in the court. The virtual courts initiative has enabled adjudication of traffic violation cases on a virtual platform. It reduces the number of judges performing judicial work in adjudicating traffic challans. Electronic traffic challans are automatically filed in virtual court for adjudication. A Judge can access the Virtual Court application from anywhere or any part of the state, view the cases and adjudicate the cases online.

27 Virtual Courts have been set up in 21 States / UTs viz. Delhi (2), Haryana, Chandigarh, Gujarat (2), Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala (2), Maharashtra, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir (2), Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand (2), Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, West Bengal and Rajasthan and Manipur (2) to try traffic offences. Over 6.3 crore cases (6,36,38,005) have been handled by these virtual courts and in more than 66 lakhs (66,67,202) cases, online fine of more than Rs. 691.95 crores have been realized till 31.12.2024.

In November 2020, Delhi High Court has issued “Digital NI Act Courts-Project Implementation Guidelines” and set up 34 Digital Courts dealing with Negotiable

Instruments Act cases. Besides being paperless, such Courts are environment friendly and have also led to saving of judicial manpower and added to the convenience of the citizens.

v. **VIDEO CONFERENCING:**

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 & Subordinate courts heard 2,51,05,478 cases, while the High Courts heard 90,92,493 cases (totalling 3.41 crore) till 30.11.2024, using video conferencing system. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India held 7,54,443 hearings from 23.03.2020 to 04.06.2024, through video conferencing. One video conference equipment each has been provided to all Court Complexes, including taluk level courts and additionally funds have been sanctioned for additional VC equipment for 14,443 court rooms. Funds for setting up 2506 VC Cabins have been made available. VC facilities are already enabled between 3240 court complexes and corresponding 1272 jails.

vi. **LIVE STREAMING:**

Live Streaming of court proceedings has been started in High Courts of Gujarat, Gauhati, Orissa, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Patna, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Calcutta & Constitutional Bench of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, thus allowing media and other interested persons to join the proceedings. Under the guidance of e-Committee, Supreme Court of India, a sub-committee was constituted for framing Model Rules for Live Streaming. The said rules have been forwarded to Computer Committee of High Courts for the feedback and suggestion and are available on the website of eCommittee, SCI.

vii. **e- FILING & e-SEWA KENDRAS:**

e-filing allows the lawyers to access and upload documents related to the cases from any location 24X7. Further the details of the case entered in the e-filing application are consumed in the CIS software and hence chances of mistakes are minimized. The e-filing 3.0 Portal is now accessible on <https://filing.ecourts.gov.in>. In this version, new tab is provided which allows Advocates and litigants to record their oath with in-system video recording, while uploading documents. This version has also provided new dashboard including the options of my partners, Case Filing, Vakalatnama, pleading, e-payments, applications and portfolio. Help section provided in the new version provides tutorial videos, FAQ and user manual. It also provides option to the litigant to send offer to the Advocates. eFiling portal also provides the option of indexing of the documents for the

Advocates. To promote e-Filing, all Central & State Government departments including the PSUs have been requested to use e-filing in all cases. Till November 2024, 11,87,028 cases were filed in High Courts and 46,25,543 were filed in District & Taluka Courts (Total 58,12,571), using e-filing facility.

e-SewaKendras (Facilitation centres) have been rolled out to bridge the digital divide by providing citizen centric services to lawyers and litigants. Covering all High Courts and one District Court as pilot project, it is being expanded to cover all court complexes. The e-Sewa Kendras are being set up at the entry point of the court complexes, with the intention of facilitating the lawyer or litigant who needs any kind of assistance ranging from case information to facilitation and e-filing. As on 30.11.2024, 1446 eSewa Kendras (Facilitation Centres) in District Courts and 38 eSewa Kendras (Facilitation Centres) in High Courts including three benches of Gauhati High Court have been made functional. These have been funded both by the e-Courts project as well out of state funding.

viii. **e-PAYMENTS:**

e-Filing of cases requires facilities for e-Payments of Court Fees, which includes court fees, fines and penalties which are directly payable to the Consolidated Fund. It can be accessed through <https://pay.ecourts.gov.in>. Introduction of electronic collection of court fees and other civil payments requires appropriate amendments in the existing Court Fees Act.

ix. **JUDGMENT & ORDER SEARCH PORTAL:**

Judgment Search Portal is a repository of judgments of High Courts and Supreme Court cases, where the litigants and lawyers can download judgement copies free of cost. It encapsulates the 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.

x. **e-COURT SERVICES:**

As part of eCourt project, 7 platforms have been created to provide real time information on case status, cause lists, judgements etc. to the lawyers/Litigants through SMS Push and Pull (4,74,371 SMS sent daily), Email (6,06,818 sent daily), multilingual eCourts services Portal (35 lakh hits daily), JSC (Judicial Service Centers) and Info Kiosks. In addition, Electronic Case Management Tools (ECMT) have been created with eCourts Services Mobile App for litigant & lawyers (total 2.75 cr. downloads as of 30th November

2024) and JustIS app for judges (20,924 downloads till 30th November 2024). These assist in the monitoring of pendency and disposal of cases at fingertips through dashboard reports, cause list, SMS alerts to Judges for undated cases, tagging of important cases and adding note, etc.

xi. **NATIONAL SERVICE AND TRACKING OF ELECTRONIC PROCESSES:**

National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes (NSTEP) has been launched for technology enabled process serving and issuing of summons. A GPS enabled device is given to the Bailiff for the service of summons, leading to greater transparency and speedy delivery of processes. It provides real time status update of service of summons, besides tracking of geographical coordinates of the process server at the time of serving summons. It has currently been implemented in 28 States/ UTs.

xii. **JUSTICE CLOCKS:**

To make effective use of database created through National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) and to make the information available to public, LED Display Message Sign Board System called Justice Clocks have been installed. The purpose of the Justice Clocks is to bring awareness to the public about justice sector, advertising the various schemes of the department and to give status of various fields to the public. The electronic signage system (approximate 10x7 feet size) provides information about disposal by courts, various schemes and services offered in the court complexes and to give status of various related information to the public, which the citizens can benefit.

A total of 39 Justice Clocks have been installed in 25 High Courts (Allahabad and Lucknow), Andhra Pradesh, Bombay (4 benches), Calcutta, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gauhati (4 benches - Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Assam), Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court (2 benches), Jharkhand, Karnataka (3 benches), Kerala, Madhya Pradesh (3 benches), Madras (2 benches), Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, Patna, Rajasthan (2 benches), Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura and Uttarakhand.

xiii. **IEC CAMPAIGN:**

As eCourts Project aims at the ICT enablement of the Indian Judiciary, it has become necessary to enhance the digital capacity-building activities through a variety of training programmes. These training programmes are being conducted in all Court complexes across the country, including Subordinate Courts to acquaint concerned stakeholders with the technology and to enable them to acquire skills required for handling digital platforms. Provision has been made for the High Courts to upload their achievements and

best practices. A divyang friendly website developed on S3WaaS platform has been launched exclusively for the e-Committee in 14 languages, which features eCourts project related information and has also been linked to the website of the Department of Justice.

A Manual on e-Filing entitled as “Step by Step Guide for e-Filing” has been prepared and made available on the e-Filing portal, in both English and Hindi, for the use of advocates and litigants. It has also been released in 11 regional languages. The e-Committee, Supreme Court of India has issued user manual for e-Courts Services Mobile Application and uploaded it on the official website of e-Committee in 14 languages, namely English, Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Gujarati, Kannada, Khasi, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu. A Brochure in English and Hindi on “How to register for e-Filing” has been made available on the e-Filing portal for the use of lawyers. It has also been released in 12 regional languages. As part of awareness campaign, a YouTube Channel has been created in the name of e-Courts Services, where video tutorials on e-Filing have been made available for larger outreach to stakeholders. 12 self-help videos on e-Filing in 7 regional languages apart, from Hindi and English were prepared and circulated for the advocates as part of awareness raising programme. The said videos are available in the e filing portal help desk and also in the social media through the e-Committee YouTube channel. To conduct awareness programme for advocates on eFiling and ECMT tools under eCourt Services, training of trainers has already been undertaken by e-Committee of the Supreme Court at the National and State levels. 25 Master Trainers have been trained in each High Court, who in turn have already trained 5409 Master Trainers across the country. These, 5409 Master Trainers, have in turn, imparted training programme on eCourt Services and e-Filing in each district of the country, for advocates in their regional languages and also identified Master Trainer Advocates.

The eCommittee of the Supreme Court has conducted 645 trainings and awareness programmes on the ICT services provided under the eCourts project, from May 2020 to November 2024. These programmes have covered nearly 6,70,433 stakeholders, including High Court Judges, Judges of the District Judiciary, Court Staff, Master Trainers among Judges/DSA, Technical Staff of High Courts and Advocates.

- xiv. On 13.09.2023, the Cabinet has approved eCourts Phase-III, with a budgetary outlay of Rs.7,210 crore. The efforts of the Government for integrating technology with the governance may prove to be a game changer in eCourts Phase III, ensuring ease of

justice by making the Court experience convenient, inexpensive and hassle free to all the citizens of the country. The proposed timeframe for the Project is four years starting from 2023 onwards. The project envisages various new digital initiatives, such as establishment of Digital and Paperless Courts that aim to bring court proceedings under a digital format in a court, digitization of court records, both legacy records and pending cases (Over more than 421.09 crore pages of court records has been digitized in the High Courts and District Courts as on Nov'24), expansion of video conferencing facilities to courts, jails and hospitals, scope of online courts beyond adjudication of traffic violations, saturation of all court complexes with eSewa kendras, state of the art and latest Cloud based data repository for easy retrieval and supporting the digitised court records, software applications, live streaming, and electronic evidence etc., use of emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence and its subsets like Optical Character Recognition (OCR) etc. for analysis of case pendency, forecasting future litigation, etc.

9. NATIONAL MISSION FOR JUSTICE DELIVERY AND LEGAL REFORMS:

9.1 Objectives: 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 coordinated 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.

9.2 Advisory Council

To advise on the goals, objectives and strategies of the National Mission and the Action Plan and its implementation, an Advisory Council has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Minister of Law and Justice with wide ranging membership which include Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs; Chairperson of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievance, Law and Justice; Minister of Law & Courts, Andhra Pradesh; Minister of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Jammu & Kashmir; Attorney General of India; Chairperson, Law Commission of India; Secretary, Department of

Legal Affairs; Secretary, Legislative Department; Solicitor General of India; Secretary-General, Supreme Court of India; Director, National Judicial Academy; and Chairman, Bar Council of India. Secretary, Department of Justice is the Convener of the Advisory Council. An Action Plan of the National Mission was formulated covering 5 strategic initiatives which are reviewed by the Advisory Council of the National Mission from time to time. The Advisory Council meets once in six months. Eleven meetings of the Advisory Council have been held so far.

9.3 Subordinate Judiciary

As per the Constitutional framework, the selection and appointment of judges in subordinate courts is the responsibility of the High Courts and State Governments concerned. As per information made available by the High Courts on Department of Justice MIS portal, as on 31.12.2024, the sanctioned strength of Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts was 25,754 as against the working strength of 20,481 judicial officers with 5,273 vacant posts. The sanctioned and working strength of judicial officers in District and Subordinate Courts has increased by 6,236 and 5,366 judicial officers, respectively, since the year 2014.

9.4 Pendency in Courts

In pursuance of a Resolution passed in Chief Justices' Conference held in April, 2015, Arrears Committees have been set up in all 25 High Courts to clear cases pending for more than five years. Arrears Committees have been set up under District courts as well.

The status of pendency of cases in various courts in the country (as on 31.12.2024) is given below:

Supreme Court	82803
High Courts	62,08,171
District and Subordinate Courts	4,53,84,378

Source : NJDG portal

The National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), provides data on cases pending in the District Courts & Subordinate Courts, High Courts and Supreme Court. NJDG has been appreciated and acknowledged by the World Bank in the Ease of Doing Business Report, 2020, as an effective tool for generation of Case Management Reports. Since the year 2023, data regarding the pendency of cases in Supreme Court on real-time basis is also available on NJDG.

9.5 Reforms under Enforcing Contracts Indicator of World Bank's Doing Business Report:

The Doing Business Report (now discontinued and being replaced with the new B-Ready Framework) was the flagship publication of the World Bank Group that benchmarked business regulations in 191 economies. The Doing Business Report measured regulations that enhanced business activity and those that constrained it. Department of Justice (DoJ) was the nodal department for the Enforcing Contract indicator. The performance of any country on the “Enforcing Contracts” indicator was measured against the time taken for disposal of a commercial dispute; costs involved in resolving a commercial dispute; the quality of judicial processes and good practices followed by the commercial courts.

This Department had created a Task force under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Justice, with members from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Department of Legal Affairs (DoLA), the High Courts of Delhi, Bombay, Karnataka and Calcutta and the Law Departments of Delhi, Maharashtra, Karnataka and West Bengal and the e-Committee of the Supreme Court. The concerted efforts of the Government and the Indian judiciary in implementing reforms under the “Enforcing Contracts” Indicator had led to India's rank improving to 163rd rank in 2020 from 186th in 2014. This jump of 23 ranks is a result of the game-changing reforms undertaken by the government.

Enforcing Contracts indicator measured the following parameters:

- a. Time estimates for commercial cases: This included time taken during filing and service phase, trial and judgment phase, and enforcement of judgment phase.
- b. Cost estimates for commercial cases: This included attorney fees, court fees (upto judgment only) and expert fees, and enforcement fees.
- c. Quality of Judicial Process Index: This included court structure and proceedings, case management, court automation, and alternative dispute resolution.

9.5.1. Following are some of the key reforms undertaken for the Enforcing Contracts indicator:

The Department has spearheaded the following steps for exclusive and focused attention to resolve commercial disputes expeditiously and strengthen the “Enforcing Contracts” regime and institutionalized these steps in collaboration with the judiciary, as follows:

- i. For speedy resolution of commercial cases, the government introduced the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 (as amended in 2018) which led to establishment of “**Dedicated**

Commercial Courts' at district level in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata. The specified value of commercial cases to be resolved in these commercial courts is starting from Rs 3 lakhs. These courts have exclusive jurisdiction as well as exclusive manpower. There are 49 Dedicated Commercial Courts in Delhi including 2 paperless digital commercial courts; 6 Dedicated Commercial Courts in Mumbai; 8 Dedicated Commercial Courts in Bengaluru city and 2 Dedicated Commercial Courts in Bengaluru Rural; 2 Dedicated Commercial Courts in Kolkata and 2 more to be set up. This structural reform introduced by the government is aimed at facilitating settlement of commercial disputes expeditiously for litigants and lawyers and at the same time instill confidence in the corporate investors.

- ii. To promote fair and unbiased adjudication of commercial matters, the government in collaboration with the judiciary is implementing eCourts project. Under this project, for enhancing judicial transparency and court automation, **“Random and Automatic Allocation”** of commercial cases has been made operational. All newly filed commercial cases in the Dedicated Commercial Courts are automatically and randomly allocated to the judges using the latest Case Information System (CIS 3.2) software.
- iii. **“Case Management Hearing or pre-trial conference facility”** under CPC Order XV-A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 introduced by the government has been made operational by the government for all commercial cases in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata. It is held before the trial and narrows down contentious issues/evidentiary questions, expedites trial process and discourages any delay tactics. The aim is to speed up case disposal by streamlining the trial process, thus benefitting the litigants as well as lawyers.
- iv. To reinforce the Prime Minister’s flagship Digital India program, the initiatives under Enforcing Contracts indicator have galvanized efforts such as **“E-Filing Facility”**. E-filing has made filing of cases real time and online which means that cases can be filed by a lawyer from home or any location, any time, 24x7. E-filing system is aimed at promoting paperless filing and create time and cost saving efficiencies by adopting technology-driven solution to file cases before courts in India.
- v. **“E-Summons”**: The process of issuing and serving the summons electronically through email followed by SMS alert which is generated through eCourt Services Portal is fully operational in Delhi and Mumbai Courts. This pioneering initiative of the government, in consonance with the Digital India vision, will save time and resources by automatically delivering the summons to parties in dispute. A Software patch for

consuming database of companies registered with the Registrar of companies, Ministry of Corporate Affairs has been developed to facilitate sending of online summons in commercial disputes and is operational in the commercial courts of Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi.

- vi. The government introduced the Commercial Courts (Amendment) Act, 2018 that ushered in a game-changing policy initiative of **“Pre-institution mediation and settlement”** of commercial cases where no urgent interim relief is contemplated through subject expert mediators empaneled by the District Legal Services Authorities.
- vii. The vision of Digital India and the eCourts project is to transform the judicial system of the country by ICT enablement of courts. In order to enhance judicial productivity, both qualitatively & quantitatively, making the justice delivery system accessible, cost effective, reliable and transparent, **“Electronic Case Management Tools (ECMTs)”** have been introduced for both Judges and lawyers. Integration of Electronic Case Management Tools in one digital platform has been done, which is a key reform under Enforcing Contracts in World Bank's Ranking.
- viii. JustIS app is an essential tool for Judicial Officers and has been made available exclusively for India's judicial officers to empower them. It gives a quick glance of the number of listed cases on the present day, undated cases, received by the Institution and by transfer in the last month, current pending and disposed off commercial matters in the current month. The eCourts app aims to enhance judicial productivity and workflows by providing case information with speed and accuracy to lawyers and litigants.
- ix. The government has recognized that an effective and faster system of resolution of high value commercial disputes needs specialized forums for expeditious adjudication. **Special Commercial Benches in various High Courts** have been set up to hear high value commercial cases above Rs. 500 crores.
- x. Various High Courts have established **Designated Special Courts for infrastructure projects**. High Court(s) of Calcutta, Karnataka, Allahabad and Madhya Pradesh have allocated specific days in a week for hearing of such matters, so that these courts function as dedicated courts for infrastructure contracts on such days.
- xi. e-Committee, Supreme Court has enabled compliance of *three adjournment Rule* by creating the facility of colour banding. The colours provide information regarding the number of adjournments in a case.

- xii. Dedicated Websites for Commercial Courts have been developed for the High Courts of Bombay, Calcutta, Karnataka and Delhi.
- xiii. Ease of Doing Business Portal- The Department of Justice has also launched the Enforcement of Contracts Portal which provides a comprehensive source of information on reforms being undertaken on the “Enforcing Contracts” parameters.

9.6. Rule of Law Index (ROLI):

The Rule of Law Index is developed and published by World Justice Project (WJP). ROLI 2024 covers 142 countries and ranks them based on the country-specific data collected across 8 factors and 44 sub-factors, derived from the four principles of “Accountable Government, Good Laws, Good Process and Access to Justice.” As per the latest report released in October 2024, India’s rank in ROLI stood at 79 out of 142 countries assessed by the WJP. Department of Justice, as the nodal department, has been working with 22 stakeholder Ministry(s)/Department(s) to improve India’s performance on the 8 key indicators/factors and 44 sub-factors identified for the purpose under the GIRG (Global Indices for Reforms and Growth) exercise launched by NITI Aayog.

9.7 Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI):

The DGQI Evaluation Exercise is undertaken by DMEO and NITI Aayog to assess the data preparedness of different Central Ministries/Departments and use of information technology. The DGQI assessment is conducted periodically for each quarter of the financial year. The last such exercise concluded in March, 2024. Department of Justice secured a score of 4.74 out of 5 in Quarter 3, 2023-24, DGQI 2.0 assessment improving upon its last performance in Quarter 4, 2022-23 score of 4.57 out of 5.0. To achieve the frontier score of 5.0, a Data Strategy Unit (DSU) has been constituted by the Department to steer the implementation of the action plan/roadmap for DGQI. The Department has also formulated and issued Data Management Guidelines with the aim of developing policies, programs and practices that would control, protect and enhance the value of datasets and information reported/collected by the Department of Justice.

10. SCHEME FOR ACTION RESEARCH AND STUDIES ON JUDICIAL REFORMS:

A Scheme for Action Research and Studies on Judicial Reforms was initiated by the Department of Justice in year 2013 with necessary approval of Standing Finance Committee. From the financial year 2021-22 onwards, the Scheme was incorporated under the “non-scheme” component of Department of Justice. The objective of the Action Research is to promote research and studies in the field of justice delivery, legal research and judicial reforms. As on 31.12.2024, 51 projects have been sanctioned under the Scheme out of which 44 projects have been completed.

11. CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME (CSS) FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES FOR THE JUDICIARY:

11.1 Objective and Scope: Development of Infrastructural Facilities for Judiciary in the States is the primary responsibility of the State Governments concerned. However, to augment the resources of the State Governments, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for development of infrastructure facilities for the judiciary was launched by the Central Government in the year 1993-94. The scheme covers construction of court buildings and residential quarters for Judges/Judicial Officers of District and Subordinate Courts, toilets, digital computer rooms and lawyers’ hall in the district and subordinate courts. The Scheme has been extended for a further period of five years from 01.04.2021 to 31.03.2026.

11.2 Since inception of the Scheme, the Central Government has provided financial assistance amounting to Rs. 11,814.48 crore to State Governments / Union Territories. Out of this, an amount of Rs. 8,370.18 crore (70.84%) has been provided since 2014-15 till date, which includes Rs. 1061 crore released during 2023-24 and Rs. 886.47 crore during 2024-25 (as on 31.12.2024). As per information collected from High Courts, as of 31st December 2024, there were 21,974 court halls / court rooms available for District and Subordinate Courts in the country. In addition, 3,166 court halls / court rooms were under construction as per Nyaya Vikas Portal. Comparing these figures with the working strength of 20,479 judges / judicial officers reported by High Courts, as of 31st December 2024, adequate court rooms/court halls are available for the current working strength of judicial manpower. 5,762 Court Halls and 3,677 Residential Accommodation were constructed / completed from 2014-15 till 31.12.2024; out of these 472 court halls and 268 residential units have been constructed in the year 2024-25 (from 01.04.2024 to 31.12.2024). The focus is now to match the availability of court rooms / court halls with the sanctioned strength of 25,741 judicial officers / judges in District and

Subordinate Courts. Considerable progress has also been made with regard to availability of residential units for judicial officers in District and Subordinate Courts. As of 31st December 2024, total number of 19,682 residential units were available and 2,638 residential units were under construction.

11.3 Scientific formula/ weightage criteria for Distribution of funds: After extension of the scheme and incorporation of new features therein, the Guidelines of the Scheme have been revised on 19 August, 2021 for smooth and effective implementation of the Scheme. The revised guidelines include weightage criteria, a scientific formula, adopted from the year 2018-19 for inter-state distribution of funds under the Scheme. The criteria is based on 4 parameters, namely, (i) number of court halls left for construction with reference to sanctioned/working strength of judicial officers in the State/UT (ii) number of residential units left for construction with reference to sanctioned/working strength of judicial officers in the State/UT (iii) working strength of judicial officers with reference to sanctioned strength of judicial officers in the State/UT, and (iv) pendency of 10 years and more old cases in subordinate judiciary. Based on such criteria, the tentative allocation of funds to States/UTs is informed to the State Governments and UT Administrations at the beginning of the financial year to enable them to submit their proposals accordingly. The guidelines also include provision of Flexi Fund scheme, as per which States/UTs, if they desire, can set aside the funds to meet local needs and requirements e.g. customization required with respect to local conditions of weather, climate etc. or meet specific local demands.

11.4 Nyaya Vikas Web Portal and Mobile App: An on-line monitoring system has been developed with the technical assistance of National Remote Sensing Centre of ISRO. For the purpose, the web portal and mobile app named “Nyaya Vikas” was developed for monitoring of construction projects in 2018. The State Governments have nominated a Nodal Officer at State level and Surveyors & Moderators for each project to enter and upload data/information relating to ongoing and completed projects. Based on the experience and observations of the Users at the Central and State level, Nyaya Vikas web portal and Mobile App has been upgraded and version 2.0 has been launched and is live from 01.04.2020. The Users in all States and Union Territories are entering data through web portal and uploading photographs through mobile app with geo-tagging. Total number of projects entered in the portal is 2,894, including 1,977 completed and 917 under construction. 2,779 projects have been geo-tagged. Department of Justice, in collaboration with ISRO, is developing version 3.0 of the portal, which will

facilitate capacity building for the application, upgrading and maintaining the Nyaya Vikas application, offering technical support, and enabling real-time tracking of Judicial Infrastructure projects using geospatial technologies.



Court Building, Dehradun



Residential Complex, Uttar Pradesh



Court Building, Karnataka



District Court, Meghalaya

12. GRAM NYAYALAYAS:

12.1 The Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 came into force with effect from 2nd October, 2009. The Act provides for establishment of Gram Nyayalayas at intermediate Panchayat level for the purpose of providing access to justice to the citizens at their doorstep. In terms of Section 3(1) of the Gram Nyayalayas Act, State Governments, after consultation with the High Court concerned, may, by notification, establish one or two more Gram Nyayalayas for every Panchayat at intermediate level or a group of contiguous Panchayats at intermediate level in a district or where there is no Panchayat at intermediate level in any State, for a group of contiguous group Panchayats. Establishment of Gram Nyayalayas is, therefore, not mandatory on the part of State Governments as per the Act. However, State Governments are requested from time to time to establish Gram Nyayalayas by the Department of Justice.

12.2 Total number of 488 Gram Nyayalayas have been notified by 15 States, out of which 318 Gram Nyayalayas are functional. To encourage the states, the financial assistance is provided for non-recurring expenses for setting up of Gram Nyayalayas, and for meeting the cost of recurring expenditure towards running these Gram Nyayalayas for the first three years. The recurring and non-recurring assistance is subject to financial ceilings, as provided in the guidelines of the scheme. The Central Government is providing assistance to states for Gram Nyayalayas which include Rs. 18.00 lakh per Gram Nyayalaya towards the cost of establishing the Gram Nyayalaya as a Ministry of Law and Justice one-time assistance (Rs. 10 lakh for office building, Rs. 5 lakh for vehicle and Rs. 3 lakh for furnishing the office) and Rs. 3.20 lakh per Gram Nyayalaya per annum as recurring expenditure for an initial period of three years.

12.3 The Gram Nyayalaya Scheme has been extended for five more years beyond 31.03.2021 i.e. upto 31.03.2026 with financial assistance of Rs.50.00 crores. The funds for the Gram Nyayalayas will henceforth be released only after they have been notified as well as made operational along with the appointment of Nyayadhikaris and reported on the Gram Nyayalayas Portal of the Department of Justice. A review of the performance of Gram Nyayalayas was to be done after one year to assess its efficacy as an institution in providing speedy and affordable justice to the rural marginalised and decide future course of action. The same is under process.

12.4 As on 31st December, 2024, a sum of Rs. 83.40 crore has been sanctioned to States so far which include Rs. 0.80 crore in 2022-23. Details are given below:

Sl. No	Name of the State/UT	Gram Nyayalyas Notified	Gram Nyayalayas operational	Funds sanctioned so far (in Rs. lakh)
1	Madhya Pradesh	89	89	2456.40
2	Rajasthan	45	45	1240.98
3	Kerala	30	30	828.00
4	Maharashtra	39	26	660.80
5	Odisha	31	21	524.40
6	Uttar Pradesh	113	98	1323.20
7	Karnataka	2	2	25.20
8	Haryana	3	2	25.20
9	Punjab	9	2	25.20
10	Jharkhand	6	1	75.60
11	Goa	2	2	25.20
12	Andhra Pradesh	42	0	436.82
13	Telangana	55	0	693.00
14	Jammu & Kashmir	20	0	0.00
15	Ladakh	2	0	0.00
Total		488	318	8340.00

13. DESIGNING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR HOLISTIC ACCESS TO JUSTICE (DISHA)

The Preamble of the Indian Constitution emphasizes “Justice” as a key objective to be guaranteed for the people of India. Article 39A of the Constitution mandates the State to provide Access to Justice and free legal aid to those who are disadvantaged due to economic, geographical, or other disparities. Access to Justice is recognized as a Fundamental Right under Articles 14 and 21 of the Indian Constitution.

Department of Justice is implementing a pan India Scheme namely “**Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice (DISHA)**” that has a financial outlay of Rs 250 crore for a period of five years (2021-2026). It aims to fulfil the Constitutional mandate of “Justice” to the people of India as enunciated under the Preamble and Articles 39A, 14 and 21 of the Constitution of India. It also aims to abide by the statutory requirements of the Legal Services Act, 1987, by giving impetus to the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16, especially the aspect of providing access to justice for all. To prioritize citizen-centric justice delivery system by integrating access to justice with technology, DISHA has the following objectives: -

- To strengthen pre-litigation mechanism through **Tele-Law**;
- To develop an effective dispensation of pro bono legal services through **Nyaya Bandhu programme**;

- iii. To empower citizens through pan India **Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness programme**.

14. TELE-LAW: REACHING THE UNREACHED

Tele-Law serves as a digital interface connecting beneficiary needing pre-litigation advice, with panel lawyers through video conferencing facilities available at Common Service Centers (CSCs) in Gram Panchayat and through Tele Law Mobile Application. This programme was initially piloted in 1800 CSCs in 11 States namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, 8 North-East States and Jammu & Kashmir (now a Union Territory), Tele-Law services were further expanded to cover 1,00,000 CSCs/Gram Panchayat in 2022-2023. Presently, Tele-Law is operational in 2,50,000 CSCs/Gram Panchayats in 783 Districts (including 112 Aspirational districts and 500 Aspirational Blocks) across 36 States/UTs of the country. A dedicated web portal on Tele-Law (<http://www.tele-law.in/>) is available in 22 regional languages, ensuring its reach to people of various and diversified ethnicities across India. To enable seamless penetration in remote areas, a Tele-Law Mobile application has also been launched to connect beneficiaries seeking pre-litigation advice and consultation directly with Panel Lawyers. At present, a helpline number 14454 is also launched for mobile phone users for easy and fast access to Tele-Law services.

In 2023, Tele-Law program was integrated with Nyaya Bandhu Pro Bono Service platform for both pre-litigation advice and Legal representation in court. The Tele Facilitation Centre (TFC) was operationalized for pre-litigation advice and counselling for the citizens with helpline number 14454.

In the year 2024, Nyaya Sahayak programme was launched. Nyaya Sahayaks are community level field functionary, who are responsible for providing door-to-door delivery of pre-litigation advice and conducting "Vidhi Baithaks" in Aspirational Blocks under the Tele-Law program in 500 Aspirational Blocks in the country.

As on 31st December 2024, pre litigation advice has been provided to **1,04,92,575 beneficiaries** across 36 States/UTs.

Picture 1: Activities under Tele-Law program



15. NYAYA BANDHU (PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES):

Department of Justice aims to inculcate culture for Pro Bono legal services and built an effective dispensation framework to deliver Pro Bono legal services. With the aim to create an ecosystem on Pro Bono, DoJ has following strategies: -

- i. **Leveraging Technology:** Mobile Application in Android, iOS (Apple users) version has been developed and has been integrated with UMANG platform of MeITY.
- ii. **Pro Bono Panels in High Courts** have been created with support from Registrar Generals of High Courts to provide State specific decentralized pool of Pro Bono Advocates. At present **23 High Courts** have created Pro Bono panels at High Courts and **1567 advocates** have been enrolled through these panels.
- iii. **Pro Bono Club Scheme** has been rolled out to instill in young minds an understanding and philosophy on Pro Bono and to assist the registered Pro Bono advocates in researching and legal drafting. **109 Law Schools** have agreed to be the part of the scheme. **19 law schools** were added in the FY 2024-2025.

As of December 31, 2024, a total of 8,706 advocates from 24 Bar Councils have joined the Nyaya Bandhu Programme across 24 State Bar Councils. Additionally, 961 new advocates have registered between April 2024 and December 2024.



Picture : 2 Activities by Pro Bono Club

16. LEGAL LITERACY AND LEGAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME (LLLAP)

16.1 Department of Justice has strategized following approaches to address Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness in the country:

- Forging partnerships across Ministries and allied Departments, Institutions, Schools etc.;
- Facilitating capacity building of existing grassroots/frontline workers/ volunteers;
- Leveraging technology for Pan India Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness

16.2 The Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness programme includes use of technology, partnerships across Ministries and allied Departments, Institutions, Schools, existing grassroots/frontline workers/volunteers as indicators to measure legal literacy and legal awareness. At present, **16 projects** are getting implemented by Implementing Agencies in different States/UTs. The Programme has touched **97 lakh** beneficiaries. In 2023-2024, 3 new

Implementing Agencies have been onboarded namely Dr Ambedkar Government Law College, Puducherry, Indira Gandhi National Open University, (IGNOU) and Sikkim State Women Commission, Gangtok. The details of the Implementing Agencies are mentioned below: -

16.2.1 Department of Psychiatry, Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS), Manipur implemented a project proposal on “Training and Sensitization of Stakeholders on Child Sexual Abuse” (Outreach 2,605)

16.2.2 Sikkim State Commission for Women (SSCW) implemented project on 'Workshop/Training and Sensitization Programme on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 and Anti-Human Trafficking' (Outreach: 1,55,606).

16.2.3 Arunachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority implemented a project on 'Synergy between Customary Practices of the Traditional Village Council System and Formal Laws of India' (Outreach: 6,666).

16.2.4 Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society, Jaipur, Rajasthan implemented legal awareness Project to ensure dignity of women, children and elders in 5 Aspirational Districts of Rajasthan – Jaisalmer, Baran, Karauli, Dholpur and Sirohi. (Outreach: 58,990)

16.2.5 The Law Research Institute, Eastern Region, Gauhati High Court, Guwahati is implementing a research project titled 'Documentation of Customary Laws of the North Eastern Region, India' (Outreach: 304)

16.2.6 National Law Institute University, Bhopal is implementing a national level 'Digital Legal Literacy – Design, Development, Management and Testing – e Nyayaganga Project.' (Outreach: 6,173)

16.2.7 National Law School of India University, Bengaluru is implementing a national level project titled 'Digital Legal Literacy-Dissemination and Assessment'. (Outreach: 17,53,964)

16.2.8 National Law University, New Delhi is implementing a project titled 'Adhikaron Ka Gyan Unnati Ki Pahchaan' in Uttar Pradesh. (Outreach: 3,226)

16.2.9 Shadow Advertising and Communications Pvt. Ltd., Bhubaneswar is implementing a project on 'Innovative Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Programme in Odisha'. (Outreach: 3,98,832)

16.2.10 Abdul Nazir Sab State Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Mysuru, Karnataka is implementing a project on capacity building of Panchayati Raj Functionaries of Karnataka. (Outreach: 95,230)

16.2.11 State Institute for Rural Development, Pune, Maharashtra is implementing a project on promotion of VIDHI Doots in Maharashtra's 100 Gram Panchayats. (Outreach: 21,309)

16.2.12 Bihar Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (BIPARD), Patna is promoting 700 VIDHI Mitras in Gram Panchayats of Bihar. (Outreach: 1,345)

16.2.13 Meghalaya State Legal Services Authorities, Shillong, Meghalaya is working on Community Mediation in Meghalaya. (Outreach: 3,515)

16.2.14 Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi is implementing a national level project on 'Monitoring and Evaluation of Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Projects'

16.2.15 DoJ signed MoA with Dr Ambedkar Government Law College, Puducherry for implementation of Legal Literacy & Legal Awareness Programme with Schools/Colleges. (Outreach: 1,54,811)

16.2.16 DoJ signed MoU with Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi for strengthening Paralegal practice in India (Outreach: 2,528)



Picture 3: Activities conducted under LLLAP programme

16.3 Webinar Series:

COVID-19 Pandemic emerged as big challenge in conducting community level legal awareness and outreach activities. Hence, virtual medium and social media platforms were used in reaching out to front line functionaries through series of Legal Awareness Webinars. From September 2021 to October, 2023, twenty thematic legal awareness webinars pertaining to socio-legal issues were organized on national level which reached out to 4.81 lakh beneficiaries. In the year FY 2023-2024, a total of 4 webinars were organized which reached out to 75,700+ viewers. The topics on which the webinars were conducted include Child labour in India, Rehabilitation of Acid Attack Survivors, Labour Laws and Child Sexual Abuse.



Picture 4: Webinar picture

16.4 Doordarshan, in collaboration with DoJ under the DISHA Scheme, has developed 56 TV programs in the year 2024 addressing various legal awareness issues. These programs focus on the empowerment of senior citizens, persons with disabilities, women, children, and transgender individuals. As of November 2024, 54 episodes have been broadcast across 11 national and regional Doordarshan channels under the sub-theme "Vidhi Jagriti Abhiyaan," which is part of the ongoing pan-India "Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman" campaign, reaching an audience of **70 lakhs**.



Picture 5: Doordarshan Episodes Clips

17. HAMARA SAMVIDHAN HAMARA SAMMAN CAMPAIGN

17.1 NATIONAL EVENT- 24th JANUARY, 2024 [NEW DELHI]

On 24th January, 2024, Department of Justice launched a pan India year-long campaign “HAMARA SAMVIDHAN HAMARA SAMMAN” to commemorate 75th Year of India as Republic. The Campaign was launched by Hon’ble Vice-President of India, in the presence of Hon’ble Minister of State (I/C) for Law and Justice, Hon’ble Attorney General of India along with Vice Chancellor (IGNOU) and Secretary (Justice). With the aim to enhance awareness about the Constitution, sensitize the citizens on the shared principles of Panch Pran and to educate the citizens about their rights, duties, entitlements and other legal services of the Government, various citizen-centric activities were organized with support from Common Service Centres, My Gov Platform, Doordarshan and other partnering agencies of the DoJ.

This includes Sabko Nyaya- Har Ghar Nyaya, wherein 2.5 lakh + Village level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) encouraged citizens in reading of Panch Pran Pledge in regional languages; Citizen centric-service melas called “Jan Sewa Janta ke Dwar” and workshop on legal services were organized across States/ UTs. Nyaya Sahayaks engaged to provide door step delivery of legal services in Aspirational Blocks and Districts. Under the Nav Bharat – Nav Sankalp, the citizens participated in reading of Panch Pran pledge; test their knowledge on Constitution through online quiz, showcase their creativity by participating in poster-making and reel-making competition under the Panch Pran Rangotsav and Panch Pran Anubhav competition respectively. These competitions were organized with support from My Gov. The Vidhi Jagriti Abhiyaan aims to involve the law students to empower the citizens on their rights, duties and involve in enthusiastic and engaging activities like nukkad natak, dance, drama, skit etc., Through the Vanchit Varg Samman Abhiyan and Nari Bhagidari, series of

activities would be organized by partnering agencies of DoJ and series of programmes are being broadcasted through Doordarshan to enhance the legal literacy and legal awareness on the rights of Divyang, transgender, senior citizens, tribal and forest rights, child rights, women participation and empowerment.

During the event, Nyaya Setu was launched which aims to extend and expand the reach of legal services till the last mile. It provides a unified legal interface for legal information, legal advice and legal assistance, chatbot facility and embeds a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) to answer the queries and facilitate a specialized counselling and legal support to the citizens. The event witnessed the release of DISHA achievement booklet from the Year 2021-2023. The event also brought together representatives from Bhashini and IGNOU to formalize their collaboration with Department of Justice. The partnership with Bhashini aims to break the barriers of language in accessibility to justice. The solutions of Bhashini have already been embedded in the Nyaya Setu – Tele Facilitation of legal services. The partnership with IGNOU would open the opportunity for Paralegals to acquire certifications in diverse field of laws, enhance their educational opportunities and increase their skills and employability across different sectors of legal assistance and support.

17.2 FIRST REGIONAL EVENT- 9th MARCH, 2024 [BIKANER, RAJASTHAN]

Following the national event, the first regional event was held in Bikaner on March 9, 2024, and was attended by distinguished guests, including Hon'ble Dr. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, then Chief Justice of India (CJI), Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister of State (I/C) for Law & Justice, Justice Shri Manindra Mohan Shrivastava, Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court, Shri Joga Ram Patel, Law Minister of the Government of Rajasthan, along with other high-level dignitaries from the Rajasthan State Government. The event marked the official release of innovations aimed at advancing pre-litigation advice at the grassroots level, such as the “Nyaya Sahayak” program, which will serve 500 Aspirational Blocks across India. The event also highlighted a special women's edition of *Voices of Beneficiaries* and a State booklet of Rajasthan, showcasing the growth and outreach of the Tele-Law programme. Additionally, dignitaries addressed the significance of human dignity and the need for technological progress in India.

17.3 SECOND REGIONAL EVENT- 16th JULY, 2024 [PRAYAGRAJ, UTTAR PRADESH]

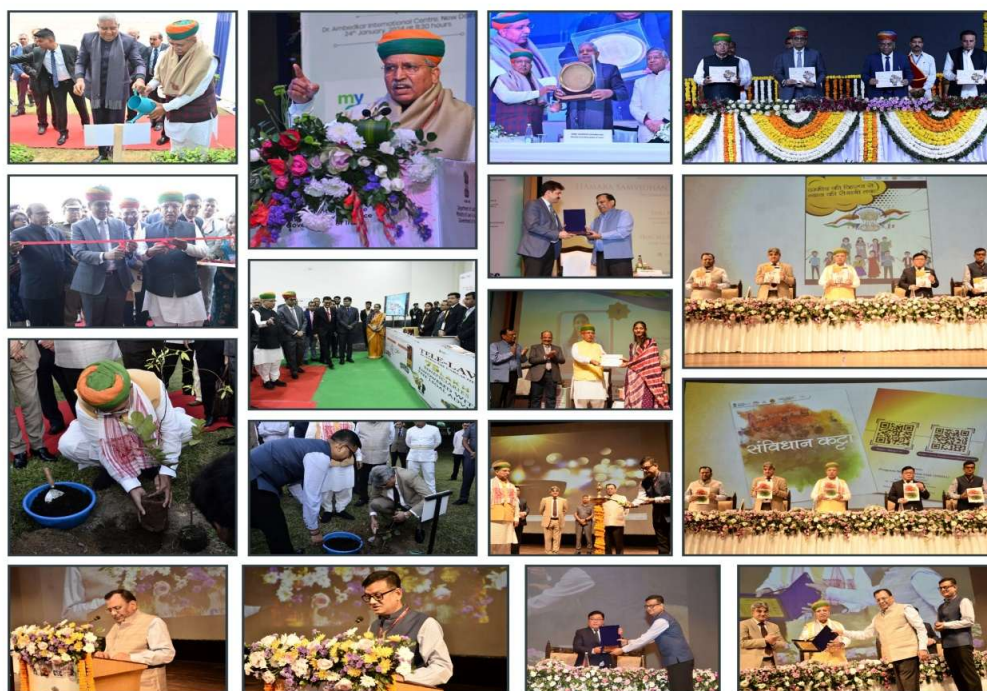
The second regional event of the year-long celebration was held in Prayagraj, where it was graced by the Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice (Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, along with the Chief Justice of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shri Arun Bhansali, and the Executive Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh State Legal Services Authority, Shri Manoj Kumar Gupta. During the event, citizens who won various competitions under the *Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman* campaign, conducted by the Department of Justice through the MyGov platform, were felicitated. The efforts of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad in creating a Pro Bono panel under the Nyaya Bandhu programme of the Department of Justice were commended, and Shri Rajiv Bharti, Registrar-General of the Hon'ble Court, was appreciated.

A dedicated portal for *Hamara Samvidhan* was also launched, which will serve as a knowledge hub to spread constitutional education in simple and easy-to-understand ways and to encourage greater citizen participation.

17.4 THIRD REGIONAL EVENT – 19TH NOVEMBER, 2024 [GUWAHATI, ASSAM]

The third regional event was held at IIT Guwahati, Assam, on November 19, 2024. The event was graced by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice (Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, along with Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shri Justice Vijay Bishnoi, Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, who attended as the Guest of Honour, and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shri Lanusungkum Jamir, Executive Chairman of the State Legal Services Authority, Assam, who was also an esteemed guest.

The event commenced with a meaningful and symbolic gesture—the planting of saplings to honor the 15 women members of the Constituent Assembly, who played an essential role in the creation of India's Constitution. This tribute, part of the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Nam' campaign, aimed to highlight the often-overlooked contributions of women in shaping the country's democratic foundation. During the event, the *Samvidhan Katta* magazine was released, featuring 75 stories that demonstrate the impact of the principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution on everyday life. Additionally, a comic book was launched, highlighting the real-life stories of 10 beneficiaries who have used the Tele-Law and Nyaya Bandhu programs to protect their Constitutional rights. Eight podcasts focusing on the role of these programs in helping citizens safeguard their rights were also unveiled.

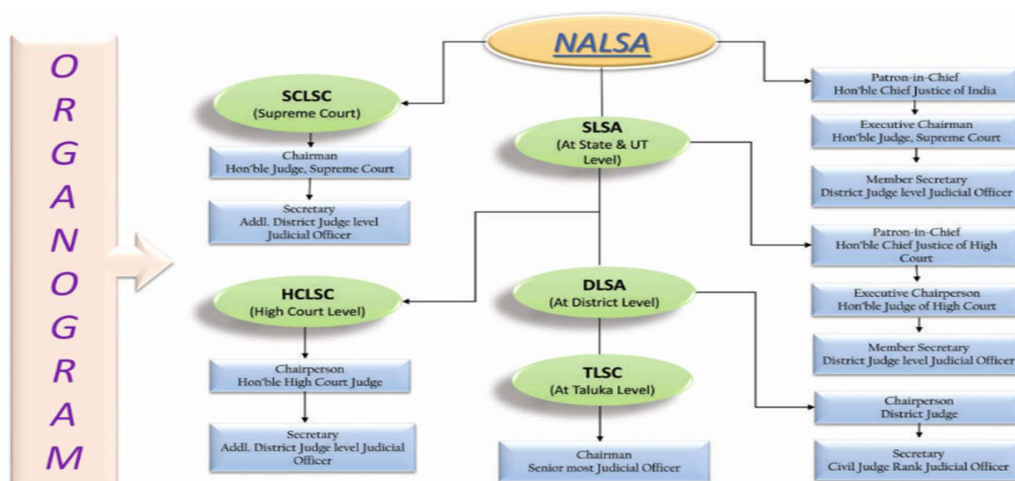


Picture 6: Glimpses of the event under Hamara Samvidhan Hamara Samman Campaign

18. NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY:

18.1 Article 39 A of the Indian Constitution provides for free legal aid in order to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities. Articles 14 and 22 (1) mandates the state to ensure equality before law. In the year 1987, the Legal Services Authorities Act was enacted by the Parliament which came into force on 9th November, 1995 to establish a nationwide uniform network for providing free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society on the basis of equal opportunity. The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to monitor and evaluate implementation of legal aid programmes and to lay down policies and principles for making legal services available under the Act.

The organogram of the Legal Services Authorities is shown below:

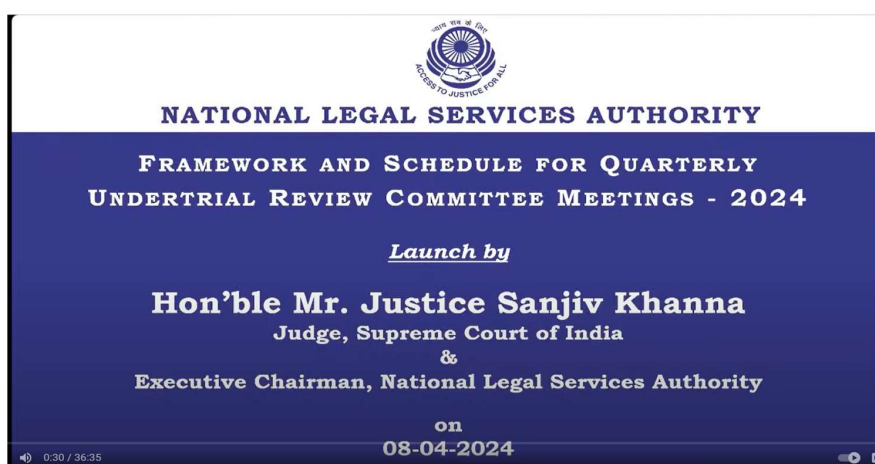


18.2 COLLABORATION WITH NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN UNDER THE INITIATIVE: “VIDHI SE SAMADHAN”

NALSA, in collaboration with the National Commission for Women (NCW), organized Legal Awareness Programmes at the Block level across 11 States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh, under the initiative called “Vidhi Se Samadhan”. This initiative aims to promote legal literacy among women in 1,495 blocks. The first phase of the programme will run until March 2025. In September, 2024, NALSA undertook preparatory activities to carry out the legal awareness programmes effectively.

18.3 RELEASE OF THE FRAMEWORK AND SCHEDULE FOR QUARTERLY UTRC MEETINGS- 2024

On 08th April, 2024, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA, formally released a Framework and Schedule for Quarterly Meetings of Under Trial Review Committees in the year 2024. This initiative was in furtherance of several directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India for conducting periodic review of detention of all prisoners. The virtual launch was attended by the Hon'ble Executive Chairpersons and Ld. Member Secretaries of the various State Legal Services Authorities; Ld. Chairpersons and Secretaries of the DLSAs and other members of the UTRCs.



18.4 STATE CONFERENCE OF DLSAS OF KERALA AND LAKSHADWEEP

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Hon'ble Executive Chairman, NALSA, visited Kerala from 06.06.2024 to 08.06.2024, for the State Conference of DLSAs of Kerala and Lakshadweep. He was accompanied by Ms. Santosh Snehi Mann, Ld. Member Secretary, NALSA.



Visit to Kadamakkudy, Kerala on 07.07.2024

18.5 STATE CONFERENCE OF DLSAS OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND LADAKH

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA, visited Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh from 17th to 22nd June 2024 for the State Conference of DLSAs. During the visit, he interacted with inmates and officials at Central Prison, Srinagar, participated in a Community Awareness Programme in Kargil, and chaired the State-Level Conference of DLSAs at the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy, Srinagar.



State Conference of DLSAs in Srinagar on 21.06.2024

18.6 MEGA LEGAL SERVICES CAMP ORGANIZED BY DELHI STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY ON 10.08.2024

Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA) in collaboration with North & North- West District Legal Services Authorities, organized a Mega Legal and Other Services Camp on 10th August, 2024 at Sarvodaya Vidyalaya, Jaunti Village, Delhi, under its Project “गूँज: कानूनी सहायता के नए आयाम”. The Project aimed to identify, engage, and uplift remote and underdeveloped villages in Delhi through a comprehensive strategy focused on legal empowerment, healthcare, education, and awareness. The chief guest of the program was Hon’ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA. The event was also graced by Hon’ble Mr. Justice Manmohan, Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Delhi & Executive Chairman, DSLISA.



18.7 STATE CONFERENCE FOR DLSAS OF DELHI

On 10.08.2024, the Delhi State Legal Services Authority under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority organized the State Conference for DLSAs of Delhi at Sarvodya Vidyalaya, Jaunti Village. The State Conference was chaired by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA.



18.8 CONFERENCE OF DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITIES OF ODISHA

On 17th August, 2024, Odisha State Legal Services Authority organized a Conference of District Legal Services Authorities of Odisha at the Odisha Judicial Academy, Cuttack. The said Conference was presided over by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme

Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA in the presence of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh, Chief Justice, High Court of Orissa and Patron-From in-Chief, OSLSA. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA visited different Legal Services Institutions in the districts of Bhubaneswar and Puri (Odisha) and presided over the Odisha Conference of District Legal Services Authorities, held at Cuttack, Odisha. HMJ Sanjiv Khanna also visited the Special Jail, Bhubaneswar where he inaugurated a Vocational Training Programme on Electronics and distributed certificates to the jail inmates who have passed the courses of Journalism and Mass Communication etc.



18.9 REVISION OF NALSA SCHEMES FOR CHILDREN AND PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

NALSA, with the approval of Hon'ble Dr. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, Patron-in-Chief, NALSA; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Executive Chairman, NALSA, and the learned members of its Central Authority, released two new schemes viz. NALSA (Child-Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024 and NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024. The former Scheme consolidates and revises previous two schemes on children and focuses on the provision of free legal services to children, including children with disabilities. It envisions implementation of a preventive, strategic, need-based and responsive legal services programme for vulnerable children. The latter Scheme updates and revises NALSA's previous scheme and seeks to align the mandate of the Legal Services Institutions with the legislative provisions under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 and the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, with the aim to ensure access to free legal services for persons with mental illness and persons with intellectual disabilities. The Scheme seeks to ensure that legal services are responsive to the specific legal and social needs of such persons. Both the Schemes were finalized after an extensive public

consultation process wherein comments were invited from the stakeholders. The Scheme for Children has been drafted in collaboration with UNICEF India and the Scheme for Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities has been drafted in consultation with NIMHANS, Bengaluru.

18.10 SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT

NALSA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE), Government of India, on 30th September 2024 at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, Janpath, New Delhi.

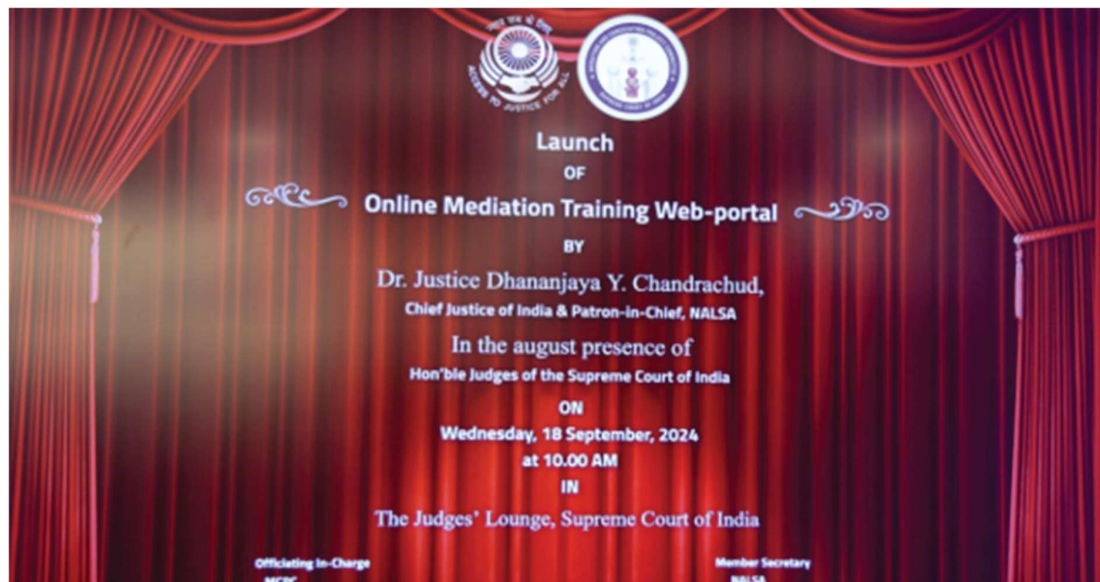


Vignette from the MoU Signing Ceremony on 30th September, 2024 at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, Janpath, New Delhi

18.11 LAUNCH OF 40+ HOURS ONLINE MEDIATION TRAINING WEB-PORTAL

On 18th September, 2024, Hon'ble Dr. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, Chief Justice of India and Patron-in-Chief, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) along with Hon'ble Mr Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA, and Chairman, Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee, Supreme Court of India (MCPC) in the august presence of the Judges of the Supreme Court of India, launched the Online Mediation Training Web-Portal at 10 a.m. at the Judges' Lounge, Supreme Court of India. Developed by NALSA in collaboration with MCPC, this initiative introduces a comprehensive 40+ hours online training module. The Online Mediation Training Web-Portal combines theoretical

knowledge with practical skills, covered by 50+ lectures on 20 topics pertaining to mediation and 10+ hours of online/ interactive practical sessions.



Vignette from the Inaugural Ceremony of the Online Mediation Training Web Portal at The Judges' Lounge, Supreme Court of India

18.12 STATE CONFERENCE OF DISTRICT LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITIES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH, PUNJAB, HARYANA AND CHANDIGARH SLISA

On 6th October, 2024, the State Conference of District Legal Services Authorities of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh, State Legal Services Authorities was organised at Dalhousie under the aegis of NALSA. The Conference aimed at enhancing coordination and collaboration amongst DLSAs and provided a platform for addressing common challenges, sharing best practices, and strengthening the implementation of legal aid and justice delivery services across the region.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajiv Shakdher, Chief Justice, High Court of Himachal Pradesh and Patron-in-Chief, Himachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority (HPSLSA) along with the judges of the Punjab & Haryana High Court, the Member Secretary and Officers of NALSA, the Member Secretaries of PSLSA, HSLSA and Chandigarh SLSA, nominated Chairpersons and Secretaries of the District Legal Services Authorities of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh participated in this State Conference. PLVs, Legal Aid Counsels, Anganwadi workers etc. attended the Inaugural Ceremony.

18.13 NALSA IN COLLABORATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDIATORS SUCCESSFULLY ORGANIZED A 15-HOURS ADVANCED COMMERCIAL MEDIATION TRAINING PROGRAM AT THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA FROM 14TH OCTOBER-16TH OCTOBER, 2024.

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), in collaboration with the International Academy of Mediators (IAM), successfully organized a 15- hours Advanced Commercial Mediation Training Program from 14th to 16th October 2024 at the Supreme Court of India. The three-day event brought together experienced legal professionals, mediators, and judges to enhance mediation skills, particularly in handling complex commercial disputes.



15- HOURS ADVANCED COMMERCIAL MEDIATION TRAINING

organized by

NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

In collaboration with

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDIATORS

14 OCTOBER 2024 - 16 OCTOBER 2024



ROW-I (Left to Right): Hon'ble Mr. Justice M.L. Mehta (Retd.); Ms. Varuna Bhandari; Mr. Rakesh Khanna; Hon'ble Mr. Justice M.M. Sundresh, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA; Mr. Claude Amar, Lead Trainer, International Academy of Mediators (IAM); Mr. Bharat Parashar, Member Secretary, NALSA; Ms. Shreya Arora Mehta, Officer on Special Duty-I, NALSA; Ms. Harshita Mishra, Officer on Special Duty-II, NALSA; Ms. Prachi Mehta, Lead Trainer, International Academy of Mediators (IAM); Mr. Tat Lim, Lead Trainer International Academy of Mediators (IAM) and Mr. Jonathan Lyod Jones, Lead Trainer International Academy of Mediators (IAM).

ROW-II (Left to Right): Ms. Anuja Saxena; Ms. Veena Ralli; Ms. Pussip Gupta; Ms. Rajlakshmi Sinha; Ms. Anupam Dhiingra; Ms. Pramila Acharya; Sh. Prathamesh Popat; Ms. Nagina Jain; Ms. Neena Khare; Ms. Jaya Goyal; Ms. Seema Sharma; Ms. Anveeksha Tripathi Jain, Trainer (TAG); Ms. Nandini Gore.

ROW-III (Left to Right): Sh. J.P. Sengh; Ms. Santosh Snehi Mann; Mr. Sandeep Saxena; Mr. Shiv Shankar Prasad; Ms. Susheela S; Sh. Rajesh Gupta; Mr. Rajesh Dash; Mr. Ashok Kumar Ray.

ROW-IV (Left to Right): Mr. Santosh Kumar, Secretary, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC); Ms. Uma Ramanathan; Mr. Niraj Kumar Gayagi, Joint Secretary, Department of Justice; Mr. Niraj Upadhyay; Ms. Poonam Mendiratta; Ms. Gauri Khara, Sh. A.S. Chandhiok; Sh. A.J. Jawad; Mr. Anoop Kumar Srivastava.

18.15 LEGAL SERVICES DAY 2024

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) celebrated **Legal Services Day** on Saturday, November 9, 2024, at Conference Hall, C-Block, Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India. The event was graced by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, then Executive Chairman, NALSA and presently Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India; Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.R. Gavai, then Chairman, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee and presently the Executive Chairman, NALSA; and Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice.



The event also witnessed the release of the Special Newsletter of NALSA, highlighting the organization's efforts and achievements in promoting access to justice. Booklets on the recent Schemes released by NALSA i.e. *NALSA (Child-Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024* & *NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024*; and a *Training Module on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013* were also released. The successful celebration of Legal Services Day, 2024 reinforces NALSA's commitment to ensuring that no citizen is denied opportunities for securing justice due to economic or other disabilities. As we move forward, NALSA will continue to strive towards creating a more inclusive and just society for all.

18.16 HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE B.R. GAVAI APPOINTED AS NALSA EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

On 11th November 2024, the President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu, under the powers conferred by Clause (b) of sub-section (2) of Section 3 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, nominated Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.R. Gavai, Judge, Supreme Court of India, as the Executive Chairman of NALSA. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Gavai, who previously chaired the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee, succeeds Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India as per the convention of appointing the second senior-most Supreme Court judge. His leadership will strengthen NALSA's mission of providing free and accessible legal aid to marginalized and economically weaker citizens, upholding the constitutional mandate of Article 39-A.

18.17 REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITIES OF PUNJAB, HARYANA, CHANDIGARH, HIMANCHAL PRADESH AND JAMMU AND KASHMIR



On November 17, 2024, the Regional Conference of State Legal Services Authorities on Empowering the Marginalized and a Step Towards Social Justice: Achievements and Roadmap was held at the Chandigarh Judicial Academy Auditorium. The event, graced by Hon'ble Mr. Justice B. R. Gavai, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Chairman, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee along with other distinguished dignitaries, focused on promoting legal empowerment and social justice initiatives.



The conference commenced with the NALSA theme song, followed by the ceremonial lamp lighting and Saraswati Vandana. Notable addresses were delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tarlok Singh Chauhan, Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Himachal Pradesh, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tashi Rabstan, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and emphasizing regional legal advancements. Key highlights included the release of the Scheme of Victim Care & Support System and a video addressing drug awareness and technology applications, underscoring innovative approaches to social justice.

The event concluded with the presentation of mementos, a vote of thanks by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia Judge, Punjab & Haryana High Court and Executive Chairman, Punjab State Legal Services Authority, and the National Anthem. A tree plantation ceremony symbolized the commitment to sustainability, reflecting the conference's broader goal of fostering equity and justice for marginalized communities.

18.18 THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MEDIATION AT PUNE

On November 30, 2024, the Regional Conference on Mediation was held at Pune, organized by the Maharashtra State Legal Services Authority (MSLSA) in collaboration with the Bombay High Court's Mediation Committees. The event, inaugurated by Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.R. Gavai, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA brought together esteemed judges and legal professionals to discuss the Mediation Act, 2023, and strategies to strengthen mediation practices.



The inaugural session featured the release of the Handbook of MSLSA and Mediation, MSLSA theme song, and the E-launch of a social media message on free legal aid services, reflecting a commitment to modern outreach initiatives. Key addresses by Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.R. Gavai, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Prasanna B. Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya, Chief Justice, High Court of Bombay and Patron-in-Chief, MSLSA emphasized the significance of mediation in reducing litigation and promoting peaceful dispute resolution.

The working sessions addressed critical topics, including an overview of the Mediation Act 2023, the role of referral judges in increasing mediation cases, and practical insights from experienced mediators. The conference concluded with a valedictory session and a vote of thanks, highlighting the collective resolve to enhance mediation as a cornerstone of accessible and efficient justice.

18.19 National Lok Adalats

Legal Services Institutions under the aegis of NALSA organized four National Lok Adalats every year. These Lok Adalats were organized to further the objective of 'Speedy and Effective Justice'. In Lok Adalats, various cases such as Criminal Compoundable Cases, Revenue Cases and Bank Recovery Cases, Motor Accident Claims, Matrimonial Disputes, Cheque Bounce Cases under the Negotiable Instrument Act, Labour Disputes, and other Civil Cases are taken up.

A brief overview of the National Lok Adalats organized during 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024 is provided below:

Department of Justice

	Pre-Litigation			Pending Cases			Total		
Dated	Taken Up	Disposal	Total Settlement amount (In Rs.)	Taken Up	Disposal	Total Settlement amount (In Rs.)	Taken Up	Disposal	Total Settlement amount (In Rs.)
09.03.2024	69043255	27331725	33865046319	6086977	3867082	140959691084	75130232	31198807	174824737403
11.05.2024	35164993	18631391	37109682637	6737122	4208597	132103657324	41902115	22839988	169213339961
14.09.2024	25256082	18672169	47483601121	6958266	4558901	148335260954	32214348	23231070	195818862075
14.12.2024	28470444	22383774	51376730398	7252254	4872480	159837426917	35722698	27256254	211214157315
Grand Total	157934774	87019059	169835060475	27034619	17507060	581236036279	184969393	104526119	751071096754

19 PERSONS BENEFITTED THROUGH LEGAL SERVICES:

Free Legal Aid Services are provided by the Legal Services Authorities to poor and marginalised sections of the society covered under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act 1987. Following is the data relating to the number of beneficiaries belonging to different strata of the society availing the free Legal Aid Services during April 2024 to November, 2024:

STATEMENT SHOWING THE NUMBER OF PERSONS BENEFITED THROUGH LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITIES ACT, 1987 DURING THE PERIOD FROM APRIL, 2024 TO NOVEMBER, 2024.														
S. No.	SLSAs	SC	ST	Women	Children	In custody	Persons with Disability	Industrial Workmen	Transgender	Victim of Trafficking in Human beings or Begar	Victims of Mass Disaster Violence, Flood, Draught, Earthquake and Industrial Disaster	General (whose annual income does not exceed the prescribed limit)	Others	Total
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	0	62	0	3	0	16	0	0	0	15	68	164
2	Andhra Pradesh	148	39	721	57	1921	4	0	3	0	0	823	2419	6135
3	Arunachal Pradesh	1067	2171	1272	150	825	3	6	2	0	0	16	10	5522
4	Assam	919	3105	5617	1860	16718	169	984	115	0	5	6894	14955	51341
5	Bihar	3287	866	7043	4182	20135	118	332	28	0	377	1731	19884	57983
6	Chhattisgarh	6837	9626	8316	320	13929	77	0	2	0	0	7465	5618	52190
7	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	4	18	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	29
8	Daman & Diu	7	5	23	3	11	2	4	1	0	0	3	0	59
9	Delhi	1217	30	13503	2055	12349	231	851	5	367	0	7614	12965	51187
10	Goa	7	16	531	6	220	7	0	0	0	0	338	30	1155
11	Gujarat	2588	4583	8475	968	6769	124	46	0	0	5	5048	3537	32143
12	Haryana	1265	0	5277	299	35767	31	4	1	0	0	2534	1258	46436
13	Himachal Pradesh	372	59	2265	82	422	57	8	1	0	3	567	480	4316
14	Jammu & Kashmir	674	362	3372	762	763	342	1	0	1	40	2939	613	9869

15	Jharkhand	19061	19225	33125	16708	19886	2706	2143	93	39	162	3241	51175	167564
16	Karnataka	3757	2095	7228	425	5384	201	146	29	9	9	4608	6439	30330
17	Kerala	988	608	8147	1908	2205	124	52	31	73	37	2169	1336	17678
18	Lakshadweep	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
19	Madhya Pradesh	17473	17216	24785	13100	68899	402	2051	0	0	241	11945	15082	171194
20	Maharashtra	1971	1109	12961	711	13316	223	145	16	2	36	3737	3450	37677
21	Manipur	196	4215	5011	945	274	93	48	10	0	47102	1604	170	59668
22	Meghalaya	19	404	324	66	560	1	0	11	6	0	90	146	1627
23	Mizoram	26	1790	577	19	630	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	3063
24	Nagaland	352	1592	353	240	350	28	0	0	0	0	278	0	3193
25	Odisha	1013	751	2524	120	7318	118	3	35	5	468	1317	551	14223
26	Puducherry	25	0	115	183	78	0	0	0	0	0	47	18	466
27	Punjab	3512	2	10157	347	22322	52	20	0	0	0	6629	919	43960
28	Rajasthan	203	53	1168	3612	8046	21	2	1	0	0	742	10	13858
29	Sikkim	13	98	318	17	107	1	0	0	0	0	86	4	644
30	Tamil Nadu	1574	230	8517	224	7209	122	126	6	0	2	7275	9835	35120
31	Telangana	214	115	1603	144	3196	22	0	0	0	0	2151	2441	9886
32	Tripura	626	426	2294	95	1089	36	0	64	0	1452	852	621	7555
33	U. T. Chandigarh	14	0	933	65	520	3	0	0	0	0	454	21	2010
34	Uttar Pradesh	1475	5	1652	510	4941	124	0	80	0	0	4330	4402	17519
35	Uttarakhand	1217	460	2708	1181	11334	126	49	0	26	8	1545	992	19646
36	West Bengal	5347	2931	12864	2760	15752	84	471	45	26	124	12712	1593	54709
37	Ladakh	0	72	134	5	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	230
	Total	77465	74264	193993	54129	303271	5652	7510	579	554	50071	101799	161063	1030350

20. SECOND NATIONAL JUDICIAL PAY COMMISSION (SNJPC):

In compliance to the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, a fresh National Judicial Pay Commission, known as Second National Judicial Pay Commission (SNJPC), headed by Shri Justice (Retd.) P.Venkatrama Reddi, former Judge of Supreme Court of India was appointed vide Notification dated 16.11.2017 to review the pay scales, emoluments and service conditions of the Judicial Officers of Subordinate Judiciary in India.

2. The report submitted by the SNJPC; the Hon'ble Court vide order dated 27.07.2022 accepted all the recommendations of SNJPC on the revised pay structure. This Hon'ble Court ordered that the pay structure as recommended by SNJPC shall be accepted and the revised pay scales would be effective from 01.01.2016. It was further directed by this Hon'ble Court that in so far as arrears are concerned, 25% of arrears would be payable in cash within a period of 3 months. Another 25% to be paid in cash within 3 months thereafter and the balance 50% was to be paid on or before the end of June, 2023. Hon'ble Court vide order dated 19.05.2023 also accepted the recommendations of SNJPC on pension and other retirement benefits of Judicial Officers and directed that all arrears of pay be cleared by 30.06.2023. It was further directed that the payment of arrears of pension, additional pension, gratuity and other retiral benefits be paid by 31.08.2023, another 25% by 31.10.2023, and the remaining 50% by 31.12.2023.

3. Department of Justice implemented the recommendations of the SNJPC in respect of Judicial Officers of the Union Territories, in consultation with Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance and convey the sanction of the Central Government to the Union Territories of J&K, Delhi and Puducherry for fixation of pay and pension of serving and retired Judicial Officers in the revised pay scales as directed by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India's order dated 27.7.2022 and 19.05.2023 vide order dated 08.08.2023. The remaining Union Territories have no cadre of Judicial Officers of their own and all the Judicial Officers posted in these Union Territories are taken on deputation from the respective neighboring state.

4. Supreme Court of India vide order dated 23.11.2023 stated that based on the outer limit of 31st January 2024, all High Courts shall ensure compliance with the directions contained in the judgment dated 19 May 2023, as noted above by 31st December 2023, the High Courts shall, within the aforesaid time frame, communicate the proposed amendments

to the rules to the State Governments/UTs, and the State Governments/UTs shall notify the rules by 31st January 2024.

5. Department of Justice conveyed the sanction of the Central Government to the Union Territories of J&K, Delhi and Puducherry for fixation of pay and pension of serving and retired Judicial Officers in the revised pay scales as directed by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India's order dated 27.7.2022 and 19.05.2023 vide orders dated 08.08.2023. Department of Justice has requested Government of UT of J&K, Delhi and Puducherry to take necessary action in compliance of Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 23.11.2023.

6. Supreme Court of India vide order dated 04.01.2024 directed to implement various allowances of Judicial Officers of states and UTs. The Order of the Supreme Court, relating to the recommendation of SNJPC regarding payment of 21 allowances to the Judicial Officers of the Union Territories has been implemented in consultation with Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance vide letter dated 24.09.2024.

21. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoUs) SIGNED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF JUDICIAL CO-OPERATION

Department of Justice has signed Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with ten (10) countries in the field of Judicial Co-operation as well as training and capacity building programmes for Judicial Officers. The latest MoU has been signed between Supreme Court of India and Supreme Court of Bhutan in the field of Judicial Co-operation on 09.10.2024.

22. REDRESSAL OF GRIEVANCES:

Department of Justice (DoJ) receives large number of Citizen's grievances from citizens directly and through online CPGRAMS Portal. During the period 1.1.2024 to 31.12.2024, 11599 grievances were disposed of out of 11989 grievances.

23. MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT:

23.1 RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005:

Under the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005, Department of Justice has initiated the following actions:

- (a) A Section Officer of the Department has been designated as CAPIO to collect and transfer the applications under the RTI Act, 2005 to the Central Public Information Officers / Public Authorities concerned and to submit the quarterly returns, regarding receipt and disposal of the RTI applications / appeals, to the Central Information Commission.
- (b) Details of the Department's functions along with its functionaries have been placed on the RTI portal of the Department's official website (<http://doj.gov.in>) as required under section 5 (i) of RTI Act, 2005 in respect of subjects being handled by them.
- (c) The Under Secretaries / Section Officers, in accordance with subjects allocated, have been designated as Central Public Information Officers (CPIOs) under section 5 (i) of RTI Act, 2005.
- (d) Directors / Deputy Secretary / Under Secretary Level Officers have been designated as Appellate Authorities in terms of section 19 (i) of RTI Act, 2005 in respect of Under Secretaries / Section Officers working for the allocated subjects.
- (e) During the year 2024-25 (01.01.2024) to (31.12.2024), 108 RTI applications and 9 Appeals were received manually and 4756 RTI Applications and 145 appeals were received online in the Department and forwarded to the concerned CPIOs / Public Authorities for providing information requested for.
- (f) As per para 1.4.1 of the DOPTs guidelines issued vide their O.M. No. 1/5/2011 – IR Dated 15.04.2013, the Department is uploading all RTI's and Appeal's replies on the website regularly.

The details of total number of RTI applications received during 2024 are as follows:-

Matter	Online	Offline
RTI	4756	108
Appeal	145	09

23.2 EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:

Redressal of Complaints pertaining to Sexual Harassment at Workplace: In compliance of Section 4(1) of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, an Internal Complaints Committee has been re-constituted for redressal of complaints by aggrieved women employees of the Department on 20.09.2023. The Committee consists of three women employees, (including one Member from an NGO) and two male employees. A workshop on Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees at work place was conducted in Department of Justice on 27th December, 2024 to sensitize all the Officers/Officials about the importance of the issue.



23.3 SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN:



As per policy guidelines of Government of India, *Swachh Bharat* programme has been implemented in the Department. During the year 2024, '*Swachhta Pakhwada*' was observed from 01.09.2024 to 15.09.2024 and another programme namely '*Swachhta Hi Sewa*' was observed and activities like beautification of lawn, plantation of trees inside campus, extensive cleaning drive, weeding out of old records, disposal of old and obsolete items and voluntary *Shramdaan* by officers/officials of Department of Justice etc. were undertaken. During the FY 2024-25, Rs. **50.00** lakh was earmarked for works

under *Swachhta* Action Plan for maintenance of the office premises. An expenditure of Rs. **49.42** lakh was incurred on this (upto 31.12.2024).

23.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF E-OFFICE:

In keeping with the policies of the Government for moving towards paperless office, this Department has taken the initiative to operationalize eOffice. Special steps have been taken with the help of NIC to impart training to all officers/officials on eOffice for smooth implementation and optimal utilization of eOffice system. As a result, Department of Justice is one of the top performing Ministries/Departments of Government of India who have moved into complete eOffice platform. For seamless flow of data between the all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India, Department of Justice has already migrated to version 7.0 of efile (eOffice).

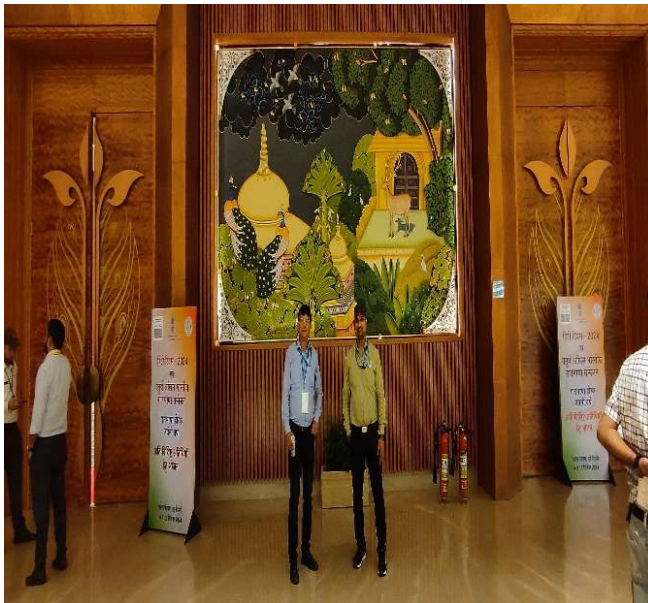
24. IMPLEMENTATION OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGE POLICY:

Official Language Section has been set up in the Department. It assists in discharging the responsibilities of implementation of Official Language policy of Union of India, the Official Languages Act, 1963, the Official Language Rules, 1976 and the compliance of directions/instructions issued by Department of Official Languages from time to time. It is also entrusted with the work of promoting the progressive use of Hindi in the Department in addition to the translation work. The progress made in the implementation of official language is monitored through Quarterly Meetings. In the year 2024, the meetings of Departmental Official Language Implementation Committee (OLIC) were held in every quarter to review the implementation of progressive use of Hindi in the Department. For promoting the use of Hindi in the Department, a scheme related to noting and drafting is being implemented. Under the scheme of Noting and Drafting, a 05-day workshop was organized for officials of Department of Justice in collaboration with Central Translation Bureau (CTB), in which certificates were given to the participants. One Hindi workshop was organized in every quarter during the year.

Apart from organizing workshops and quarterly meetings, a Desk training on newly developed Translation Software, “*Kanthasth 2.0*” was given to 30 Officers/Staff of Department of Justice to enable and encourage them to translate the documents using this tool. Kanthasth swadeshi software has now been uploaded on e-office also by Department of Official Language. The officers and the employees of the Department have been requested to use this software for bilingual purpose.

Official Language Section of the Department also arranges for various Training Programs for Officers and employees of the department. In the year of 2024-25, two Parangat Training programs were conducted in the Department. Participants of Parangat Training were given cash award on passing examination with prescribed marks. During the year of 2024-25 two workshops on Official Language Act for all the officers and Staff and one training workshop

on noting and drafting for personal Secretaries and P.S.O of higher Officers were also organized. The Officers and the employees of the Department participated in Fourth All India Official Language Conference, 2024 organized in Bharat Mandapam New Delhi on 14 to 15 September, 2024.



24.1 HINDI FORTNIGHT AND HINDI DIWAS:



In order to promote and encourage the implementation of Official Language in the Department, Hindi Diwas was organized on 30th September, 2024. On the occasion of Hindi Diwas, message of Hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs was read out in the presence of

Secretary (Justice). In his address, Secretary (Justice) urged the officers and officials of the Department to do their maximum work in Hindi. In addition to this, Hindi Fortnight was organized in the Department from 14th September, 2024 to 30th September, 2024. During observance of Hindi Fortnight, six competitions i.e. Hindi Essay, Hindi Translation, Reciting Hindi Poems, Hindi Typing, Hindi Dictation and Hindi Extempore were organized. A total of **93** officers/officials participated in these competitions. Cash prizes (First: Rs. 3,000/-, Second: Rs. 2,500/- and Third: Rs.1500/- and **five incentive prizes Rs. 1,000/-** along with certificates were awarded to the winners of each competition.



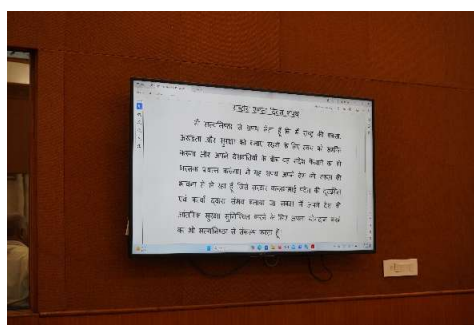
25. A SPECIAL CAMPAIGN 4.0

A Special Campaign for reduction of pendency and efficient management of space was conducted from 2nd October, 2024 to 31st October, 2024. National Legal Services Authority of India and National Judicial Academy were also brought under the Campaign for Space management purpose. In pendency clearance silo of the Campaign, in respect of all pendency under the categories of References from MPs, Parliamentary Assurances, Public Grievances and references from State Governments were cleared.



26. RASHTRIYA EKTA DIWAS:

Ekta Diwas was observed on 31st October, 2024 at Department of Justice premises to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. On this occasion pledge on Rashtriya Ekta Diwas was administered to the all Officers/officials of DoJ.



27. VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK, 2024 (28.10.2024 TO 03.11.2024)

Vigilance Awareness Week, 2024 was celebrated in the Department from 28.10.2024 to 03.11.2024. 'Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity' was the theme for the event. The Integrity Pledge was taken by all the Officers/staff of the Department of Justice



on 28.10.2024. Online pledge has also been undertaken by officers/officials of Department of Justice on this occasion.

28. HAR GHAR TIRANGA ABHIYAN, 2024

The Department of Justice participated in the Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan observed from 9th-15th August, 2024 to inculcate the values of equity, justice, peace and pays tribute to the martyrs in honour of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Abhiyan was also observed by Judiciary at an unprecedented scale throughout the country with participation of Hon'ble Judges of Supreme Court, High Courts and District and Subordinate Courts with staff members by unfurling the National Flag at their residences and respective office buildings.

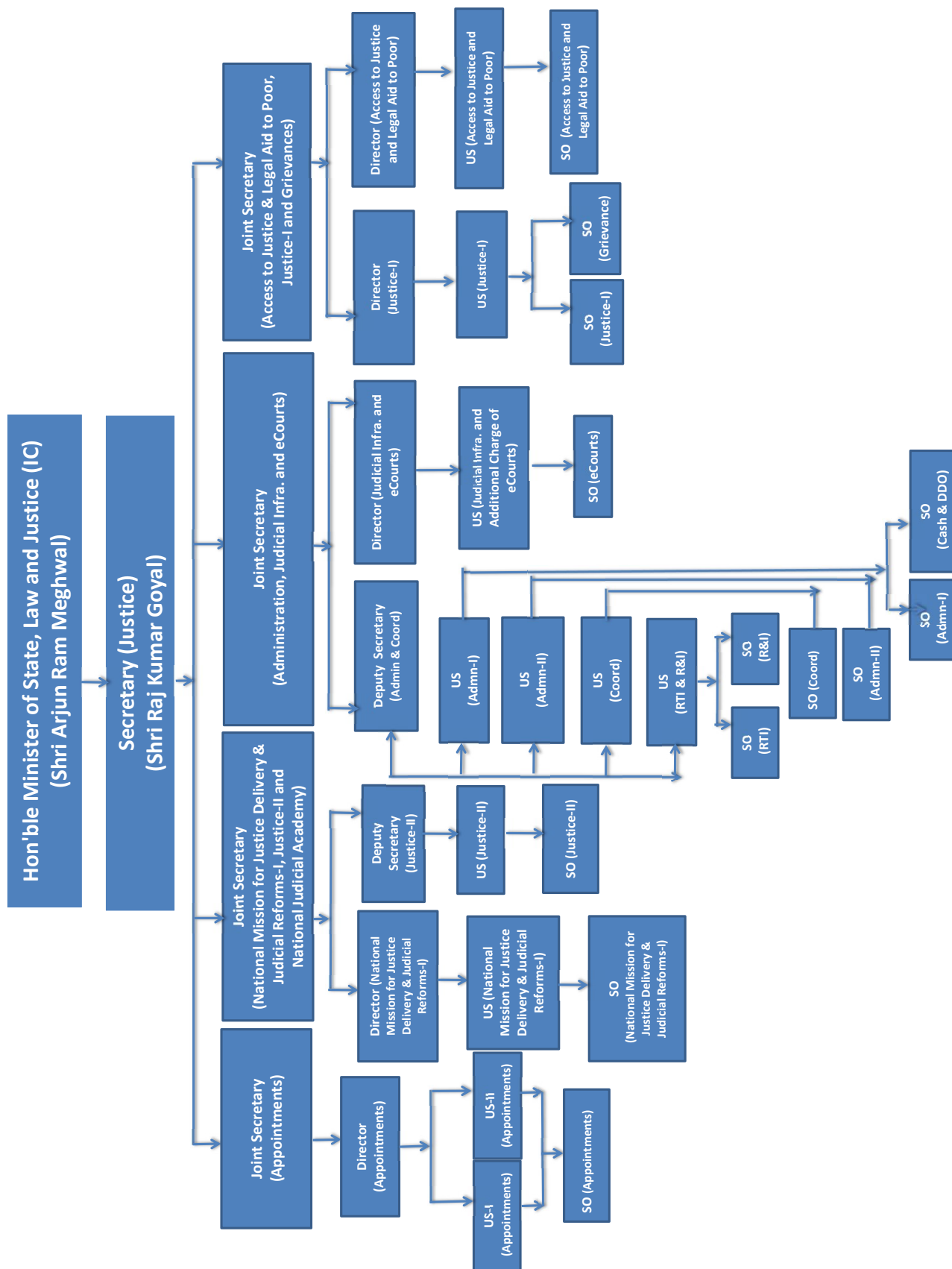
29. CONSTITUTION DAY:

Samvidan Divas (Constitution Day) was observed on 26th November, 2024 at Department of Justice to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India. On this occasion all offices/staffs of DoJ read the preamble of Indian Constitution.



30. STATUS OF CAG PARA

There is no CAG/PAC para pending in Department of Justice.



CHAPTER - III

DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS (VIDHI KARYA VIBHAG)

1. FUNCTIONS AND ORGANISATIONAL SET UP

1.1 The Department has been allocated the following subjects as per the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961:-

1. Advice to Ministries on legal matters including interpretation of the Constitution and the laws, conveyancing and engagement of counsel to appear on behalf of the Union of India in the High Courts and subordinate courts where the Union of India is a party.
2. Attorney General of India, Solicitor General of India, and other Central Government law officers of the States whose services are shared by the Ministries of the Government of India.
3. Conduct of cases in the Supreme Court and the High Courts on behalf of the Central Government and on behalf of the Governments of States participating in the Central Agency Scheme.
4. Reciprocal arrangements with foreign countries for the service of summons in civil suits for the execution of decrees of Civil Courts, for the enforcement of maintenance orders, and for the administration of the estates of foreigners dying in India intestate.
5. Authorization of officers to execute contracts and assurances of property on behalf of the President under Article 299(1) of the Constitution, and authorization of officers to sign and verify complaints or written statements in suits by or against the Central Government.
6. Indian Legal Service.
7. Treaties and agreements with foreign countries in matters of civil law.
8. Law Commission.
9. Legal Profession including the Advocates Act, 1961 (25 of 1961) and persons entitled to practice before High Courts.
10. Enlargement of the jurisdiction of Supreme Court and the conferring thereon of further powers; persons entitled to practice before the Supreme Court, references to the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Constitution of India.
11. Administration of the Notaries Act, 1952 (53 of 1952).
12. Income-tax Appellate Tribunal.

The Department has also been allocated administration of the following Acts:-

- (a) The Advocates Act, 1961
- (b) The Notaries Act, 1952
- (c) The Advocates' Welfare Fund Act, 2001
- (d) The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996
- (e) The Commercial Courts Act, 2015 and
- (f) The India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019.

1.2 The Department is also administratively in-charge of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal, the Law Commission of India and the India International Arbitration Centre. The

Department is also administratively concerned with all the matters relating to the Indian Legal Service. It is further connected with the appointment of Law Officers namely the Attorney General of India, the Solicitor General of India and the Additional Solicitor Generals of India. With a view to promote studies and research in law and for improvement in legal profession, the Department sanctions grant-in-aid to certain institutions engaged in these fields like Indian Law Institute.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

The Department of Legal Affairs has a two-tier set up, namely, the Main Secretariat at New Delhi and the Branch Secretariats at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Bengaluru. The nature of duties discharged by the Department can be broadly classified into two areas- Advice work and Litigation work. The Organisational Chart of the Department of Legal Affairs is at **ANNEXURE-I**.

2.1 Main Secretariat:

- i. The set up at the Main Secretariat includes Law Secretary, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretary and Legal Advisers and other Legal Advisers at various levels. The work relating to tendering of legal advice and conveyancing has been distributed amongst groups of officers. Each group is normally headed by an Additional Secretary or a Joint Secretary & Legal Adviser, who, in turn, is assisted by a number of other Legal Advisers at different levels.
- ii. The litigation work in the Supreme Court on behalf of all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India and some administrations of the Union Territories is handled by the Central Agency Section presently handled by Officers of Government Advocates cadre of the Indian Legal Service (ILS) and other supporting staff.
- iii. The litigation work in the High Court of Delhi and CAT (Principal Bench) on behalf of all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India is processed by the Litigation (High Court) Section presently headed by an Addl. Legal Adviser.
- iv. The litigation work in the Subordinate Courts in Delhi is handled by the Litigation (Lower Court) Section presently headed by an Assistant Legal Adviser.
- v. The Department has a special cell, namely, Implementation Cell for dealing with the implementation of the recommendations of the Law Commission and the administration of the Advocates Act, 1961 and the Advocates Welfare Fund Act, 2015. It also deals with the legal profession.
- vi. There is one post of Joint Secretary & Legal Adviser each in Railway Board and Department of Telecommunications respectively. Apart from these the Officers of the Indian Legal Services are also posted in the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Urban Development, SFIO, NTRO and CBI.

2.2 CREATION OF INDIAN LEGAL SERVICE (ILS)

With the development of the society, the legal profession underwent a metamorphosis and several attempts have been made for proper dispensation of justice and to cater the legal needs of the society. One such attempt made in 1956 to cater to the needs of the Government qualitatively is creation of “Central Legal Service (the forerunner of the present Indian Legal Service)”. The Government of India in the Ministry of Law and Justice established Indian Legal Service under the Indian Legal Service Rules, 1957, which came into force on the 1st October 1957. Since inception the officers of the Indian Legal Service have been rendering dedicated service to the nation by giving legal advice in important matters to various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India and drafting bills and ordinances which are introduced in Parliament. This service has given Governors to States, Secretary General to the Houses of Parliament, Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners, Judges to High Courts and Judicial Members to various Tribunals like CAT, ITAT, DRT etc. and Information Commissioner.

(2) The Department of Legal Affairs has initiated the exercise of Cadre Review of Indian Legal Service which also includes amendments in existing Indian Legal Service Rules.

2.3 ROLE OF ILS

The officers of the Indian Legal Service (ILS) manning the Department of Legal Affairs and Legislative Department being the principal legal organ of the Government of India have risen to the challenges and performed at optimum levels. The digital revolution has changed the dynamics of information sharing and the economy has created new areas of wealth creation. This necessitates the ILS officers to update the legal skill and acumen to cater to emerging legal needs. They being the Principal Legal Advisers to the Government have responded effectively and speedily to the demands made upon them by the various organs of the Government and play a pivotal role in both advisory as well as in drafting work.

2.4 Representation of SC/ST/OBC/Ex-S/PH amongst the employees of ILS Cadre (Legal Adviser & Government Advocate) & GCS cadre is at **ANNEXURE-VII**.

2.5 Representation of female employees amongst the employees of ILS Cadre (Legal Adviser & Government Advocate) & GCS cadre is at **ANNEXURE-VIII**.

2.6 Statement showing the total number of Government servants and the number of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Ex-Servicemen and Physically Handicapped amongst them {In respect of CSS, CSSS, CSCS, CSOLS and GCS (Accountant and Jr. Accountant only) Cadres of Ministry of Law and Justice (Department of Legal Affairs and Legislative Department)} as on 01.01.2025 is at **ANNEXURE-IX**.

2.7 VIGILANCE ACTIVITIES

(1) The Vigilance Unit in the Ministry of Law and Justice caters to Department of Legal Affairs (including Income Tax Appellate Tribunal) and Legislative Department. The Vigilance Unit is headed by Chief Vigilance Officer of the rank of Additional Secretary/ Joint Secretary who is appointed with the concurrence of Central Vigilance Commission. Vigilance Unit is presently headed by Smt. Sunita Anand, Additional Secretary. The overall responsibility of

vigilance activities of both these Departments rests with the Chief Vigilance Officer. The Chief Vigilance Officer is the nodal point in the vigilance unit set up for these Departments and is entrusted with the following:

- Identification of sensitive areas prone to malpractices/temptation and taking preventive measures to ensure integrity/efficiency in government functioning;
- Taking suitable action to achieve the targets fixed by the Department of Personnel & Training on anti-corruption measures;
- Scrutiny of complaints and initiation of appropriate investigation measures;
- Inspection and follow-up action on the same;
- Furnishing comments of the Department to the Central Vigilance Commission on the investigation reports of the Central Bureau of Investigation;
- Taking appropriate action in respect of departmental proceedings on the advice of Central Vigilance Commission or otherwise;
- Obtaining first and second stage advice of the Central Vigilance Commission, wherever necessary; and

Obtaining the advice of Union Public Service Commission in regard to the nature and quantum of penalty to be imposed, wherever necessary.

(2) Preventive vigilance continues to receive priority attention with emphasis on identification of areas sensitive or prone to malpractices and temptation. The guidelines/instructions issued from time to time by the Department of Personnel & Training and Central Vigilance Commission in this regard are followed. Vigilance Awareness Week was observed in the week starting from 30.10.2023 to 05.11.2023.

2.8 GENDER ISSUES

The Complaints Committee under Section 4 of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 has been set up to look into the complaints on sexual harassment from employees of both the departments i.e. Department of Legal Affairs and Legislative Department. The Complaints Committee is deemed to be the inquiring authority appointed by the disciplinary authority for the purpose of CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965 and the report of the Complaints Committee is treated as enquiry report. The Complaints Committee will examine the complaints made by women employee(s) against sexual harassment and, if necessary, conduct an enquiry. On completion of the same, the Committee will submit its findings to the Department of Legal Affairs for further necessary action. The Committee is presently headed by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary.

2.9 INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

Department of Legal Affairs (DoLA) organizes Internship Programme for young law students for doing internship. The purpose of this Programme is to acquaint young law students with the working of Department of Legal Affairs by giving training in the field of research & referencing work, tendering legal advice in various specialized fields of law such as constitutional & administrative law, finance law, infrastructure law, economic law, labour law,

conveyancing, arbitration & contract law etc. Indian students who are pursuing studies in 2nd & 3rd year of three-years degree course and in 3rd to 5th year of five-year degree course or students who have completed their LLB course from any recognized college/law school/university. Duration of internship ordinarily remain for a period of one month.

3. ADVICE SECTIONS

3.1 There are three Advice Sections in the Department of Legal Affairs, namely, Advice A, Advice B and Advice C. The Advice A and Advice B Sections facilitate the movement of files relating to the requests for advice received from various Ministries/Departments for legal opinion. The requests received for legal advice are placed before the concerned group heads to whom a particular Ministry/Department has been allocated to. To make the functioning more convenient, the various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India are distributed between Advice A and Advice B Sections:

A. The following Ministries/Departments/Organizations are dealt by Advice 'A' Section:

1. Ministry of Home Affairs
2. Ministry of External Affairs
3. Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
4. Ministry of Defence
5. Ministry of Road Transport & Highways
6. Ministry of Labour and Employment
7. Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers
8. Ministry of Steel
9. Ministry of Mines
10. Department of Justice
11. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
12. Ministry of Coal
13. Ministry of Communications
14. Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
15. Development of North Eastern Region
16. Union Public Service Commission
17. Staff Selection Commission
18. Central Information Commission
19. Ministry of Shipping
20. Ministry of Civil Aviation
21. Ministry of Tribal Affairs
22. Ministry of Minority Affairs
23. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas
24. Ministry of Tourism
25. Election Commission of India
26. Central Vigilance Commission
27. Conveyancing matters including house building advance cases of all the Ministries and Departments.

B. The following Ministries/Departments/Organisations are dealt by Advice 'B' Section:

1. Ministry of Finance
2. Ministry of Corporate Affairs
3. Ministry of Heavy Industry & Public Enterprises
4. Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
5. Ministry of Railways
6. Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs
7. Ministry of Commerce & Industry
8. Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
9. Lok Sabha Secretariat
10. Rajya Sabha Secretariat
11. President Secretariat
12. Prime Minister Office
13. Cabinet Secretariat
14. Ministry of Science & Technology
15. Ministry of Jal Shakti
16. Ministry of Textiles
17. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
18. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
19. Department of Atomic Energy
20. Ministry of Power
21. Comptroller and Auditor General of India
22. Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
23. Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
24. Ministry of Agriculture
25. Ministry of Rural Development
26. Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution
27. Ministry of Education
28. Ministry of Culture
29. Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports
30. Ministry of Food Processing Industries
31. Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation
32. Department of Space
33. Ministry of Panchayati Raj
34. Ministry of Women & Child Development
35. Ministry of Earth Sciences
36. Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying
37. Ministry of Cooperation
38. Ministry of AYUSH
39. Department of Legal Affairs
40. Legislative Department
41. Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology

3.2 The Advice A & B Sections received 5178 references from various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India for legal opinions/ advice on various

issues/ court cases and vetting of legal documents/counter affidavits during the period 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024.

- 3.3 772 SLPs, 906 litigation issues, 1444 references for general advice, 1527 vetting of counter affidavits, 177 Cabinet Notes, 30 Private Members, Bills, and 55 State Bills/Ordinances were examined.
- 3.4 189 references relating to examination from conveyancing angle, which include lease agreement/MoUs, etc.
- 3.5 The Officials of this Department took part in 154 national and international meetings during the period.
- 3.6 100 RTI applications and 8 public grievances pertaining to the Advice Sections were dealt with.
- 3.7 21 Parliament Questions/inputs for question were processed.

4. NOTARY CELL

4.1 The administration of the Notaries Act, 1952 and the Notaries Rules, 1956 comes under the purview of the Notary Cell. The Notary Cell deals with the online applications received from legal practitioners or other persons who possess prescribed qualifications for appointment as Notaries; examination and scrutiny of these applications; holding of interviews; appointment of selected persons as notaries, etc. The Notary Cell also conducts inquiries into the allegations of professional misconduct on the part of the notaries. It also handles the requests for verification of the Central Notaries received from police authorities. The Notary Cell also processes the applications for renewal of certificates of practice as notaries issued by the Central Government. It also processes the applications for change in the area of practice of the notaries.

4.2 As on 27.1.2025, approximately 35703 persons have been granted Certificate of Practice for practicing as Notaries by the Central Government in various States/ Union Territories of the country. Further, during the year 2024, Certificates of Practice of about 2800 Central Notaries were renewed.

4.3 Streamlining the Process of Appointment of Notaries: In order to streamline the process of appointment of Central notaries, the Notary Cell has taken the following steps:

- a) The process of appointment through physical interviews has been discontinued. Interviews for appointment of notaries are now held in online mode. This has allowed ease of access to the applicants, who have applied for appointment as Central notaries, and has brought greater transparency in the entire process. Online interview is also economical to the applicants as it saves travel cost and time for them. The applicants can now appear in the online interview from their home or office.

- b) Towards creating a paper-less system, the requirement of submission of physical applications has been replaced by the online system of applications.

4.4 Ease of Access to the Citizens: Based on rational parameters like population of the State, Gross State Domestic Product, State-wise GST collection, pending litigation, the geographical landscape, area of the State, etc., the strength of Notaries to be appointed by the Central Government in various States and UTs has been **increased from 52,950 to 1,04,925**, *vide* the Notaries (Amendment) Rules, 2024, notified on 24th February, 2024. This would provide ease of access to the citizens so far as notarial services are concerned.

4.5 Appointment of Notaries: In the year 2024, 40435 legal practitioners have been provisionally appointed as notaries in 18 States/ UTs which are mentioned in the table 1. Out of them, as on 07.02.2025, digitally signed Certificate of Practice has been issued to 16098 notaries which are mentioned in the table 2.

TABLE-1

Sl. No.	State	No. of Candidates Provisionally Selected
1	Assam	420
2	Bihar	331
3	Chandigarh	100
4	Delhi	975
5	Goa	296
6	Gujarat	8086
7	Haryana	1357
8	Himachal Pradesh	578
9	Jharkhand	320
10	Maharashtra	14648
11	Odisha	531
12	Rajasthan	4538
13	Uttarakhand	170
14	Kerala	1865
15	West Bengal	838
16	Uttar Pradesh	1627
17	Madhya Pradesh	2177
18	Punjab	1578
Total		40435

TABLE-2

Sl. No.	Name of the States	CoP Issued
1	Assam	26
2	Bihar	22
3	Chandigarh	36
4	Delhi	73
5	Gujarat	3857
6	Himachal Pradesh	420
7	Jharkhand	36
8	Maharashtra	6623
9	Rajasthan	3997
10	Uttarakhand	92
11	Kerala	221
12	Madhya Pradesh	679
13	Punjab	16
Total		16098

4.6 Digitization of the Notary Cell: In order to provide a paperless, faceless and efficient system, and to achieve the goal of the digital India of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, the Notary Portal i.e. <https://notary.gov.in> has been developed as a dedicated platform for providing online services like submission of applications for appointment as notaries, issuance and renewal of Certificates of Practice, change of practice area, submission of annual returns, etc. The Notary Portal has different modules, to be rolled out in phases. When all modules of the Notary Portal go live, the Central Notaries will not be required to submit applications/ requests in physical mode. They can submit applications online; monitor its progress; and download digitally signed Certificates of Practice from their digilocker accounts. In the first stage, module relating to issue of Certificate of Practice to the provisionally selected Notaries has been launched. As on 27.01.2025, 12961 digitally signed Certificate of Practice have been issued through the Notary Portal.

5. JUDICIAL SECTION

5.1 The Judicial Section is responsible for the conduct of litigation of the Government of India and Union Territories before the Supreme Court, various High Courts, the Central Administrative Tribunals and the District Courts. Its functions include processing the appointments of the Attorney General for India, the Solicitor General and the Additional Solicitors General of India, Central Government Counsels in the Supreme Court, High Courts, the Central Administrative Tribunals, the District Courts and the Consumer Forums in various States for conducting litigation work on behalf of the Central Government, engaging Law Officers and other Counsels on behalf of the Ministries/Departments for conducting cases before the Supreme Court, the High Courts, the Tribunals, the Commissions of Inquiry, the District Courts, the Quasi-Judicial Authorities etc. Its functions also include formulation and

settlement of their terms and conditions for conducting cases. The Judicial Section is also responsible for nomination of Arbitrators in disputes between the various Departments of the Government of India and private parties.

The Section is responsible for issuing statutory orders authorizing various Officers to sign and verify complaints and written statements in suits before any Court with civil jurisdiction or in writ proceedings by or against Central Government under Order XXVII, Rule 1 of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908. This Section authorizes Officers to sign contracts and agreements on behalf of the President of India under Article 299(1) of the Constitution of India.

This Section deals with the work of reciprocal arrangements with foreign countries for service of summons in civil suits, execution of decrees of Civil Courts, enforcement of maintenance orders and administration of the estates of foreigners dying intestate in India.

India assented to the Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters and also to the Hague Convention on Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil and Commercial Matters in the year 2007. The Ministry of Law and Justice is the Central Authority for both the Conventions. The Judicial Section deals with the processing of service of summons/notices received through Judicial Authorities from foreign countries under the said Convention to Indian nationals. It also deals with forwarding of summons/notices originating from Judicial Authorities of our country to the Central Authorities of foreign countries.

5.2 The activities undertaken by the Judicial Section are as follows:

I. Conduct of Central Govt. litigation before various courts of law through Law Officers/Panel Counsel:

- a) During the period, **Six** new Additional Solicitor General for India have been appointed in Supreme Court of India.
- b) During the said period, term of the **Ten** Deputy Solicitor General of India in various High Courts / Benches of High Courts, have engaged afresh or their terms extended.
- c) During the said period, a total of **1082** Advocates empaneled or their terms as panel counsel have been extended for various courts / tribunals in the country.
- d) During the said period, resignations of **34** panel counsel have been processed.
- e) Proposals are received from some of the Ministries / Departments, dealing with special functions, regarding separate panels of advocates for their specific representation, besides this, requests / proposals are also received from various Ministries / Departments of the Government of India for the engagement of Law Officers, panel counsel and of private Advocates to represent them in various courts in the country on normal or special terms & conditions. During the said period, about **280** of such proposals have been processed.

II. Clarification and various issues viz. terms of engagement of panel counsel, issues related to fee schedule, etc.

Issues are received from time to time from various Ministries/Departments for clarification on terms & conditions of engagement of panel counsel, their fee schedule etc. As such, during the said period, about **260** such clarifications have been issued.

III. Nomination of Arbitration panel counsel in domestic as well International commercial disputes, involving Government/CPSE on the one hand and CPSE/private party on the other:

Requests are received regarding engagement of Arbitration Panel Counsel to represent various Ministries / Departments in arbitration cases. During the said period, in response to such requests, Arbitration Panel Counsel have been engaged in about **230** arbitration cases.

IV. Entering into Treaties and Agreements with foreign countries in matters of civil law:

Ministry of Law & Justice, Department of Legal Affairs, is the nodal Ministry for reciprocal arrangement with foreign countries. In addition to this, Ministry of Law & Justice, Department of Legal Affairs undergoes various agreements on legal co-operation under civil law with other countries. Under this obligation, during the said period, the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties in civil and commercial matters with the **Socialist Republic of Vietnam** has been signed.

V. Examination and processing of requests arising out of bilateral treaties in respect of service of summons etc. (Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties/reciprocal arrangements) and multilateral treaties (the Hague convention of 1965/1971):

M/o Law & Justice, Department of Legal Affairs is the Central Authority under Hague Convention, 1965 and 1971 for serving of summons/notices and for taking of evidence in Civil & Commercial matters for service abroad of judicial & extra judicial documents in civil and commercial matters. Under this obligation, during the said period, about **3200** requests have been processed.

VI. RTI / Public Grievance/ Parliamentary Questions related work:

During the period about **189 RTI** applications and other related matters have been disposed of and as on date **no** public grievance is pending on part of Judicial Section on PG Portal / CPGRAMS. Also, during the said period in total **30** **parliamentary questions** have been replied to.

6. ADR CELL

6.1 The traditional mode of dispute resolution, *i.e.* litigation, is a lengthy process leading to delays in dispensation of justice as well as overburdening of Judiciary. In such a scenario, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms like arbitration, conciliation and mediation assume significance. These ADR mechanisms are less adversarial, informal and are capable of providing a better substitute to the conventional methods of resolving disputes.

6.2 The Government has also taken various steps and measures towards revitalizing and strengthening the contract enforcement and commercial dispute resolution regimes including Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms, to enable ease of doing business and boost investor confidence. The legislative interventions and policy initiatives in the field have gone a long way in strengthening the position of India as a robust jurisdiction for resolution of disputes.

6.3 The Department is concerned *inter-alia* with the administration of the Mediation Act, 2023, the India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019, the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 and the Commercial Courts Act, 2015.

6.4 The Mediation Act, 2023:

6.4.1 A successful settlement not only helps in preserving the relationship amongst the parties, offering ease of living but also in great savings of time and resources which in turn contribute in the growth of the nation's economy. In furtherance of enabling a statutory ecosystem for mediation and to have a consolidated law on mediation, the Mediation Act, 2023 was enacted. Mediation law will prove to be a pivotal reform towards providing comprehensive recognition to mediation and enabling the culture of amicable settlement of disputes outside of courts to take root.

6.4.2 The Mediation Act, 2023, lays down the legislative framework for mediation to be adopted by disputing parties, especially institutional mediation where various stakeholders have been identified to establish a robust and efficacious mediation ecosystem in India. The salient provisions of the Mediation Act, 2023 *inter-alia* include:

- (i) Provisions relating to voluntary pre-litigation mediation in matters of civil or commercial dispute before parties approach a court or tribunal
- (ii) Matters or disputes not fit for mediation
- (iii) Process of mediation to be completed within a maximum period of 180 days
- (iv) Procedure for appointment of mediator and conduct of mediation
- (v) Functions of Mediation Service Providers and Mediation Institutes
- (vi) Mediated Settlement Agreement resulting from mediation being final, binding and enforceable in accordance with the provisions of Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, in the same manner as if it were a judgment or decree of a Court.
- (vii) Challenge to Mediated Settlement Agreement to lie on limited grounds of fraud, corruption, impersonation etc.
- (viii) Community mediation for reference of disputes with consent of parties which are likely to affect peace, harmony and tranquility amongst the residents or families of any area or locality.
- (ix) Provision of online mediation.
- (x) Establishment of the Mediation Council of India and power to make regulations *inter-alia* for conduct of mediation.

6.4.3 Keeping in view certain administrative and legal pre-conditions which are required to be fulfilled before all the provisions of the Act can be enforced, it was decided that the provisions of the Act may be brought into force in a phased manner. Accordingly, several provisions of the Act were brought into force *vide* gazette notification dated 09.10.2023.

6.4.4 Proposal for creation of 60 posts for Mediation Council of India under Department of Legal Affairs (DoLA) was sent to Department of Expenditure. DoE has approved the creation of 21 posts.

6.4.5 The following rules under the Mediation Act, 2023 have been notified in the Gazette of India on 13.06.2024:-

- i. The Mediation Council of India (Salary, Allowances and other Terms and Conditions of Service of Chairperson and Members) Rules, 2024;
- ii. The Mediation Council of India (Traveling and other Allowances for Part-time Chairperson and Part-time Members) Rules, 2024; and
- iii. The Mediation Council of India (Forms and Manner of Annual Statement of Accounts) Rules, 2024.

These Rules have been laid on the Table of the House in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha on 25.07.2024 and 26.07.2024 respectively.

6.5 The India International Arbitration Act, 2019:

6.5.1 The India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019 (earlier known as New Delhi International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019) was enacted in 2019 to provide for the establishment of the IAC as an institute of national importance for the purpose of creating an independent and autonomous regime for institutionalised arbitration and to develop India as a hub of arbitration.

6.5.2 The Act provides for the appointment of persons of repute and having knowledge and expertise in institutional arbitration as Chairperson and Members of the IAC.

6.5.3 The Centre was established on 13th June, 2022 and is envisaged to compete with leading arbitral institutes such as Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC), Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC), London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), Dubai International Arbitration Centre and so on.

6.5.4 During the period from January 2024 to December 2024, IAC has empanelled 21 persons on the IAC Panel of Arbitrators for International Arbitration and 113 on the IAC Panel of Arbitrators for Domestic Arbitration.

6.5.5 IAC administers arbitration as per the India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations, 2023. During the period from January 2024 to December 2024, the IAC has registered 03 (Three) arbitrations comprising of 01 (One) Domestic Arbitration matter and 02 (Two) International Arbitration matter. Further, IAC has registered 11 domestic arbitration matters upon receipt of a judgment, direction or order of Court referring the parties to the IAC for arbitration. In 01 ad-hoc arbitration matter, IAC has appointed Sole Arbitrator as per India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations, 2023.

6.5.6 In order to contribute to better dispute resolution for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE) ecosystem by promoting faster and more effective resolution of disputes, IAC has also notified the IAC (Conduct of Micro and Small Enterprises Arbitration) Regulations, 2024 for conduct of arbitration in the disputes referred under section 18 of the MSME Act, 2006.

6.5.7 During the year 2024-25, IAC has *inter-alia* conducted various conferences and has entered into several MoUs including one with the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (India), Government of India for establishment of India International Maritime Dispute Resolution Centre (IIMDRC) as a branch of IAC at Mumbai.

6.6 The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 and Arbitration Council of India:

6.6.1 The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 consolidates the law relating to domestic arbitration, international commercial arbitration, enforcement of foreign arbitral awards and conciliation. The Act is based on the Model Law adopted by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) in 1985.

6.6.2 To keep pace with current developments in the arbitration landscape and to enable arbitration as a viable dispute resolution mechanism, the Indian arbitration law has undergone significant changes in the years 2015, 2019 and 2021. The changes are enabled to signal a paradigm shift for ensuring timely conclusion of arbitration proceedings, minimizing judicial intervention in the arbitral process and enforcement of arbitral awards. The amendments are further aimed at promoting institutional arbitration, updating the law to reflect best global practices and resolve ambiguities thereby establishing an arbitration ecosystem where arbitral institutions can flourish.

6.6.3 Since 2019, many developments have taken place in the field of arbitration including judicial pronouncements, technological advancements relating to dispute resolution etc. Taking note of these developments, the Department is considering further amendments to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996.

6.6.4 Part I-A of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 provides for establishment of the Arbitration Council of India (Council) for the purpose of *inter-alia* framing policies governing the grading of arbitral institutions and recognizing professional institutes providing accreditation of arbitrators.

6.6.5 The establishment of the Council is aimed to minimize the roles of courts in arbitration matters, by providing that parties may approach arbitral institutions which are graded by the Council and designated by the Supreme Court and High Courts, as the case may be, for the purpose of appointment of arbitrators under section 11 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996.

6.6.6 With a view to expedite the establishment of the Council, the following Rules have been notified according to the provisions of the Amendment Act:

- i. The Arbitration Council of India (Terms and Conditions and the Salary and Allowances payable to Chairperson and Members) Rules, 2022.
- ii. The Arbitration Council of India (Qualifications, Appointment and other Terms and Conditions of the Service of Chief Executive Officer) Rules, 2022.
- iii. The Arbitration Council of India (Travelling and other Allowances Payable to Part-time Members) Rules, 2022.
- iv. The Arbitration Council of India (Number of Officers and other Employees, their qualifications, appointment and other Terms and Conditions) Rules, 2022.

Further, Section 10 of the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2019 which deals with various aspects of the Council have been brought into force *vide* notification dated 12.10.2023.

Presently, other steps for the establishment of Arbitration Council of India are underway.

6.7 The Commercial Courts Act, 2015:

6.7.1 Economic and commercial transactions backed by large investments promote a country's economic standing in the comity of nations. For commercial and economic activities to prosper, a legislative framework that encourage investors and promote business activities is a pre-requisite. Therefore, the Government has given high priority to frame business facilitating laws *inter-alia* with a view to make India one of the preferred destinations for investment and business. In this context, the Parliament enacted the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 which provides for establishment of Commercial Courts at district level, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division in the High Courts.

6.7.2 Carrying the agenda forward and to continue with the economic reforms in the country, the Central Government has taken several steps to boost the investment and business friendly atmosphere in the country and facilitate quick resolution of disputes with least interference of the courts. In this endeavour, the Commercial Courts, Act, 2015 was amended in 2018. The Amendments have facilitated the fast tracking of Commercial disputes by reducing the specified value of a commercial dispute to Rs. 3 lakhs from the earlier Rs. 1.00 Crore and establishment of Commercial Courts at District Judge level in the jurisdiction of High Courts enjoining Ordinary Original Civil Jurisdiction.

6.7.3 Also, to ease the load on the judicial system, mandatory "*Pre-Institution Mediation and Settlement*" (PIMS) mechanism has been introduced wherein plaintiff is required to undertake mediation before approaching the Court for settlement of dispute except where any urgent interim relief is contemplated. On failure to resolve dispute through PIMS mechanism, the claimant can approach the courts for resolution of their commercial dispute. The amended Act also provides for establishment of Commercial Appellate Court at District level and Commercial Court below District Judge level in such territories wherein the High Courts do not enjoy ordinary original civil jurisdiction.

6.7.4 The establishments of Commercial Courts in the Country have positively impacted the resolution of commercial disputes in a time bound manner.

6.7.5 The Department of Legal Affairs is also considering further amendments to the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, to keep pace with the requirements of having an efficacious commercial dispute resolution mechanism.

6.8 Signing of India-Singapore Memorandum of Understanding in the Sphere of Law and Dispute Resolution:

6.8.1 In March 2024, India and Singapore have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation between the two countries in the sphere of Law & Dispute Resolution. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in a virtual meeting of the Minister of State for Law and Justice (I/C), Government of India, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal for the Indian side and the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Law, Government of Singapore, Mr. Edwin Tong for the Singapore side. The signed MoU was subsequently exchanged between the two countries in the month of May, 2024

6.8.2 The MoU is aimed to further cooperation between the two countries in the areas of common interest such as international commercial dispute resolution and matters relating to promotion of robust alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in respective countries, etc.

6.8.3 The MoU *inter-alia* provides for the establishment of Joint Consultative Committee to oversee its implementation.

7. CYBER CELL

7.1 The Cyber Security Cell of the Department of Legal Affairs has been pivotal in safeguarding sensitive legal data and ensuring the integrity of digital infrastructure. Cyber Cell of the Department is responsible for a) Monitoring Cyber Security Status of the Department and b) Digital Initiatives/ Digital Projects of the Department.

7.2 Throughout the year, the cell has implemented various security measures and ensured the compliance of OM/DO letters issued by MeitY, CERT-In, NIC, etc. This Department has prepared Cyber Crisis Management Plan (CCMP) which serves as a methodical policy framework for the Department, particularly in crisis situation. Cyber Security Cell appoints Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) and Deputy CISO along with an expert team to oversee the plan's formulation and implementation.

7.3 The Cyber Cell has ensured the removal of administrative rights and installation of BIOS Password in all the systems of Shastri Bhawan, High Court, Lower Court and Notary. The Cyber Cell of the Department is responsible for fortnight updation of the website of Department of Legal Affairs on <https://guidelines.india.gov.in>. The Cyber Cell is also responsible for nominating suitable Officer/Officials for various training programs organized by MeitY.

7.4 The Cyber Cell has conducted Security Audits of important website and portal of the Department such as Notary Online Application Portal (NOAP) and LIMBS Portal marking a substantial progression, allowing citizens to apply for notarization online, aiming to shift the entire notarization process to a digital platform for easy access from home. The LIMBS Portal enables real-time case tracking and streamlines fee management of Law Officers, Panel Counsels, Advocates.

7.5 Replacement of outdated ICT devices, upgrade of network devices and the installation of security tools, replacement of all non-genuine software with licensed versions. Installation of UEM & EDR for all the new NIC connection established in Notary Cell. Cyber Cell ensured audits of entire ICT (Information and Communication Technology) devices including all systems, laptops, wifi-routers and network switches of the Department in line with MeitY's mandate.

7.6 Cyber Cell of the Department made sure the transition to a paperless office by digitalizing documents and processes which has enhanced transparency and expediting the decision-making workflow.

7.7 In addition, the Cyber Cell has focused on enhancing employee awareness through targeted cybersecurity training programs (Cyber Hygiene and Security on 29.10.2024), issuing

Cyber-bulletin to empower the staff with the knowledge to recognize and mitigate potential threats.

7.8 The proactive approach has helped the department align with national standards of data protection, ensuring both legal confidentiality and the security of digital assets. The continuous strengthening of security protocols remains a priority, as the department aims to uphold trust and transparency in its operations.

8. IMPLEMENTATION CELL

8.1 Administration of Statutes:

The Cell is concerned with the administration of the following Acts:

- i. The Advocates Act, 1961
- ii. The Advocates' Welfare Fund Act, 2001.
 - (i) **The Advocates Act, 1961:** The Bar Council of India is a statutory body established under section 4 of the Advocates Act, 1961 that regulates the legal practice and legal education in India. Its members are elected from amongst the lawyers in India and as such represents the Indian bar. It prescribes standards of professional conduct, etiquettes and exercises disciplinary jurisdiction over the bar. It also sets standards for legal education and grants recognition to universities whose degree in law will serve as a qualification for students to enrol themselves as advocates upon graduation. Rules framed by Bar Council of India under the Advocates Act, 1961 and The Advocates Welfare Fund Act, 2001 are available on the official website of the Bar Council of India i.e. www.barcouncilofindia.org.
 - (ii) **The Advocates' Welfare Fund Act, 2001:** Social security in the form of financial assistance to junior lawyers and welfare schemes for indigent or disabled advocates has always been a matter of concern for the legal fraternity. Certain States enacted their own legislation on the subject. The Parliament enacted "Advocates' Welfare Fund Act, 2001" applicable to the Union Territories and the States which do not have their own enactments enabling them to create "Advocates' Welfare Fund". This Act makes it compulsory for every advocate to affix stamps of the requisite value on every Vakalatnama filed in any Court, Tribunal or other Authority. Sums collected by way of sale of "Advocates' Welfare Fund Stamps" constitute an important source of the Fund. Any practicing Advocate may become member of the Fund on payment of an application fee and annual subscription. The Fund shall vest in and be held and applied by the Trustee Committee established by the appropriate Government. The Fund shall, *inter-alia*, be used for making ex-gratia grant to a member of the fund in case of a serious health problem, payment of a fixed amount on cessation of practice and in case of death of a member, to his nominee or legal heir, medical and educational facilities for the members and their dependents, purchase of books and for common facilities for advocates.

8.2 Law Commission Reports: The Implementation Cell is responsible for processing of reports of the Law Commission, laying them before the Parliament and forward reports to the concerned Ministries/Departments for their examination /implementation as well as pursue them for expeditious action. The Law Commission of India has submitted 1-287 & 289 reports and all the reports have been laid before both the Houses of the Parliament. Also, all the reports received till 19.03.2024 have been forwarded to the concerned Ministries/Departments for their examination/ implementation or further action at their end. The Implementation Cell, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievance, Law & Justice, since 2005 has been continuously laying Annual statement showing the status of pending Law Commission Reports before both the Houses of the Parliament. The last of such Statement (15th Statement) was laid on the Table of both the Houses of Parliament (in Lok Sabha on 01.04.2022 and Rajya Sabha on 31.03.2022). The Commission also makes its reports available through its website *i.e.* www.lawcommissionofindia.nic.in.

8.3 Legal Education- The cell is responsible for improvement in Legal education.

8.4 Court Cases- This Section also deals with court cases filed in various High Courts and Supreme Court that may relate to either of these two Central legislations or may relate to Bar Council of India or other miscellaneous issues raising legal and constitutional issues. This requires examination of court cases; preparation and transmission of para-wise comments, issuing of instructions to Counsels, filing of replies and processing of their fee bills. Between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, the section managed a total of 21 court cases.

8.5 Parliament Questions (PQs)- During the Parliament Session, this Cell has to deal with a good number of Parliament Questions (PQs) which is a time bound and time-consuming subject calling for utmost urgency along with Assurances. Between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, the section replied to a total of 19 Parliamentary questions and also fulfilled 6 pending assurances.

8.6 VIP References - This office has also received 14 VIP reference between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024, from President Office, PMO comments, MPs/MLAs/States VIPs reverences. These are considered to be on priority.

8.7 RTI Applications/ 1st Appeal / 2nd Appeal - 38 RTI Applications, 10-1st Appeals and 1-2nd Appeal were received in the section between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024. That again require an urgent attention and were disposed in time bound manner.

8.8 Public Grievances- There are also certain references made by public relating to Bar Council of India and State Bar Councils; complaints against Advocates, etc. and the same are attended to and appropriate action is taken after enquiring/consulting concerned authority. Representations from State Bar Councils, Bar Associations and advocates are also received in the Cell. A total of 124 PG in physical form and 96 on CPGRAMS Portal were addressed by the Section between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024.

8.9 Foreign Law Firm

8.10 India-UK (Barriers faced by UK legal Services firms in India-reg.)

8.11 India-USA TPF (Trade Policy Forum)

8.12 Miscellaneous work

8.13 Projection or Estimate.

The section is expected to handle approximately 5-6 court cases, 8-10 parliamentary questions, 3-4 VIP references, 10-15 RTI applications, and 30-40 public grievances for the period from January, 25-March, 25.

9. EVENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE

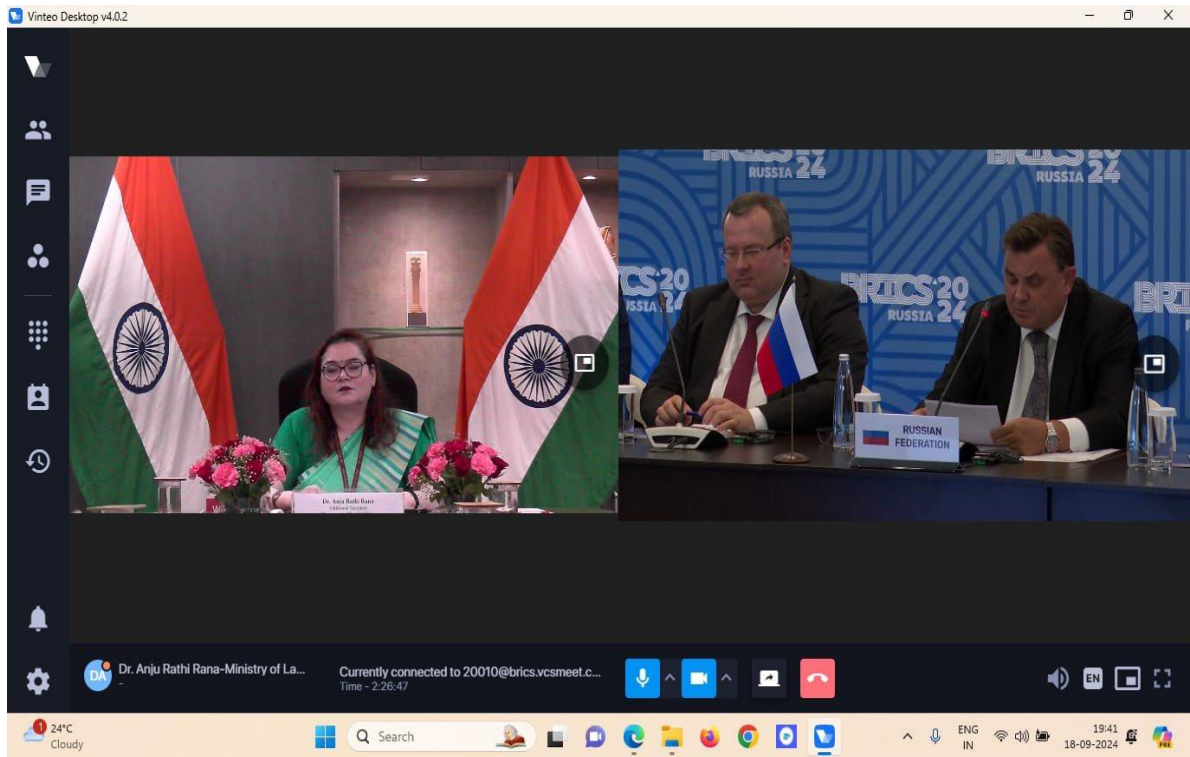
9.1 SOCIAL MEDIA CELL: Department of Legal Affairs has a dedicated social media Cell which is responsible for disseminating information and creating public awareness regarding the objectives and various activities of the Department through an effective outreach on different Social Media Platforms. **Some of the achievements of the social media Cell during the year are as below:**

9.2 Activities Conducted/ Coordinated by the Social Media Cell

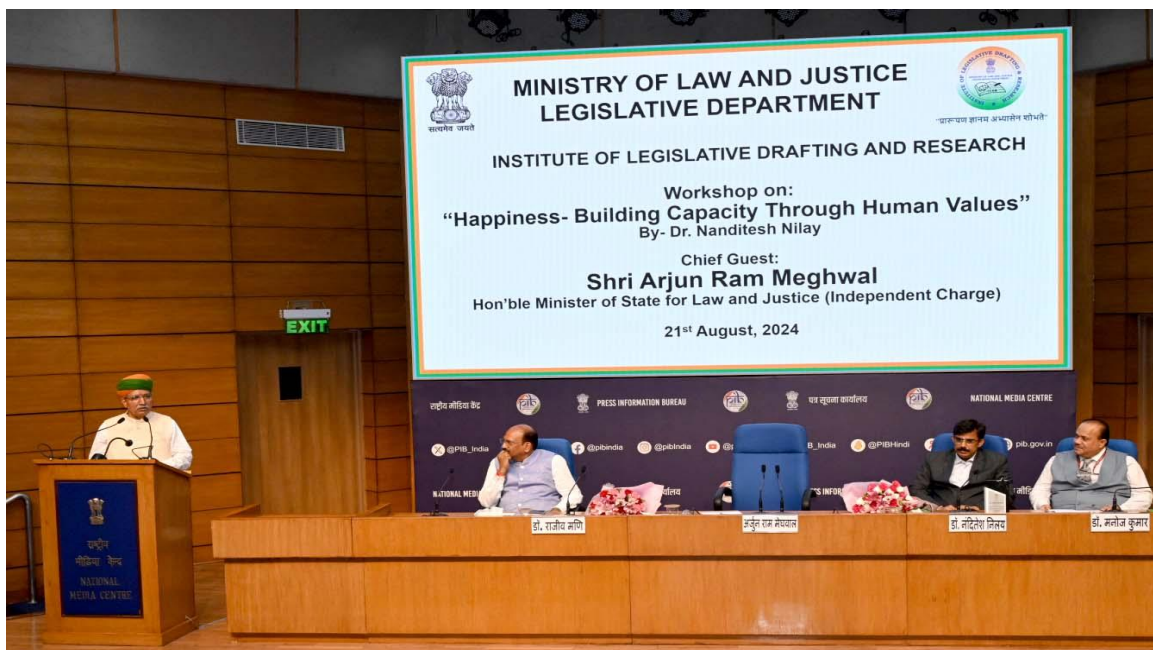
- i. Brahma Kumaris Session on Emotional Engineering | 5th January 2024
- ii. World Hindi Day | 10th January 2024
- iii. National Girl Child Day | 24th January 2024
- iv. National Voters' Day | 25th January 2024
- v. Republic Day | 26th January 2024
- vi. Brahma Kumaris Session on Enhancing Communication Skills | 2nd February 2024
- vii. Safer Internet Day | 6th February 2024
- viii. Awareness Workshop on POSH Act | 13th February 2024
- ix. Brahma Kumaris Session on Work Life Integration | 16th February 2024
- x. Capacity Building Workshop for Legal Advisors | 20th March 2024
- xi. Motivational Lecture cum Workshop on "Happiness: Building Capacity through Human Values"| 11th July 2024
- xii. Preparation of PIB reports and coverage of High level Committee on Simultaneous Elections
- xiii. Coverage of launching of New Notary Portal by Department of Legal Affairs| 03rd September 2024
- xiv. Coverage of the "BRICS Ministers of Justice Meeting" | 18th September 2024
- xv. Report on "A Comprehensive Review of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897"

- xvi. Preparation of PIB reports and coverage of Three Criminal Laws, - Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023
- xvii. Coverage of Launching Online Hindi course on the Constitution of India|
26th November 2024
- xviii. Coverage of Yoga and Meditation Sessions on the occasion of 10th International Yoga Day
- xix. Organizing the Three-days Heartfulness Meditation Workshop on 07.08.2024, 08.08.2024 and 09.08.2024
- xx. Coverage of Pledge taking ceremony on occasion of “Rashtriya Ekta Diwas” (National Unity Day) on 30th October 2024
- xxi. Raising cybersecurity awareness through social media platforms with quizzes and posts. Coverage of cybersecurity workshops within the department.
- xxii. Celebration of Constitution Day on 26.11.2024
- xxiii. Coverage of World Meditation Day on 20.12.2024
- xxiv. Coverage of the occasion on the exchange of the Instrument of Ratification/Notification for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Legal Cooperation between the Republic of India and Kingdom of Morocco on 16.01.2025.
- xxv. Comprehensive media coverage, including the publication of the PIB report on Jan Seva programs under the "Serving the Karmayogi Way" initiative.

9.3 Photograph of Important Events



“BRICS Ministers of Justice Meeting” on 18th September 2024



“Happiness: Building Capacity through Human Values” | 11th July 2024



विधि कार्य विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF
LEGAL AFFAIRS

A True Experience of Inner Peace and Well-being

Tranquil Meditation Session under the guidance of Heartfulness Society



21st June 2024

[@MLJ_Goi](#) [MLJ.GovIndia](#) [@mlj_Goi](#) [law-and-justice-ministry-india](#) [@mlj_Goi](#)

Three-days Heartfulness Meditation Workshop



MoU on Legal Cooperation between Republic of India and Kingdom of Morocco
on 16.01.2025



Workshop on Cyber Hygiene and Cyber Security



Constitution Day Celebration



Three New Criminal Laws Reforms

10. TRAINING DIVISION

10.1 Introduction: In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving professional environment, organizations are constantly challenged to stay ahead of the curve by embracing new technologies, methodologies, and market trends. One of the most important factors that contribute to the continued growth and success of any department is the establishment of a dedicated training section. Understanding the critical role that training and capacity building play in this process, the department established the Training Division in 2022. This division was entrusted with the vital responsibility of developing a robust framework for providing comprehensive training to ILS Officers and other Officers/Officials within the department.

10.2 Approved Training Plans: Further specialized training plans are developed by AS, Training Division for holistic development of Human Resources including:

- i. Training Plan for ILS Officers
- ii. Training Plan for feeder Cadre {Superintendent and Assistant (Legal)}
- iii. Training Plan for Young Professionals
- iv. Training Plan for Law Interns
- v. Training plan for SOs/ASOs
- vi. Specialized Training on Law of Seas

10.3 Activities Conducted during the F.Y. 2024-25 for Capacity Building

10.3.1 Conferences on three new criminal laws

The Training Division under the Department of Legal Affairs organized five major conferences aimed at disseminating the provisions of three new criminal laws namely **The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**, the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**, and the **Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023**. The conferences were held in different regions of India, attracting over 10,000 delegates, including top legal professionals, policymakers, government officers, and stakeholders from a wide spectrum of sectors. The conferences were held in the following cities:

- i. **New Delhi (20th April 2024)**
- ii. **Guwahati, Assam (18th-19th May 2024)**
- iii. **Kolkata, West Bengal (16th June 2024)**
- iv. **Chennai, Tamil Nadu (23rd June 2024)**
- v. **Mumbai, Maharashtra (30th June 2024)**

These conferences witnessed the presence of luminaries, legal practitioners, judicial officers, public prosecutors, police officers, law enforcement agencies, Defence & CAPF personnel, academicians, and other stakeholders from across all states of India. The events were marked by enriching discussions, knowledge sharing, and the active participation of government representatives and top legal experts.

The success of these conferences highlights the Training Division's commitment to promote legal education, awareness, and professional development. By engaging a wide range of professionals from various sectors, these events have contributed significantly to the understanding of the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**, the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**, and the **Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023**, and their implications. These conferences have played a crucial role in strengthening India's legal framework and fostering collaboration among legal professionals, thus contributing to a more informed and cohesive legal community across the country.

10.3.2 Launch of Online Course (Hindi version) on the Indian Constitution on the website of the Department on the occasion of Constitution Day, 2024.

The Training Division successfully launched an online course on the **Indian Constitution** on the official website of the Department of Legal Affairs on the occasion of **Constitution Day, 2024**. The course, also available in Hindi, aims to enhance legal literacy and awareness of the Constitution among wide audience across India.

The Hindi version of the course was designed to make the fundamental principles of the Indian Constitution more accessible to a larger demographic, particularly those in Hindi-speaking regions. The course covers essential topics such as the structure of the Indian government, fundamental rights, duties of citizens, and key amendments to the Constitution.

This online initiative was launched to mark **Constitution Day**, a day dedicated to recognizing the importance of the Constitution in shaping India's democracy. The launch was met with

positive feedback, especially from participants who appreciated the course's clarity, depth, and accessibility, making constitutional knowledge available to a broad audience.

10.3.3 Workshop on Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH)

One of the pivotal sessions focused on the **Prevention of Sexual Harassment** was organised on 13.02.2024, where participants were educated on the legal frameworks, policies, and best practices aimed at fostering a safe and respectful work environment. The workshop delved into the provisions of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act, 2013, and emphasized the importance of effective grievance mechanisms, awareness-building, and the creation of a zero-tolerance culture towards harassment. The session provided valuable insights on how government institutions can better address and prevent sexual harassment, ensuring a safer workplace for all employees.

10.3.4 Capacity-Building Workshops-to develop legal Competencies

Capacity Building session conducted by **Shri Suresh Chandra** on **20.03.2024**, the former Law Secretary, who shared his extensive knowledge and expertise in administrative law and governance. His workshop provided participants with a deep understanding of the intricacies of legal frameworks that guide administrative decisions, with a focus on enhancing the efficiency and transparency of government operations. Shri Chandra's experience allowed participants to gain a better grasp of the challenges involved in public administration and the critical role that law plays in shaping sound governance practices.

In addition, the Training Division hosted a session on **Administrative Reforms** led by

Prof. Alka Chawla on **07.05.2024**, an expert in the field of public policy and administration. Prof. Chawla's workshop provided an in-depth analysis of the evolving landscape of administrative reforms, discussing both the theoretical and practical aspects of improving government service delivery. Participants were exposed to strategies for enhancing the performance and accountability of public institutions, and the session highlighted the significance of reforming administrative structures to meet contemporary challenges. Through case studies and practical examples, Prof. Chawla inspired participants to think critically about the ongoing need for reform and how to contribute to transformative change within government systems.

Furthermore, the Training Division hosted a series of workshops focused on **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)** mechanisms on **26.09.2024**, specifically in the context of **International Law and Cross-Border Disputes**. These workshops were designed to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and tools to navigate the complexities of resolving disputes that involve parties from multiple jurisdictions. The workshop was led by prominent expert in international law, who provided valuable insights into the global legal landscape and the various ADR methods used in cross-border disputes, such as arbitration and mediation. The

sessions highlighted the importance of effective dispute resolution strategies in international relations and trade.

Together, these workshops equipped officials with the tools, knowledge, and practical insights required to address crucial issues such as sexual harassment prevention, legal governance, administrative reforms, and international dispute resolution. By bringing together experienced experts in these fields, the Training Division continues to contribute to the professional development of civil servants, preparing them to navigate the complexities of modern governance and legal challenges.

10.3.5 "Rashtriya Karmayogi - Large Scale Jan Seva Program"

The Training Division successfully conducted training program under the "**Rashtriya Karmayogi - Large Scale Jan Seva Program**" for the 1st and 2nd batches of its officers on 24th and 30th January 2025 at CSOI, K.G. Marg, New Delhi. The program, held from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM, aimed at instilling a sense of "Seva-Bhav" (service-oriented mindset) among the officers. These batches were led by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, whose guidance and leadership played a pivotal role in shaping the program's objectives. Through this initiative, the division sought to enhance the officers' commitment to public service and foster a deeper understanding of their roles in serving the community with dedication and integrity.

10.3.6 Workshops on Behavioural Subjects

The Training Division also focused on enhancing the soft skills and behavioral competencies of the employees of the Department of Legal Affairs. A series of workshops on various behavioral subjects were conducted to help staff build stronger interpersonal relationships, improve communication skills, and foster emotional intelligence in the workplace.

One key workshop, **Stress Management on Work-Life Integration**, provided participants with practical tools and strategies to effectively balance professional responsibilities with personal life. The session focused on setting boundaries, prioritizing tasks, and managing time efficiently, helping attendees find harmony in their busy schedules. Similarly, the **Stress Management Workshop on Enhancing Communication Skills Part-I and Part-II** offered valuable techniques for improving both verbal and non-verbal communication. Part-I focused on the fundamentals of communication, while Part-II explored advanced techniques to enhance persuasive communication and active listening, vital skills for effective workplace interactions.

Another significant workshop in the series was **Stress Management on Emotional Engineering**, which focused on understanding and managing emotions in high-pressure situations. Participants learned how to regulate emotional responses, improve emotional intelligence, and cultivate resilience in challenging work environments. Additionally, the **Workshop on Behavioral Aspects - "Destiny in Our Hands"** encouraged participants to take

control of their personal and professional futures by developing a positive mindset, setting clear goals, and taking proactive steps toward success.

The **Workshop on - "Striking the Work-Life Balance"** was aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of how to manage stress and maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life. It offered practical tips for reducing burnout and maintaining physical and mental well-being.

Another impactful session, **"Enhancing Decision Making Skills"**, helped participants sharpen their decision-making abilities, equipping them with techniques to make informed, effective, and timely decisions in both personal and professional contexts.

The **Workshop on - "Effective Communication"** helped participants understand the importance of clear, concise, and respectful communication, particularly in complex administrative settings. It provided valuable insights on improving communication styles to build trust and collaboration. Similarly, the **"Building Interpersonal Relationships"** workshop focused on enhancing participants' ability to form meaningful relationships at work, promoting a more cooperative and productive environment.

On a more holistic note, the **Heartfulness Workshop on the Occasion of World Meditation Day** provided attendees with the opportunity to engage in mindfulness and meditation practices, helping them manage stress, increase focus, and enhance overall well-being. The **Workshop on Behavioral Aspects - "Mind the Mind"** delved into mental health and the impact of thoughts on stress levels, teaching participants how to cultivate a healthier mindset and cope with daily stressors.

The details of the workshops organized by the Training Division:

Sl. No.	Workshop	Date	Details
1.	Workshop on Emotional Engineering	05.01.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
2.	Workshop on Enhancing Communication Skills Part-I	19.01.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
3.	Workshop on Enhancing Communication Skills Part-II	02.02.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
4.	Workshop on Work-Life Integration	16.02.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
5.	Workshop on Mental Empowerment	01.03.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs

6.	Workshop on Behavioural aspects- “Destiny in Our Hands”	08.08.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
7.	Workshop on Behavioural aspects- “Striking the Work-Life Balance”	11.09.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
8.	Workshop on Behavioural aspects- “Enhancing Decision Making Skills”	10.10.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
9.	Workshop on Behavioural aspects- “Effective Communication”	13.11.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
10.	Workshop on Behavioural aspects- “Building Interpersonal Relationships”	05.12.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
11.	Heartfulness Workshop on the Occasion of World Meditation Day	20.12.2024	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs
12.	Workshop on Behavioural aspects- "Mind The Mind"	08.01.2025	For All Employees of Department of Legal Affairs



Pic 1: Capacity Building Workshop on “The Role of ADR in International Law and Cross-Border Disputes”



Pic 2: Workshop on Behavioural aspects- “Effective Communication”



Pic 3: Workshop on Behavioural aspects- “Effective Communication”



Pic : 4: Workshop on Behavioural aspects- "Mind The Mind"



Pic 5: Workshop on Behavioural aspects- "Mind The Mind"



Pic 6: Workshop on Behavioural aspects- "Mind The Mind"



Pic 7: Training program under "Rashtriya Karmayogi-Large Scale Jan Seva Program"



Pic 8: Training program under "Rashtriya Karmayogi-Large Scale Jan Seva Program"

11. HINDI SECTION

11.1 Progressive use of Hindi in Official work in the Department of Legal Affairs

The Department of Legal Affairs has taken following steps to implement various instructions issued by the Department of Official Language on the progressive use of Hindi for official purposes of the Union as contained in the Official Languages Act, 1963 and the Official Languages (Use for Official Purposes of the Union) Rules 1976 :-

(a) Notification under the Rule 10(4) of the Official Languages (Use for Official Purposes of the Union) Rules 1976 :

This Department was notified under Rule 10(4) of the Official Languages Rules, 1976 on 21-3-1980. All officers and employees proficient in Hindi submit drafts etc. of all communications addressed to State Governments/Union Territories and to private individuals and also to Central Government offices located in Regions "A" and "B" and of communications in reply to letters etc., received in Hindi or signed in Hindi, including appeals, representations, etc., (from the employees) only in Hindi.

(b) Steps taken for implementation of orders relating to the Official Language and progressive use of Hindi:

(1) Orders for individuals under rule 8(4):

Under the provisions of Official Language (Use for official purpose of the Union) rule 8(4) of rule, 1976 (As amended 1987) latest orders in the name of officers/employees who are proficient in Hindi were issued on 29.05.2024 to do their complete official work in Hindi.

(2) **Check Points:**

A review of the check points for implementation of orders relating to the Official Language was made and orders for creation of adequate number of check points in accordance with Rule 12 of the Official Languages Rules, 1976 were issued on 13.12.2023. The effectiveness of check points is being regularly monitored through the quarterly progress reports received from sections/offices.

(3) In Sections / Units where the staff are proficient in Hindi, the use of Hindi in their day to day work is being encouraged. Work relating to grant of various types of leave is being done in Hindi. Almost all cases relating to House Building Advances, GPF Advances and Withdrawals etc. are also being processed in Hindi and orders are also being issued in Hindi.

(4) All general orders, notifications, resolutions and administrative reports etc. are invariably issued in bilingual form. All letters received in Hindi are invariably replied to in Hindi only. It is strictly ensured that there is no violation of the relevant rules in this regard. English to Hindi dictionaries have been provided to all sections of the Department for encouraging the use of Hindi in day to day official work.

(5) Hindi specimen of standard draft of all letters being used frequently by various sections have been provided. All standard forms have been prepared in Hindi and English so that employees can use them without facing any difficulty. All forms used in the Department have also been translated into Hindi. Entries in service books are also being made in Hindi. All rubber stamps, name plates, sign boards etc., are invariably prepared in bilingual form.

(6) All computers in the Department are bilingual. Facility to work in Hindi is available on the computers provided to the officers and sections of the Department.

(7) **Hindi Teaching Scheme:**

A time bound programme has been prepared for imparting Hindi/ Hindi Stenography/ Hindi Typing Training to the employees of the Department and its

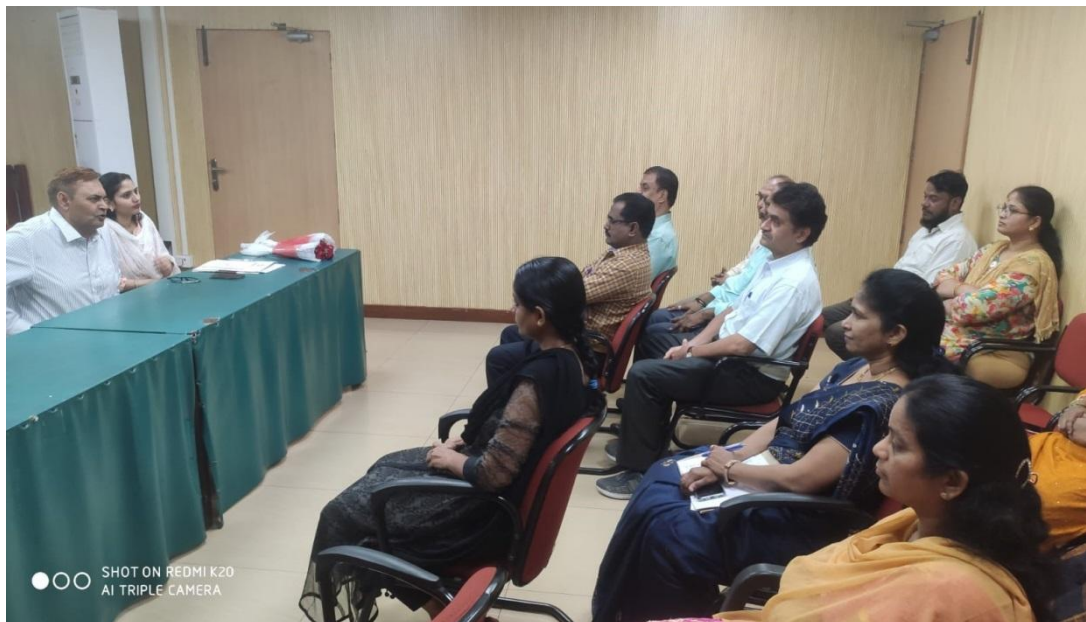
offices under the Hindi Teaching Scheme. Employees are awarded personal pay/ Advance increments/ Cash Awards, etc., as per the instructions of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Official Language. Currently one official of the department is taking training under the scheme.

(8) **OLIC Meetings:**

The meetings of Official Language Implementation Committee of the Department are held regularly. Joint Secretary (Rajbhasha Adhikari) of the Department is the Chairman of this Committee and Director (Admn.), all Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries and all Section Incharges and Branch Officers are members of this Committee whereas Assistant Director (O.L.) is the Member Secretary. In these meetings, compliance status of Quarterly progressive report and implementation of orders related to Official Language are reviewed. Minutes of the meetings are circulated to all concerned for follow-up action.

(9) **Hindi Workshop:**

In compliance of the official language policy of the union and instructions issued by Deptt. Of Official Language, MHA with the objective of removing the difficulties being faced by the employees of ITAT Hyderabad Bench, and ITAT, Mumbai Headquarter in their day to day official work in Hindi, Hindi workshops were organized on 26.06.2024 and 13.11.2024 respectively. Lecture/Training was given in these workshops to officers/Assistants/UDCs and Court Clerks by Shri Shamsher Singh Asst. Director (OL) Deptt. Of Legal Affairs.



ITAT, Hyderabad Bench



ITAT, Mumbai Headquarter

A Hindi Workshop was also organized on 04.09.2024 in the Deptt. Of Legal Affairs, Shastri Bhawan. A talk was given by Shri Shamsheer Singh, Asst. Director, Deptt. Of Legal Affairs to employees of Deptt. Of Legal Affairs.



Deptt. Of Legal Affairs, Shastri Bhawan

(10) **Official Language Inspection:**

In consonance with the provisions made in the Annual Programme of Deptt. Of Official Language, MHA an inspection regarding review of the progress made in use of Hindi in Official work of ITAT, Hyderabad Bench and ITAT, Mumbai Headquarter was carried out on 25.06.2024 and 12.11.2024 respectively by Shri Shamsheer Singh, Assistant Director (OL), and Ms. Khushboo Nidhi, Jr. Translation Officer, Deptt. Of Legal Affairs.

An Official Language Inspection was carried out in Cash Section and P.G. Cell, on 24.09.2024 by Officials of Official Language Unit, Deptt. Of Legal Affairs.

(11) **Organisation of Hindi Day/Hindi Fortnight:**

With a view to accelerate the use of Official Language and to increase the awareness among the employees as regards to the Official Language policy and the various incentive schemes for using Hindi in official work, Hindi Diwas (Day) was celebrated in the Department on 14.09.2024. Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law and Justice and Law Secretary in their messages appealed to the officers and employees of the Department to adopt Hindi in their day-to-day official work. Message received from Hon'ble Home Minister on the eve of 'Hindi Day' was also circulated in the Department and its offices. In order to make the various programmes organised in this connection effective, The 'Hindi Pakhwada' (Fortnight) was organised in the Department from 14.09.2024 to 29.09.2024. This was done with the objective of giving wider publicity to the various schemes and generating maximum output in terms of work done in Hindi. This year, during the 'Hindi Pakhwada', 5 competitions viz., 'Hindi Essay Competition', 'Hindi Typing Competition', 'Translation Competition' and 'Hindi Noting and Drafting Competition', 'Hindi Dictation' (for group 'C', employees) were organised in the Department. Nearly 94 officers/employees participated in these competitions. Out of these 67 successful participants were awarded cash prizes. 'Hindi Diwas (Day)' was also celebrated in the Branch Secretariats of the Department and Benches of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal at various places in the Country. Various competitions were organised on this occasion and successful participants were awarded cash prizes.



Hindi Pakhwada Competition

12. LIMBS (Legal Information and Management Briefing System)

12.1 The Legal Information Management and Briefing System (LIMBS) is a web-based application for monitoring of all court cases where Union of India is a party. LIMBS came into operation in February 2016 and since then, the application is working under the supervision of the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice. It is an innovative and easy to access online tool which is available 24x7 to all the stakeholders, viz., senior Government officers/officials, nodal officers and users of Ministries/Departments.

12.2 LIMBS Version 2.0 is an upgraded version of LIMBS and was launched in the year 2020 in collaboration with NIC. It is a dashboard-based system for the user Ministries/Departments on which they can monitor their cases at a glance. This version uses Open-Source technologies using Coordinator framework of PHP to enhance the security and improve the efficiency of the system.

12.3 Leaning towards a more automated system and to minimize the manual data entry process, efforts are being made to integrate LIMBS with various Courts and Tribunal data bases through APIs for seamless data transfer and real time update. In this regard, Department of Legal Affairs in cooperation with NIC have successfully integrated LIMBS with the following Courts and Tribunals:

Court/ Tribunals integrated with LIMBS via API i.e.

1. Supreme Court
2. High Courts
3. District & Session Courts

Tribunals:

1. Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT)
2. Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT)
3. Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL)
4. Customs Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal (CESTAT)
5. Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)
6. National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)
7. National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)
8. National Green Tribunal (NGT)
9. Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT)

12.4 LIMBS has been effectively deployed across all Ministries, including their respective departments, sub-departments, attached offices, and autonomous organizations within the Government of India. During the current annual period (from January 1 to December 31, 2024), a total of 199,866 court cases from various Ministries have been recorded in LIMBS, supported by a robust network of over 7,280 panel advocates who contribute firsthand information regarding these cases. The system is continuously updated and enhanced in response to user feedback and the introduction of new and emerging technologies.

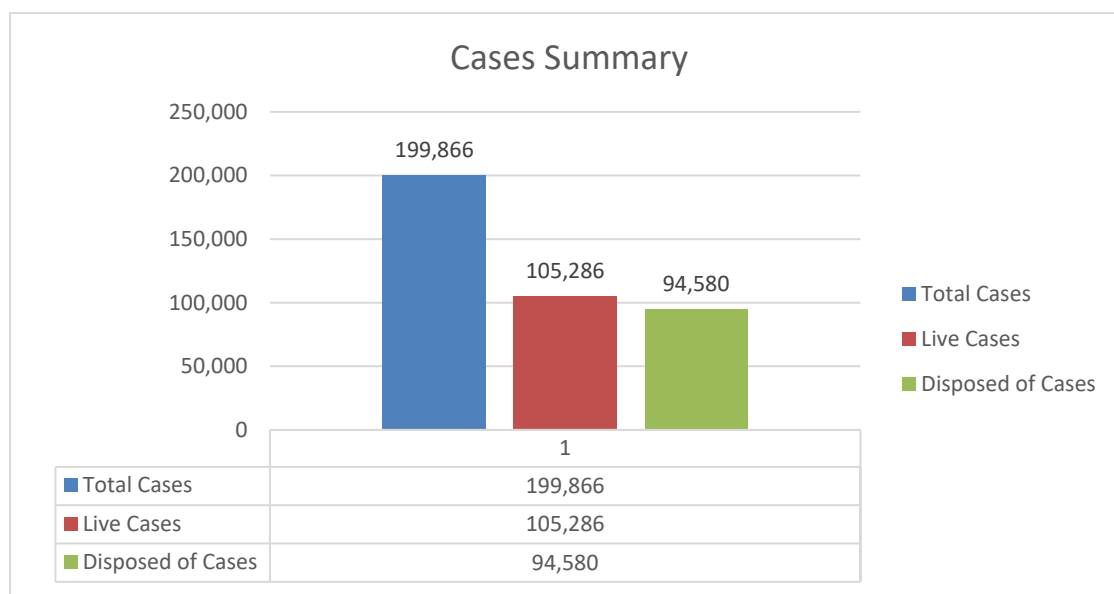


Figure 1: Outreach of LIMBS Portal (1st Jan – 31st Dec 2024)

12.5 Main Features of LIMBS

LIMBS is equipped with advanced data analytics capabilities. These features support the monitoring of cases and the uploading of fee bills by law officers, Central Government panel counsels, and advocates. The key features of LIMBS include:

- (i) **My court cases:** Users have the ability to input new cases *via* the ‘New Entry’ tab on the dashboard. They can update the most recent hearing dates and upload pertinent documents for a case through the ‘Compliance Entry’ section. Additionally, users may edit or input basic case details like the CNR number, advocate names, mobile numbers, and a brief history.
- (ii) **Updation:** Users have the ability to modify the last date of hearing, update the CNR number in instances where it has not been refreshed during a new entry, facilitate the automatic updating of case status for multiple cases, and make updates to exception cases as well as tribunal cases.
- (iii) **Important Cases** – A Nodal Officer has the facility to mark cases as ‘Important’ after getting approval from the concerned Secretary. Users can also view important cases of concerned Ministry/Department under Important Cases tab on the dashboard.
- (iv) **MIS Reports:** Users have the ability to access various statistical and summary reports, including summaries categorized by case status, case type, financial implications, court details, resolved cases, total arbitration cases, total bills raised, a comprehensive list of nodal officers, and a complete user list, among others. Management Information System (MIS) reports allow users to examine the litigation status of the relevant Ministry, which includes the total number of cases recorded, cases that are currently pending, cases that have been resolved, cases awaiting compliance, significant cases, contempt cases, the top ten cases categorized by counsel, and pending cases organized by subject matter.
- (v) **Advanced Search:** Through this powerful utility, users can search court cases through various fields - Ministry/Department, court details, case category, financial implication, case status, party name, advocate, system date, case date, next date of hearing/judgment date and brief history.
- (vi) **Nodal Officers and Local Admins** can activate newly registered users of concerned Ministry/ Departments/Autonomous organizations/ CPSEs, etc. They can change the profile of users who have retired or transferred and can delete wrongly entered or duplicate cases.
- (vii) **Add Progress:** Users can add day to day progress of the cases and display its details on the web page.
- (viii) **Transfer of Cases:** Users of one Ministry/Department can transfer cases to other users of same Ministry/Department or to nodal officers of other Ministries.
- (ix) **Arbitration Cases:** Users can enter details using ‘Case Entry’ tab and can view entered cases using the list under ‘Arbitration’ tab.

- (x) **AMRCD/AMRD Module:** It has a separate domain to enter and monitor cases pertaining to Administrative Mechanism for Resolution of Commercial Disputes AMRCD and AMRD. Reports can also be generated under the 'MIS Report' tab.
- (xi) **FAB Module** -FAB Module (Form for Appearance Bill) enables law officers to raise bills online. This digital initiative not only saves time but also helps the smooth processing of the bills.
- (xii) **Advocate Login:** Presently, advocates can log into their accounts and can enter new cases. Advocates can update the last hearing dates, next hearing dates, transfer cases by marking the status 'This is not my case' to the concerned user, send message to respective user who is dealing with the case and raise a bill online.
- (xiii) **Raised Bill:** Users can view the bills uploaded by the Advocate on concerned cases and generate sanction order copy also.
- (xiv) **Advice Module/ (SLP):** SLP module has been developed to capture timelines of physical process to curb delays in timely filing of SLPs/Appeals.
- (xv) **Exception Cases:** The exception cases are those cases containing exceptions/errors related to courts, advocate details, case category, case status, financial implication, case date and last date of hearing. To update the exceptions/errors, a sub-module was also developed.

12.6 Upgradation of Limbs

- i) **LIMBS Homepage:** LIMBS homepage has been transformed to showcase live statistics from the LIMBS portal. The design will feature a modern, user- friendly layout with dynamic visuals that effortlessly direct users to important features and motivate engagement with strategically positioned calls to action.
- ii) **LIMBS administrator profile:** Now, the LIMBS portal has a provision to add Vendor code against panel advocates.
- iii) **Training Materials:** LIMBS is currently developing an online training module in collaboration with CBC for the i-got platform.
- iv) **Linking with Public Financial Management System (PFMS) Portal** will enable advocates to submit their bills through the LIMBS portal, while also allowing for the tracking of payment details through the integration with the PFMS portal.
- v) **DGQI Guidelines:** LIMBS data is being updated by the guidelines given on the Data Governance Quality Index (DGQI) portal by Niti Ayog.
- vi) **Email Functionality:** The LIMBS platform features an email tool that enables the Ministry/Department Secretary to send notification regarding upcoming hearings for relevant cases.
- vii) The LIMBS portal has implemented a new feature that allows users to change their passwords every three months.

- viii) The automatic updating functionality for High Court cases within the LIMBS system now facilitates the daily recording of case stages, next hearing dates, last hearing dates, and order details, utilizing the CNR number while the user is logged into the LIMBS portal.
- ix) Integration of LIMBS with the Supreme Court allows users to retrieve case details and orders by entering the Diary Number with year on the new entry page of the LIMBS portal.
- x) **New Financial Implication:** The LIMBS portal allows users to select financial slabs on the new entry page to record the actual amount involved in the cases.
- xi) LIMBS portal design has been updated to enhance user experience, functionality, and accessibility. This update offers a valuable and user-friendly platform for accessing court case information.
- xii) The LIMBS portal provides user-friendly step-by-step instruction and demonstration *via* screenshots, along with interactive video tutorials to enhance the user experience.
- xiii) The LIMBS FAQs have been updated to address the most common questions and problems users face on the LIMBS platform. These FAQs help user quickly find answers to their queries and make effective use of the LIMBS platform.
- xiv) To enhance the monitoring of court cases, the following new reports have been added under the MIS reports tab:
 - Periodic Report with updated field
 - SQL Report (CBDT PCIT wise)
 - Panel Advocate-wise report
 - Ministry Wise User Progress Report
 - Sub-Category report on case type of cases
 - Contempt/NDOH Report

12.7 New onboarded Ministry/Departments on LIMBS

- (i) NCB: Narcotics Control Bureau under M/o Home Affairs
- (ii) NIA: National Investigation Agency under M/o Home Affairs
- (iii) CIC: Central Information Commission under M/o Home Affairs
- (iv) CRCS: Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies
- (v) FSSAI: Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
- (vi) TRAI: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.

12.8 Impact of Limbs

- (i) LIMBS is a timely initiative that acts as a catalyst for enhancing the monitoring of court cases from the viewpoint of the Ministries and Departments of the Union of India. By integrating with the e-Courts application, it offers a holistic solution for the efficient management of litigation involving the Union of India. LIMBS establishes a centralized database, standardized templates, and a uniform nomenclature to eliminate confusion and ambiguity in the handling of court cases. The provision of SMS alerts to advocates, users, and relevant officials facilitates vigilant case management and real-time updates. Furthermore, Management Information System (MIS) reports have significantly improved the operations of legal cells across various Ministries and Departments.
- (ii) LIMBS has thus revolutionized the litigation monitoring system of the Union of India by introducing accountability, ownership, cohesiveness among the users across the Ministries and improving transparency by entering the necessary information on this web application.
- (iii) LIMBS offers affordable web technology access to all the stakeholders in the Union of India involved in a court case, coordinating inputs that are seamlessly available 24/7 according to predefined access rules. This enables continuous monitoring of a case's various stages through a comprehensive suite of user-friendly reports.
- (iv) LIMBS aims to reduce financial burden, conserve time and bring efficiency in the working of various Departments of a Ministry. It fosters transparency and instils a sense of responsibility among all stakeholders throughout the duration of a court case.

12.9 Training/ Meeting conducting by LIMBS Team

The LIMBS team conducted more than **143 training and meeting sessions**, utilizing both online and offline formats. These sessions engaged officers and officials from various Ministries and Departments, including the **Ministry of Finance (Revenue CBDT), Ministry of Home Affairs (NIA), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Department of Space, Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Education (NIOS), Ministry of Communications (NICF), and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)**, among others, to ensure the effective dissemination of its features.



Figure 2: Training at CBI, HO New Delhi

13. RTI CELL

13.1 Under the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005 the RTI Cell acts as a nodal agency for RTI matters. The RTI Cell receives and thereafter forwards the RTI application to the concerned Central Public Information Officers/Public Authorities. It also coordinates follow-up action on appeals/orders received from the Central Information Commission. The RTI Cell is also responsible for timely submission of quarterly return on RTI applications/Appeals to the CIC. The RTI Applications/Appeals received online on RTI Web Portal are also being forwarded online to the concerned CPIO/Public Authority and Appellate Authority.

13.2 Department of Legal Affairs has presently 20 CPIOs at the level of Under Secretary and 10 First Appellate Authorities at level of Additional Secretary & Joint Secretary and equivalent Officers.

13.3 The details of the RTI Applications/Appeals received from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024 in Department of Legal Affairs. are as follows:—

Sl. No.	RTI Matters	01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024
1	RTI Request	4068
2.	RTI First Appeals	183
3.	Second Appeals	22
4.	Expected RTI requests	300-350

PROACTIVE DISCLOSURES under Section 4 (1) of the RTI Act, 2005.

13.4 In accordance with the Department of Personnel and Training's Office Memorandum No. 1/06/2011-IR, dated 15th April 2013, it is stipulated that each Ministry/Public Authority must have its Proactive Disclosure package audited by a third party on an annual basis and subsequently report the findings to the Hon'ble Central Information Commission (CIC) through publication on their respective websites.

13.5 The Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) has been designated to conduct the third-party audit of the proactive disclosures on the website of the Department of Legal Affairs for the Financial Year 2023-24. The audit was conducted online using the software developed by the Hon'ble Central Information Commission.

13.6 The primary focus of the audit was on the uploading of the Citizen Charter for this Department. The necessary follow-up actions to address the audit's findings and recommendations are currently underway.

13.7 The Hon'ble CIC has reviewed the comments provided by the IIPA and has directed that all areas where requirements were either partially met or not met at all must be duly addressed, unless the Public Authority has classified certain categories as "Not Applicable."

14. LIBRARY AND RESEARCH SECTION

14.1 The Library and Research Section is a specialized research oriented Section, which looks after and caters to the requirements of Law Books/Journals/Online Legal Services and other research materials for the Ministry of Law & Justice. The Section provides references and legal research services to the Hon'ble Minister of Law and Justice, Law officers and ILS officers of Department of Legal Affairs and Legislative Department.

The officials of other departments and ministries of the Government of India, including the Department of Justice and Law Commission of India can also visit the library for referring to the available resources.

14.2 During the period 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024, the Section acquired 663 books and 328 Bare Acts for the users of Department of Legal Affairs and Legislative Department. Further, the Section subscribed to 7 types of Indian Law Journals, 20 newspapers and 25 periodicals.

14.3 The Section has enhanced its pool of E-Research resources thereby enabling larger number of users to access digital information and research material.

14.4 The Library and Research Section has subscribed to/renewed the following Online Services for retrieval of Case Laws, Judgments and Articles etc. for the use of officers of Ministry of Law and Justice:

- i. Manupatra Online Services
- ii. SCC online Services (up to 15.11.2024)
- iii. JusMundi Online services

15. LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA

The 23rd Law Commission of India has been constituted for a period of 3 years w.e.f. 01.09.2024 *vide* notification dated 02.09.2024. The terms of reference of the 23rd Law Commission of India is given as under:—

- To Review/Repeal of obsolete laws;
- To examine laws which affect the poor and all such measures as may be necessary to harness law and the legal process in the service of the poor;
- To keep under review the system of judicial administration to ensure that it is responsive to the reasonable demands of the times;
- To examine the existing laws in the light of Directive Principles of State Policy and to suggest ways of improvement and reform and also to suggest such legislations as might be necessary to implement the Directive Principles and to attain the objectives set out in the Preamble of the Constitution;
- To examine the existing laws with a view for promoting gender equality and suggesting amendments thereto;
- To revise the Central Acts of general importance so as to simplify them and to remove anomalies, ambiguities and inequities;
- To consider and convey to the Government its views on any subject relating to law and judicial administration that may be specifically referred to it by the Government through Ministry of Law and Justice (Department of Legal Affairs);
- To consider the requests for providing research assistance/guidance to any foreign countries as may be referred to it by the Government through the Ministry of Law and Justice (Department of Legal Affairs); and
- To examine the impact of globalization on food security, unemployment and recommend measures for the protection of the interests of the marginalized.

Foreign Visits and International Conferences etc.:

Details of Online Meetings of International Conferences / Foreign Visits undertaken in this Department by the Hon'ble Minister/ Officer(s) of the Department of Legal Affairs w.e.f. 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024;

Sl. No.	Name & Designation	Country Name	Purpose of visit and duration.
1.	Sh. Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble	London, UK	To attend the opening ceremony of Legal Year of the United Kingdom

	Minister of State (I/C) for Law & Justice		and to discuss various issues in the meeting of India-UK Legal Services Committee held from 30 th September to 2 nd October, 2024.
2.	Sh. R. Venkataramani, Ld. Attorney General for India	Abu Dhabi, UAE	To attend the Inaugural Session of the Legal & Business Conference as a “Guest of Honour”, on behalf of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) on 29 th May, 2024 at Dubai preceded by a visit of the ICC Indian Delegation to the inaugurated BAPS Hindu Mandir at Abu Dhabi on 28 th May, 2024.
		Warsaw, Poland	To attend the 8 th GC Manthan & India International Legal Conclave 2024 held from 31 st May to 3 rd June, 2024 at Renaissance, Warsaw, Poland, as “Special Guest”.
		Geneva, Switzerland	To attend the 4 th Periodic review of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) held on 13 th -16 th July, 2024 at Geneva, Switzerland.
		Singapore	To attend the Inaugural Forum of Chief Legal Advisors and the Commemorative Event of the 125 th Anniversary of the Permanent Court of Arbitration held from 25 th to 26 th July, 2024 at Singapore.
		Cyprus	To attend the Commonwealth Legal Education Association, CLEA – International Conference on 7 th & 8 th October, 2024 at the University of Central Lancashire, Republic of Cyprus (UCLan Cyprus).
		Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	To attend the First Summit of the Heads of Prosecution Services–PG20, held on 21 st -22 nd October, 2024.
3.	Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary	London, UK	To attend the opening ceremony of the Legal Year and to discuss

			various issues in the meeting of India-UK Legal Services Committee held from 30 th September to 2 nd October, 2024.
4.	Sh. Tushar Ramesh Chandra Mehta, Ld. Solicitor General of India	Geneva, Switzerland	To attend the 4 th Periodic review of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) held on 13 th -16 th July, 2024 at Geneva, Switzerland.
5.	Sh. R.S. Verma, Additional Secretary	Through video conferencing	To attend the 1 st Expert Meeting for preparation of the 11 th Meeting of Ministers of Justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States, held on 20 th February, 2024.
		St. Petersburg, Russia	To attend a meeting to discuss draft Protocol of the meeting of 22 nd Prosecutors General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States, held on 21 st May, 2024.
		Through video conferencing	To attend the 11 th Meeting of Ministers of Justice of SCO Member States held on 6 th June, 2024 preceded by Expert Meeting held on 4 th June, 2024.
		Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	To attend the 22 nd Meeting of Prosecutors General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States, held from 24 th to 27 th July, 2024.
6.	Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary	27 th to 30 th August, 2024 Colombo, Sri Lanka	To attend the Regional Round Table and Systems Analysis Exercise on Mapping Drug Trafficking Networks in the East Indian Ocean held from 27 th to 30 th August, 2024.
7.	Ms. Sunita Anand, Joint Secretary & Legal Adviser	New York, USA	To attend to the 79 th Session of Working Group-II (Dispute Settlement) of the United Nations Commission on International Trade

			Law (UNCITRAL) held from 12 th to 16 th February, 2024 in New York, USA.
8.	Sh. K. M. Nataraj, Ld. Additional Solicitor General of India	St. Petersburg, Russia	To attend the 6 th Meeting of BRICS Heads of Prosecution Services, 2024 held on 18 th -19 th June, 2024 at St. Petersburg, Russia.
9.	Ms. Aishwarya Bhati, Ld. Additional Solicitor General of India	Geneva, Switzerland	To attend the 4 th Periodic review of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) held on 13 th -16 th July, 2024 at Geneva, Switzerland.
10.	Sh. Dhruva Kumar Singh, Chief Controller of Accounts	Through video conferencing	To attend the 1 st Expert Meeting for preparation of the 11 th Meeting of Ministers of Justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States, held on 20 th February, 2024.
		Through video conferencing	To attend the 11 th Meeting of Ministers of Justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation SCO Member States held on 6 th June, 2024 preceded by Expert Meeting held on 4 th June, 2024.
		London, UK	To attend the opening ceremony of Legal Year of the United Kingdom and to discuss various issues in the meeting of India-UK Legal Service Committee held from 30 th September to 2 nd October, 2024.
11.	Sh. Ashutosh Mishra, Joint Secretary & Legal Adviser	Nosy Bay, Madagascar	To attend the United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC's) Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime – Prosecutors' Network Forum from 12 th to 16 th August, 2024.
12.	Sh. Ajay Kumar Arora, Joint Secretary	Vienna, Austria	80 th Session of Working Group-II (Dispute Settlement) of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

			(UNCITRAL) held from 30 th September to 4 th October, 2024.
13.	Dr. R.J.R. Kasibhatla, Additional Legal Adviser	Through video conferencing	To attend the BRICS International Investment Arbitration Center, held on 6 th March, 2024.
		Through video conferencing	To attend the PCA Case No. 2021-38 – 1. Maxis Communications Berhad 2. Global Communication Services Holdings Limited v. Republic of India, held from 11 th to 26 th March, 2024.
		London, UK	To attend the meeting to discuss Rakia International arbitration matter with the counsels, held from 13 th to 14 th May, 2024.
		Doha, Qatar	To attend the India-Qatar BIT Negotiations, held from 31 st July to 1 st August, 2024.
		London, UK	To attend the final hearing in the S.67 application filed by RAKIA to challenge the Award of the Arbitration Tribunal from 14 th to 16 th October, 2024.
14.	Sh. Niraj Kumar, Additional Legal Adviser	Nosy Bay, Madagascar	To attend the UNODC's Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime – Prosecutors' Network Forum from 12 th to 16 th August, 2024.
15.	Sh. Sohan Kumar Sharma, Additional Legal Adviser	Minsk, Belarus	To attend the Joint EAG and the CIS CCPG Forum, scheduled to be held on 13 th and 14 th November 2024.
16.	Sh. Praveen Srivastava, Additional Legal Adviser	Colombo, Sri Lanka	To attend the Regional Round Table and Systems Analysis Exercise on Mapping Drug Trafficking Networks in the East Indian Ocean held from 27 th to 30 th August, 2024.
17.	Sh. Avnit Singh Arora, Director	Through video conferencing	To attend the 14 th India-US Trade Policy Forum (TPF) Services Working Group meeting held on 10 th January, 2024.

		Through video conferencing	To attend the Virtual Briefing Meeting of the Senior Officials of the Law Ministries (SOLMS) of Commonwealth Countries, held on 6 th February, 2024.
		Through video conferencing	To attend the BRICS International Investment Arbitration Center, held on 6 th March, 2024.
		Through video conferencing	To attend the PCA Case No. 2021-38 – 1. Maxis Communications Berhad 2. Global Communication Services Holdings Limited v. Republic of India, held from 11 th to 26 th March, 2024.
		Zanzibar, Tanzania.	Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting (CLMM), scheduled to be held from 4 th to 8 th March, 2024 at Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania.
		Through video conferencing	To attend the 4 th Meeting of the Task Force on the promotion of International Arbitration in the Commonwealth, held on 18 th July, 2024.
18.	Ms. Haimanti Bhattacharya, Director	Through video conferencing	To attend the Virtual Briefing Meeting of the Senior Officials of the Law Ministries (SOLMS) of Commonwealth Countries, held on 6 th February, 2024.
19.	Dr. Rajiv Kumar Verma, PS to Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C) for Law & Justice	London, UK	To attend the opening ceremony of Legal Year of the United Kingdom and to discuss various issues in the meeting of India-UK Legal Service Committee held from 30 th September to 2 nd October, 2024.
20.	Ms. Ameyavikrama Thanvi, Junior Advocate	Geneva, Switzerland	To attend the 4 th Periodic review of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) scheduled to be held on 13 th -16 th July, 2024 at Geneva, Switzerland.

16. SWACHHATA MISSION

16.1 Under the “Special Campaign 4.0”, cleanliness drive was conducted in the Department of Legal Affairs during 2024-25. Under the said campaign, old and obsolete items including those which were unserviceable, e-waste, worn out furniture and fittings, outdated air conditioners, etc. were auctioned. This helped in creating a cleaner environment in the Department.

16.2 In order to encourage cleanliness in the office area, the Department of Legal Affairs has been keenly monitoring various initiatives and organised several awareness campaigns amongst employees for maintaining cleanliness, not only in offices but also in their homes. Various steps were taken to sanitize the rooms/ open areas, etc., keeping in view the aftermath of Covid 19 and routine mopping/sweeping/cleaning of the floors, toilets, open area, stair cases and corridors of this Department were undertaken.

16.3 This campaign also included weeding out of old records/files, disposal of old newspapers, e-waste etc., apart from digitization and scanning of old records to optimize office space. The practice of single-use plastic was discouraged and, in their place, only folders/files made out of paper/e-waste paper are being emphasized.

16.4 Some of main initiatives undertaken by this Department include deep cleaning of toilets, corridors and other common areas and all Sections by removing extra wires, furniture, white wash in certain rooms, etc. pest control activity covering an area of about 3700 square metres has also been initiated and currently under process.

17. BRANCH SECRETARIAT, MUMBAI

17.1 The Branch Secretariat, Mumbai is presently headed by the Senior Government Advocate, Shri A.A. Ansari, as the In-charge (w.e.f. 28.03.2024). The Branch Secretariat, Mumbai has territorial jurisdiction over States viz. Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Goa and Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu for rendering legal advice and handling of litigation of various Central Government Ministries/Departments located in the region.



17.2 ADVICE: The Branch Secretariat, Mumbai renders legal advice to all the Ministries and Departments of Government of India located in the States within its jurisdiction. The Ministries/Departments of Central Government also approach this Branch Secretariat for advice in matters pertaining to cases conducted within its jurisdiction. During 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024 the Branch Secretariat received 1175 number of references for advice. All the advices were disposed off promptly.

It is estimated that 294 number of references will be received for the period from 1st January, 2025 to 31st March, 2025.

17.3 SUPERVISION OF LITIGATION: The Branch Secretariat, Mumbai conducts litigation pertaining to Ministries/ Departments on behalf of Government of India before the Hon'ble Bombay High Court at Mumbai, Central Administrative Tribunal, Mumbai bench, NCLT, and other Tribunals functioning within Mumbai, District Courts and State & District Commission, etc. Further the Branch Secretariat also monitors cases pending before the Benches of Hon'ble High Court of Bombay and also other High courts within its jurisdiction whenever any Ministry/Department or other Autonomous/Statutory Bodies approach Branch Secretariat for the purpose. The Branch Secretariat also conducts litigation pertaining to the Indian Railway pending before the Hon'ble High Court, CAT, RCT, District Courts and Commission, etc.

About 2290 cases were received by the Branch Secretariat, Mumbai pertaining to High Court at Bombay of which 633 have been disposed off. Further 1592 cases were disposed off pertaining to other High Courts and Tribunals and 1311 matters pertaining to Railways were disposed off.

The projection or estimates for the period from 1st January, 2025 to 31st March, 2025 is as under:

- i. 572 cases may be received pertaining to High Court of Bombay of which 150 cases are estimated to be disposed off.
- ii. 327 matters estimated to be received pertaining to Railways.

17.4 FEE BILLS OF COUNSELS: The Mumbai Branch Secretariat makes payment of professional fee towards appearance/consultation to the Ld. Addl. Solicitor General of Bombay High Court and Counsel appearing before Hon'ble Bombay High Court and further makes payment to the Central Government Standing Counsel for the District Courts within the State of Maharashtra from funds allocated for the same. An amount of Rs 1,61,72,700/- from 01.01.2024 up to 31.12.2024 has been disbursed to Counsels including Standing Counsel as professional fee.

It is estimated that an amount of Rs.1.25 crores is expected to be incurred during the period from 1st January, 2025 to 31st March, 2025.

17.5 RTI MATTERS: During the period, Senior Government Advocate (I/C) has been notified as First Appellate Authority, The Assistant Legal Adviser has been notified as the CPIO.

During this year, the BS Mumbai received 35 applications seeking information under RTI Act out of which 34 applications have been disposed off within the prescribed period of time as provided under the Act. Further, 05 numbers of First Appeals have been disposed off by this Branch Secretariat within the stipulated period.

17.6 BUDGET AND ACCOUNTS: The budget and accounts work in this Branch Secretariat is done online using the "PFMS" portal. All payments are done through PFMS Portal. GeM is used for procurement of goods, stationeries and other services. Pension cases are also processed through "Bhavishya" online portal.

17.7 LIBRARY AND RESEARCH: The Mumbai Branch Secretariat has a library containing more than 14000 books. This library proves to be very useful for the Officers and Staff while tendering advice and also in litigation matters. The library is rich in books on various subjects i.e. journals, law books, Swamy Handbook, MoP, etc. These are regularly purchased for the use of Officers and Staff. Online Journal 'SCC Online' has been subscribed by the Branch Secretariat.

17.8 PROGRESSIVE USE OF HINDI AND HINDI PAKHWADA: A "Rajbhasha Samiti" is functioning in the Branch Secretariat which submits periodical reports as and when required by the authority. Various statements and forms viz. leave forms, joining report, rubber stamps, communications etc. have been made bi-lingual. Hindi Pakhwada and Hindi Diwas was organized in the month of September-October, 2024. A number of events and competitions were conducted for promotion of Hindi language.

17.9 HIGHLIGHTS

17.9.1 Technological Advancement: E-office has been implemented in Branch Secretariat and officers have been encouraged to use E-office for handling the File work. The budget and

accounts work in this Branch Secretariat is done online using various **software** and the “**PFMS**” portal. **GeM** is used for procurement of goods, stationeries and other services. Pension cases are also processed through “**Bhavishya**” online portal. Focus has been kept on using online journals and accordingly **SCC Online** has been subscribed for referencing in advices rendered by the Branch Secretariat. Digitisation of the records is under process. Data relating to litigation matters entered in excel format.

17.9.2 Swachhta Campaign: A Special Campaign Swachhta 4.0 had been initiated in BS-Mumbai wherein various activities were undertaken, viz., weeding out of old records, commencement of digitization of records, identification of old and unserviceable furniture, cleanliness drive in the office including library, beautification of the office premises. Obsolete records were weeded out. Moreover, cleanliness drive has been an ongoing process under which segregation of disposed records etc. is being carried out regularly.

17.9.3 Events:

(i) Conference on India’s Progressive path in the Administration of Criminal Justice

A conference on India’s Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice was organised by the Branch Secretariat, Mumbai on 30th June, 2024 at National Sports Club of India Auditorium, Worli, Mumbai, with a vision to increase understanding and awareness of the key provisions of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, the new criminal laws enacted in December, 2023 which were scheduled to take effect on 1.7.2024 among stakeholders and to facilitate discussions on the implications, implementation challenges, and future developments of these legislation and to foster collaboration and exchange of ideas among legal experts, policymakers, practitioners and academics in addressing legal and societal challenges. A huge number of 6766 participants registered for the said conference. Approximately 3,000 participants including Hon’ble Judges of various High Courts, luminaries, public prosecutors, legal experts, policymakers, police officers and other representatives participated from various States and Union Territories including Rajasthan, M.P, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, H.P., Uttarakhand, U.P, Goa, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Chandigarh and Jammu & Kashmir. The conference was held successfully.



(ii) Various events were observed in BS-Mumbai in the year 2024. Pledges were taken by all the officers/officials on the occasions of Vigilance Awareness Week, Nasha Mukht Bharat, Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, Fit India, etc. On the occasion of Constitution day, reading of Preamble was organized in the office. Women's Day was celebrated in the BS Mumbai and also Yoga Day was celebrated on 21.06.2024, wherein all the officers/officials of the office participated in the exercise as per the Common Yoga Protocol.



Fit India Pledge by Officers/Officials of BS Mumbai



Visit of Hon'ble Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Justice (Independent Charge) at BS Mumbai

18. BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA

18.1 During the period from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata was headed by Shri A.A. Ansari, ILS, Senior Government Advocate/In-charge who is functioning as over all In-charge. The Branch Secretariat, Kolkata is functioning from 2nd & 3rd Floor, Middle Building, 11, Strand Road, Kolkata-700001. It has **nine** wings viz. **Advice, Litigation (High Court at Calcutta), CAT including Circuit Benches & Other High Courts, Tribunals and Lower Courts etc. within the jurisdiction of Branch Secretariat, Kolkata, Administration, Cash & Accounts, Hindi, Bill, R & I Section and Library.**

GROUP PHOTO OF EMPLOYEES OF BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA



18.2 The Litigation Wing of the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata looks after the entire litigation matters pertaining to different Ministries/Departments of Union of India pending before the Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta, Circuit Benches at Port Blair and Jalpaiguri and also various Tribunals, District Commission, State Commission and Lower Courts covering West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and States of North Eastern Region comprising of Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh.

18.3 Branch Secretariat, Kolkata also (i) conducts litigation matters in the High Court at Calcutta by the Officers who are notified to act as Government Pleader within the meaning of Order XXVII, Rule 8B(a) of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908; (ii) acts as Office of Advocate-on-Record in Original Side of the High Court at Calcutta; (iii) engages Additional Solicitor General of India and/or counsel in different cases as per requirement in the Calcutta High Court matters; (iv) engages Counsel in the Central Administrative Tribunal, Calcutta Bench, other Tribunals in Calcutta, Consumer Redressal Commission at State level and other Forums of alternative remedy; (v) looks after the litigation work in the High Court at Calcutta on Original Side and Appellate Side and Arbitration Case on behalf of the Central Government; and (vi) Branch Secretariat, Kolkata also conducts litigation through Panel Counsels pertaining to the Indian Railways pending before the Hon'ble High Court, CAT, RCT, District Courts and Commission etc.

18.4 In addition to the litigation work of the Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta, Branch Secretariat, Kolkata exercises general supervision and engagement of Counsel over the litigation of the Central Government in Subordinate Courts in West Bengal such as City Civil Court, Small Causes Court, Judicial Magistrate's Courts as well as different District Courts in West Bengal in which the Central Government is either a party or otherwise interested.

18.5 The Branch Secretariat, Kolkata also exercises general supervision over litigation of the Central Government in various High Courts in the Eastern Region like High Court at Calcutta (including Circuit Benches at Jalpaiguri and Andaman & Nicobar Islands), High Court of Judicature at Patna, High Court of Jharkhand at Ranchi, Orissa High Court, Gauhati High Court at Guwahati, Gauhati High Court (Permanent Bench at Itanagar, Kohima, Aizawal), High Court of Meghalaya at Shillong, High Court of Tripura at Agartala, High Court of Sikkim at Gangtok. This Branch Secretariat also looks after drafting and vetting of instruments of conveyance, agreements, contracts and other different types of documents to which the Central Government is a party.

18.6 The Branch Secretariat, Kolkata scrutinizes fee bills received from the Panel Counsel, obtains sanction for engagement of Special Counsel at special rate to appear on behalf of Government Department in the Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta or in the other High Courts and subordinate courts in West Bengal, prepares Paper Book for appeals (through engaged counsels) in Original Side matters and all ancillary work related to litigation like issuance of back-sheets, making correspondences, having conferences etc. and also establishment and other alternative work in connection with the personnel of this Branch Secretariat.

18.7 The Advice Wing of this Branch Secretariat is responsible to render legal advice/opinion upon the references received from various Ministries/Departments functioning within the territorial jurisdiction of Branch Secretariat, Kolkata. Apart from the same, other Ministries/Department whose Headquarters are outside the jurisdiction of Branch Secretariat, Kolkata, also approach this Branch Secretariat for advice in the matter pertaining to interpretation of statutes and Court Cases. [During the period from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, the Advice Wing received references total 1108 numbers for advice, all were disposed off promptly (It is estimated that another 265 references will be received during the period from January, 2025 to March, 2025)].

18.8 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, total 3625 number of cases have been received by the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata relating to Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta from the petitioners and from different Ministries/Departments and Autonomous bodies, etc. (It is estimated that another 740 references will be received during the period from January, 2025 to March, 2025).

18.9 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, a total 175 numbers of references have been received by this Branch Secretariat regarding Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and company matters before the National Company Law Tribunal, Kolkata Bench. (It is estimated that another 45 references will be received during the period from January, 2025 to March, 2025).

18.10 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, a total 1332 numbers of cases have been received in the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata for engagement of Counsels for the matters pertaining to Hon'ble CAT, Kolkata Bench and Circuit Bench at Port Blair (It is estimated that another 290 cases will be received during the period from January, 2025 to March, 2025).

During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, a total 1385 numbers of cases received for engagement of Counsel in various Tribunals, RCT, Industrial Tribunal, CESTAT, Consumer Commission and Lower Courts including Arbitration Cases (It is estimated that another 280 cases will be received during the period from January, 2025 to March, 2025).

18.11 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, Shri A.A. Ansari, ILS, Senior Government Advocate/Incharge has been designated as First Appellate Authority. Dr. Subhro Jyoti Mukherjee, Deputy Legal Adviser was designated as CPIO upto 18/11/2024 and thereafter Shri Sanjib Das, Section Officer has been designated as CPIO with effect from 19/11/2024 to deal with the RTI matters. During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, a total 31 RTI references and 01 First Appeals were received and disposed off within stipulated time period (It is estimated that another 10 RTIs and 01 FA will be received during the period from January, 2025 to March, 2025).

18.12 The Branch Secretariat, Kolkata makes payment of professional fee towards appearance/consultation to the Ld. Additional Solicitor General of Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta and Panel Counsel appearing before Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta and further makes payment of Retainership Fee to the Central Government Standing Counsel for the District Courts within the State of West Bengal from the budget allocated for the same. During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, the claims submitted by the panel counsel have been speedily processed proportionately out of the sanctioned budget for 2024-2025, an amount of Rs.3.27 Crores has been incurred for payment towards Professional Fees to Panel Counsels and Retainership Fee for Standing Counsel for the State of West Bengal (It is estimated that another Rs.1.10 crores will be paid during the period from January, 2025 to March, 2025).

18.13 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, in august presence of the Hon'ble Minister of State for Law & Justice, Independent charge Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, a Conference on India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice was organized by the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata on 16th June, 2024, with a vision to increase understanding and awareness of the key provisions of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, the new criminal laws enacted in December 2023 and already effected on and from 1st July, 2024, among stakeholders and to facilitate discussions on the implications, implementation challenges and future developments of these legislations and to foster collaboration and exchange of ideas amongst legal experts, policy makers, practitioners, and academics in addressing legal and societal challenges. Eminent personalities from legal fraternity viz.; Judges, advocates and law professors from the States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha & West Bengal participated in the conference along with Governor of West Bengal as the Chief Guest of the event.

PHOTOGRAPH DURING CONFERENCE ON INDIA'S PROGRESSIVE PATH IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE AT KOLKATA ON 16TH JUNE, 2024.



PHOTOGRAPH DURING CONFERENCE ON INDIA'S PROGRESSIVE PATH IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE AT KOLKATA ON 16TH JUNE, 2024.



18.14 The Hindi Section of this Branch Secretariat is working hard for effective use of Hindi as official language. During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, 04 nos. quarterly meetings of Official Language Implementation Committee has been organized and 04 nos. of Hindi workshops were

also organized. Reference matters have been prepared and distributed among Sections for doing work of regular nature in Hindi in terms of Section 3(3) of Official Languages Act, 1963. Three employees of this office have been nominated for Hindi training “Praveen” conducted by Central Hindi Training Institute, Department of Official Language. They had successfully completed their training. Further, they have already been nominated for “Pragya” course. ‘HINDI PAKHWADA’ was also observed in this Branch Secretariat with great enthusiasm during 14-29 September 2024. The Hindi Diwas was attended on 14th September, 2024 by one Assistant Section Officer and Junior Translation Officer of this Office at New Delhi, Bharat Mandapam. The Conference on Joint Regional Official Language Conference for East and North-East Regions, 2024 on 08/03/2024 at Siliguri was attended by One Assistant Section Officer and Junior Translation Officer. Hindi Kavi Sammelan on 09/04/2024 at Kolkata was attended by Head of Office/PPS, one Assistant Section Officer and Junior Hindi Translator of this office. One Superintendent (Legal) and one Assistant Section Officer had participated in ‘Kavita Path’ Competition organized by NARAKAS on 23/12/2024. Required reports were being forwarded on regular basis in the prescribed proforma to the Main Secretariat at New Delhi as well.

OFFICERS OF BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA DURING HINDI PAKHWADA, 2024



EMPLOYEES OF BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA DURING HINDI PAKHWADA, 2024



MS. RIMA BOGI, ASO OF BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA RECEIVING PRIZE FROM SHRI A.A. ANSARI, ILS, SR. GOVT. ADVOCATE/INCHARGE FOR HINDI COMPETITION DURING HINDI PAKHWADA, 2024.



18.15 The Budget and Accounts related work in the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata are being done online using the portal-based payment system i.e. 'Public Financial Management System' (PFMS) developed by NIC. All payments to employees, Government Counsel and other service providers are being made online through PFMS portal. Periodical reports are directly submitted to Pay & Accounts Office and other Public Authorities online. For procurement of Goods, Stationeries and other Services, Government e-procurement website <https://gem.gov.in> is being used extensively for direct procurement as well as procurement through Bids. Pension cases are being processed through 'Bhavishya' online portal.

18.16 The Library of this Branch Secretariat, Kolkata, containing more than 10,600 books and journals, is proving its worthiness and is very helpful for use in Litigation and also adhering advice as well to Government Ministries/Departments. Online Journals 'Live Law', 'Manupatra' and 'SCC Online' have also been subscribed by this Branch Secretariat.

18.17 The Legal Information Management & Briefing System (LIMBS) portal is functional in the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata w.e.f. 1st January, 2022. The Panel Counsels registered their names in the LIMBS portal to enable them to upload the Orders of the Court and claim fee. Instructions have also been issued to different Ministries/Departments to upload the cases in the LIMBS portal and to provide the LIMBS ID in the references made to the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata. A total of 4,909 number of bills have been received during 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 through LIMBS portal from Panel Counsels.

18.18 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, International Yoga Day has been observed by the Branch Secretariat, Kolkata on 21st June, 2024.

EMPLOYEES OF BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA PERFORMING YOGA DURING INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY ON 21ST JUNE, 2024



EMPLOYEES PERFORMING YOGA DURING INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY ON 21ST JUNE, 2024



18.19 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, Branch Secretariat, Kolkata has celebrated National Sports Day, 2024 on 29/08/2024 by performing Plunk and playing Tug of War.

EMPLOYEES DURING NATIONAL SPORTS DAY ON 29TH AUGUST, 2024



18.20 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, Branch Secretariat, Kolkata had observed Women's Day on 08/03/2024, Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan Pledge on 31/05/2024, Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign during 09/08/2024 to 15/08/2024, Swachhta Day Pledge on 02/10/2024, Rastriya Ekta Diwas Pledge on 31/10/2024.

18.21 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, 'Vigilance Awareness Week' has been observed during 28/10/2024 to 03/11/2024. Integrity Pledge on 'Vigilance Awareness Week' was administered by In-charge, Branch Secretariat, Kolkata on said occasion on 30th October, 2024.

**EMPLOYEES OF BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA TAKING INTEGRITY
'PLEDGE ON 30/10/2024.**



18.22 During 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, Constitution Day was observed on 26/11/2024 in this Branch Secretariat wherein the employees read the Preamble of the Constitution.

EMPLOYEES OF BRANCH SECRETARIAT, KOLKATA DURING READING OF THE PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION



19. BRANCH SECRETARIAT, BENGALURU

The Branch Secretariat, Bengaluru tenders advice on legal issues to all the Ministries/ Departments along with the subordinate/Regional Offices thereunder located in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana and Union Territory of Puducherry (with Andhra Pradesh). This Branch Secretariat is headed by an Additional Legal Adviser who functions as In-charge.

19.1 ADVICE WORK: The advice work includes, *inter alia*, scrutiny and vetting of draft pleadings i.e. statement of objection, counter affidavits intended to be filed before the High Courts and their Benches, as well as sub-ordinate courts and various Tribunals located within the territorial jurisdiction of the Branch Secretariat, Bengaluru.

The Branch Secretariat also examines feasibility of filing Special Leave Petitions under Article 136 of the Constitution of India, Writ Petitions under Article 226 of the Constitution, Writ Appeals and Review Petitions against the Judgements/Orders of different Courts and Tribunals withing its territorial jurisdiction.

The Branch Secretariat, Bengaluru in the course of tendering advice on legal issues and guiding Ministries/Departments on legal front, thereby enabling them in taking legally sustainable administrative decision, also interpret laws and Constitution, whenever necessary.

During the period from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024, 597 references were received for legal advice.

19.2 SUPERVISING LITIGATION: The Branch Secretariat supervises the entire litigation of the Central Government Departments and offices in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh at Amaravathi, High Court of Karnataka, Bengaluru, Benches of High Court of Karnataka at Dharwad & Kalburagi and High Court for the State of Telangana at Hyderabad, Subordinate Courts located at Bengaluru City and most of the districts of Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, CAT in these States and Union Territory of Puducherry (with Andhra Pradesh). This Branch Secretariat also looks after the work of Government litigation in the District Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum, the State Consumer Redressal Commissions of the respective States, Central Government Industrial Tribunal and Debt Recovery Tribunal. About 4918 litigation references, which include nomination of counsel, counsel fee bills and general correspondence relating to litigation, were received during the period from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024. The function of the Branch Secretariat in this regard includes engagement / nomination of the Counsel and distribution of cases among the Central Government Counsel.

19.3 FEE BILLS OF COUNSEL: This Branch Secretariat processes counsel fee bills and pays the fees directly from its centralized funds to the Deputy Solicitor General of India and Central Government Counsel in the High Court of Karnataka, Bengaluru. About 544 fee bills were received by the Branch Secretariat during the period from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024. So far as the Benches of High Court of Karnataka at Dharwad and Kalburagi are concerned, the counsel fee bill is borne by the Departments/Ministries concerned on whose behalf the Counsel conducts the cases and not by the Branch Secretariat, Bengaluru. The Departments / Ministries concerned pay the fee for Central Government panel Counsel in Central Administrative Tribunal, District and Subordinate Courts. Hence, this Branch Secretariat is not certifying counsel fee bills. However, this Branch Secretariat clarifies as and when requests are received.

19.4 EVENTS AT BRANCH SECRETARIAT, BENGALURU:

19.4.1 International Day of Yoga: The 10th International Day of Yoga was celebrated with the theme “Yoga for Self and Society” by the employees of the Branch Secretariat, Bengaluru by digitally joining the various platforms to practice the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) performing Yoga collectively. The significance of performing Yoga was discussed along with the benefits associated with it. All the employees were encouraged to incorporate the same in their respective daily routine.

19.4.2 Observance of Hindi Fortnight: Branch Secretariat, Department of Legal Affairs, Bengaluru celebrated the Hindi Fortnight by conducting various competitions for the officers and staff. All participants actively participated with enthusiasm in 5 competitions. The competitions were organised with the assistance of the Assistant Director of the Hindi Teaching Scheme, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bengaluru who judged the competitions and delivered speech on the valedictory function and distributed prizes to the winners.

19.4.3 Vigilance Awareness Week: The Branch Secretariat observed the Vigilance Awareness Week, 2024. The Integrity Pledge was administered in the Chamber of Additional Legal Adviser & In charge on 28th October, 2024. All the officials of this Branch Secretariat attended the event and took the oath of Integrity Pledge.



Integrity Pledge on 28.10.2024



19.4.4 Celebration of 75 years of Constitution of India: The 75 years of the Constitution of India was celebrated in this Branch Secretariat. All the officials of this Branch Secretariat assembled in the Chamber of Additional Legal Adviser & In charge on 26.11.2024 and the Preamble to the Constitution of India was recited, with pride and patriotism.



Reciting the Preamble to the Constitution on 26.11.2024



19.5 RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005: All the RTI Applications received in the Branch Secretariat, Bengaluru are handled and disposed off within the time-frame stipulated under RTI Act. The Section Officer/Superintendent (Legal) in this Branch Secretariat is designated as the CPIO and the Additional Legal Adviser & In charge of Branch Secretariat, Bengaluru is designated as the First Appellate Authority.

20. BRANCH SECRETARIAT, CHENNAI

20.1 ADVICE: The Branch Secretariat renders legal advice to all Central Government Offices located in the States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and the Union Territory of Pudhuchery. During the given period, around **729** references have been received for advice and disposed off. Additionally, an estimated **200** references are likely to be received during the period from 1.1.2025 to 31.03.2025.

20.2 LITIGATION: Branch Secretariat, Chennai looks after the entire litigation work of Central Government (except cases relating to Income-Tax, Central Excise and Customs, etc.) in the Principal Bench of Madras High Court & its Madurai Bench and High Court of Kerala. It also looks after the Central Government litigation work in the City Civil Courts, Presidency Courts of Small Causes, Subordinate Courts, various Tribunals, Consumer Fora, etc. in Tamil

Nadu and Kerala. Besides, Branch Secretariat, Chennai has also been entrusted with the work of Central Government litigation before the Madras Bench of Central Administrative Tribunal at Chennai and Ernakulam Bench of Central Administrative Tribunal in Kerala.

During the given period, around **8906** litigation matters were received and disposed off accordingly which include litigation receipts, fee bills and files opened for cases of High Court/CAT/LC etc. Additionally, an estimated **2000** litigation matters are likely to be received during the period from 1.1.2025 to 31.3.2025.

The Branch Secretariat keeps the Ministries and Departments of the Central Government informed about the important developments of their cases as well as the results of the litigation with suitable advice for further action, if required. Pleadings, affidavits etc., to be filed in the Courts/ Tribunals / Consumer Fora / Arbitration matters in Tamil Nadu and Kerala are scrutinized and vetted at the draft stage. Functions of Branch Secretariat, Chennai also include engagement / nominations of the Counsel and collection of materials from the concerned Central Government Departments involved in the cases, for being passed on to the Counsel after necessary scrutiny of the documents from the legal angle.

20.3 LIMBS: Branch Secretariat, Chennai is utilizing LIMBS web-based application created by Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law & Justice, which is a single point access to streamline the procedure of conducting Central Govt. litigation matters. At present details of various Court Cases listed in the Principal Bench of Madras High Court & its Madurai Bench that are handled by Branch Secretariat, Chennai are periodically being updated in the LIMBS portal for use of various stakeholders.

20.4 COUNSEL FEE BILLS: The Branch Secretariat makes payment of professional fees from the funds allocated for this purpose, directly to the Additional Solicitor General of India, Deputy Solicitor General, Senior Panel Counsel and the Central Government Standing Counsel in respect of cases pertaining to the Principal Bench of Madras High Court & its Madurai Bench.

During the relevant period, around **2003** fee bills pertaining to central government litigation in High Court of Madras and Madurai Bench were processed and an amount to the tune of **Rs.3.53 Crores** was paid to Central Govt. Panel Counsel. The above amount includes payment towards Retainer Fees to Standing Government Counsel of District & Subordinate Courts in Tamil Nadu & Puducherry for handling central government litigation.

Additionally, an estimated **500** fee bills pertaining to central government litigation in High Court of Madras and Madurai Bench are anticipated and an approximate amount of **Rs. 1.50 Crores** is expected to be paid to Central Govt. Panel Counsel including Retainer Fees to Standing Government Counsel of District & Subordinate Courts in Tamil Nadu & Puducherry, during the period from 1.1.2025 to 31.3.2025.

Fee Bills preferred by the Central Government Counsel for appearance before the Central Administrative Tribunal and Subordinate Courts were dealt with and sent to

the Departments concerned for payment, as per relevant OM issued by Department of Legal Affairs, New Delhi.

20.5 CONFERENCE ON INDIA'S PROGRESSIVE PATH IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE HELD AT CHENNAI ON 23RD JUNE, 2024: Ministry of Law & Justice, Department of Legal Affairs with the approval of the Hon'ble Minister of Law & Justice planned to organize a series of Conferences at different parts of the country before 1.7.2024 with a vision to increase understanding and awareness of the key provisions of the 3 new criminal laws viz the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 which came into force with effect from 1.7.2024.

The fourth in the series of Conferences was organized by Branch Secretariat, Chennai in coordination with the Department of Legal Affairs, New Delhi, on **23rd June 2024** at VIT Campus, Kelambakkam, Chennai, in the august presence of **Hon'ble Law Minister, Independent charge, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal**, and other dignitaries comprising Hon'ble I&B Minister, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Hon'ble ex-Governor of Kerala, Chief Justice of High Court of Madras, Chief Justice of High Court of Karnataka, Chief Justice of High Court of Kerala, Chief Justice of High Court of Telangana, Ld. Law Secretary, various Judges, Central Govt. Panel Counsel and stakeholders from the field of law, including Police Officers from different law enforcement agencies.

The one day Conference comprised three technical interactive sessions wherein various eminent panellists deliberated extensively on the various important legal provisions of the three new criminal laws coming into effect from 1st July 2024. There was exchange of ideas amongst legal experts, policy makers, practitioners and academicians. The interactions in all the three technical sessions were highly informative and enthralled the august gathering comprising legal fraternity and different stakeholders.

The above Conference was conducted successfully with the able guidance and support of the organizing team of Department of Legal Affairs, New Delhi and active contribution of all the dedicated officers and staff of Branch Secretariat, Chennai.

PHOTOGRAPHS DURING CONFERENCE ON INDIA'S PROGRESSIVE PATH IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE AT CHENNAI ON 23RD JUNE, 2024.







20.6 Observation of ‘International Day of Yoga’ on 21st June, 2024

As per the directions of Main Secretariat, a demonstration session was conducted on 21.06.2024 in connection with the Yoga day celebrations. The employees were requested to devote their time daily to practice yoga as per the Common Yoga Protocol devised by Ministry of Ayush, to avail physical and mental health benefits.

20.7 Observance of ‘Hindi Pakhwada’ in September 2024

In accordance with directives of Department of Official Language, Main Secretariat, Hindi Pakhwada was observed in this office in September 2024. In order to encourage usage of Hindi in day-to-day official work, valuable suggestions to improve usage of Hindi in official work was imparted to the officers/officials.

20.8 Observance of ‘VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK’

As per CVC guidelines, ‘**VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK**’ with the theme “**Corruption free India for a developed Nation**” was observed in this Branch Secretariat as per the guidelines of Central Vigilance Commission from 28th October to 3rd November, 2024. ‘Integrity pledge’ was administered to all officials of this Branch Secretariat on 28th October, 2024 at 11.00A.M.

20.9 Special Cleanliness Campaign 4.0 conducted in October-December 2024

As per the directions of Department of Legal Affairs, a Special/Cleanliness Campaign 4.0 was organized in this Branch Secretariat. Old litigation case files numbering 1043 which were identified, segregated and recorded for weeding out last year, were duly listed and indexed during the current Special Campaign 4.0 during October-December 2024 and approval obtained for weeding out. Similarly, the process of segregating and indexing the old litigation files/case bundles that got accumulated over the years was also completed and the unwanted records have been weeded out.

20.10 Observance of 'CONSTITUTION DAY'

As directed by Main Secretariat, all the officials of this Branch Secretariat assembled in the Chamber of Additional Legal Adviser & In charge on 26.11.2024 and recited the Preamble to the Constitution of India in connection with celebration of 'Constitution Day' to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India.



Reciting the Preamble to the Constitution on 26.11.2024

20.11 'Swachh Bharat Mission'

The In charge of this Branch Secretariat has been periodically monitoring and inspecting cleanliness activities of the office. In view of the aftermath of Covid-19 pandemic situation, top priority has been accorded towards cleanliness of office premises, hand sanitization, social distancing, wearing of masks, etc. from time to time to maintain hygiene and avoid health issues. Cleaning activities were carried out in full swing in the office premises during the months of October-December 2024. All officers and employees of this office took the Swachhta Pledge and were requested to plant trees at their homes and surrounding areas.

20.12 'Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan'

In connection with the country wide mass pledge against drugs, all officers/officials of this Branch Secretariat took the pledge under 'Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan' on 12.08.2024, to make our country drug-free. Report in this regard has been sent to Main Secretariat.

20.13 Conduct of CAT Panel Counsel Meet

A meeting of the CAT Panel Counsel was convened at 4.00 PM on 28.11.2024 in the Chamber of In Charge, Branch Secretariat, Chennai to review the conduct of CAT litigation and to discuss the difficulties/problems faced by the CAT Panel Counsel in handling the cases. The meeting chaired by Dr. R.S. Shrinet, Addl. Legal Adviser & In charge, Branch Secretariat, Chennai was attended by 12 CAT panel counsel for CAT, Chennai, including Shri K. Rajendran, SCGSC and Shri Su. Srinivasan, SCGSC. The Panel Counsel deliberated about various issues connected with CAT litigation and they were requested to extend all assistance for the smooth and seamless conduct of litigation before the Hon'ble Central Administrative Tribunal, Chennai Bench.

20.14 Retainer Fees

Out of its allotted funds, the Branch Secretariat has been entrusted with the mandate of paying Retainer Fees to Standing Government Counsel of District & Subordinate Courts in Tamil Nadu & Puducherry. During the relevant period, an amount of **Rs.22.32 Lakhs** was paid towards Retainer Fees to Standing Government Counsel. The above amount has been included in the total Counsel Fee payments referred at Para 20.4 above. Additionally, payment of an amount of **Rs. 5.58 Lakh** will be made towards Retainer Fees during the period from 1.1.2025 to 31.3.2025.

20.15 Implementation of e-Office

As per the directions of Main Secretariat, this office has already started implementation of e-Office in Administration Section, since April, 2023. From April, 2024 onwards, all new files of Administration Division, Litigation Division, Advice Division and Accounts Division are being opened and processed in the e-Office module, thereby enabling 100% utilization of e-Office module. Active physical files opened before April, 2024 are being converted into electronic form in a phased manner. All bills including Counsel Fee bills and claims of officials of this Branch Secretariat are processed through PFMS and payments are directly credited to the bank accounts of the concerned vendors/beneficiaries. Necessary modifications have been incorporated in the 'LITCASE' software under the guidance of concerned NIC personnel, so that information/data related to Fee Bill receipts and their disposal are duly updated.

20.16 RTI receipts

During the above period, **38 RTI applications** were received which includes online, physical and cases transferred from Other Public Authorities. **4 RTI appeals** were received during the period from 1.1.2024 to 31.12.2024.

20.17 Female employees

There are **3 regular female employees** working in this office, viz., 1 Section Officer (CSS), 1 Private Secretary (CSSS) and 1 Court Clerk (GCS).

20.18 Statistics of Employees working under the following categories:

There are 6 regular employees under various categories other than General Category employees, i.e., SC-1; ST-1; OBC-4 [including Ex-Servicemen - 1]

21. LITIGATION IN DELHI HIGH COURT

21.1 The Litigation (HC) Section handles the Litigation work in Delhi High Court on behalf of all the Ministries/Departments of Govt. of India including Service matters of Delhi Police except Income Tax Departments. Officer-in-Charge assisted by Assistant Legal Adviser and other staff looks after the Litigation work as follows: -

- a) The cases dealt with and contested in Delhi High Court are generally related to: - Civil and Criminal Writ Petitions under Article 226 & 227 of the Constitution of India, Civil Misc. Applications, Division Bench Appeals, Company Applications, Execution Applications and Criminal Misc.
- b) And the cases dealt with and contested in Courts other than Delhi High Court are generally related to: - National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission, Central Government Industrial Tribunal (CGIT)- cum Labour Court, NCLT, NCLAT, Unlawful activities (Prevention Tribunal), Debt Recovery Tribunal, Debt Recovery Appellant Tribunal, Immigration Appellate Committee, Appellate Tribunal for Electricity, Central Information Commission, District Consumer Form, National Green Tribunal (NGT) etc.
- c) The Litigation work is dealt with by two Sections- Litigation (HC) Section 'A' and 'B' being supervised by Assistant Legal Adviser. Section 'A' deals with the advance notices pertaining to the Writ Petitions, Letters Patent Appeals (LPA), and Miscellaneous Petitions under Article 226 & 227 of the Constitution of India, Original Revisions etc. and the Writ Petitions filed on behalf of the Union of India in the Hon'ble Delhi High Court including matters of general natures. Section 'B' deals with the payment of professional fee bills of the Law Officer, Central Govt. Standing Counsel, Senior Panel Counsel and Govt. Pleaders held on the panel of Delhi High Court.
- d) To conduct Central Govt. litigation, as on date there is one Additional Solicitor General of India (ASG) and panel of Central Govt. Standing Counsel (CGSC), Senior Counsel and Govt. Pleaders (GP). Close liaison is being maintained between the concerned Ministry/Department and the nominated Panel Counsel to safeguard the Govt. interests in Delhi High Court.

21.2 This Unit also deals with the payment of professional fee bills pertaining to Law Officers, CGSCs, Senior Counsel and Government Pleaders on the panel of Delhi High Court. The requisite information regarding budgetary allocations and expenditure details for the financial year 2024-25 has been furnished hereunder: -

Financial Year	Total Budgetary Allocations (Rs.)	Expenditure incurred on a/c of Professional fee bills payment (Rs.)
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2024-25	18 Crore	(Figures up to 17/01/25) 14.58 Crore
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21.3 The Litigation (HC) Delhi Section looks after the Litigation work related to the Ministries/ Departments of UOI, Tribunals and Commissions etc., and nominates the Counsel from the approved panel to defend the interest of Ministries/Departments of UOI in Delhi High Court, Tribunals & Commissions etc. Details of receipt of cases in which Govt. Counsel were engaged are as follow: -

LITIGATION HIGH COURT SECTION

Period		Total
No. of cases received for 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024	Estimated for 01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025	
13233	3300	16533

LITIGATION IN CAT (Principal Bench) DELHI

21.4 The Litigation CAT (PB) Delhi Cell looks after the Cases/Litigation work related to the Ministries and Department of UOI and nominates the Counsel from the approved panel to defend the interest of Ministries/Departments of UOI in CAT (PB), Delhi. CAT (PB) Litigation Section has engaged Govt. Counsel in all the cases received to conduct the litigation in CAT (PB) Delhi. Details of receipt of cases in which Govt. Counsel were engaged are as follow: -

Period		Total
No. of cases received for 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024	Estimated for 01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025	
3106	775	3881

LITIGATION ARMED FORCES TRIBUNAL (AFT) DELHI

21.5 The Litigation in AFT Delhi Cell looks after the Cases/Litigation work related to the Armed Forces and nominates the Counsel from the approved panel to defend the interest of Union of India in AFT, Delhi. AFT Delhi Litigation Section has engaged Govt. Counsel in all the cases received to conduct the litigation in CAT (PB) Delhi. Details of receipt of cases in which Govt. Counsel were engaged are as follow: -

Period		Total
No. of cases received for 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024	Estimated for 01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025	
5282	1300	6582

22. LITIGATION (LOWER COURT) SECTION, TIS HAZARI, DELHI

22.1 The Litigation work in the various District Courts as well as Consumer Forum/Tribunals in Delhi/New Delhi on behalf of all Ministries/Departments of Government of India except Income- tax Department is handled by Litigation (LC) Section. The Litigation work, in the above said Courts/Tribunals are look after by an Assistant Legal Adviser & In-Charge, who is Assisted by a Superintendent (Legal)/ Assistant (Legal).

22.2 There is a panel of Senior Panel Counsels and Additional Central Government Counsels (i.e. **94 Senior Panel Counsels & 233 A.C.G.C**) are nominated for contesting the Cases on behalf of Union of India, i.e. Government of India. On receipt of request from the Administrative Ministry/Department, action is taken to engage a suitable Govt. Counsel to appear on their behalf in the Courts. During the period (01st January 2024 –31st December 2024) under report this Section engaged Counsels in **1409 Cases**. Close liaison is maintained with the various Department as well as Govt. Counsels at all times to safeguard the interest of the Government (Union of India) in the District Courts/Consumer Forums/Tribunals.

22.3 When Cases are decided by the Hon'ble Courts, the Govt. Counsels submit their fee bill in a prescribed format. The fee bills are scrutinized very carefully, having regard to the terms and condition of their appointment before certifying and making payment at the prescribed rates. The period (01st January 2024 –31st December 2024) under report this Section **received 383 fee bills** from Government Counsel/Senior panel Counsels. **Finance year 2024-25**, this Section has allocated budget of **Rs.80,00,000/-** (Eighty Lakh Rupees only). Out of this amount **Rs. 28,76,910/-** (Twenty Eight Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Nine Hundred And Ten Only) has been paid to the Government Counsels/Senior Panel Counsels for their Professional Fee Bills.

22.4 The Assistant Legal Adviser who is the Branch Officer of this Section. He has been designated as Central Public Information Officer under the Right to Information Act, /2005. The Superintendent (Legal) who supervises the Litigation (LC) Section.

23. CENTRAL AGENCY SECTION

23.1 Central Agency Section (CAS) was set-up in the year 1950. This office is responsible for conducting litigation before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on behalf of all Ministries/



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Departments of the Central Government and also on behalf of National Capital Territory of Delhi, Union Territories (excluding Pondicherry and J&K), the office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India and all field offices under CAG. Special Leave Petitions/Appeals/& other petitions in certain matters on behalf of Union of India are filed after obtaining opinion of Ld. Law Officers on the feasibility of filing Special Leave Petitions/Appeals in the Supreme Court through Central Agency Section. During the year 2024, Central Agency is headed by a Senior Government Advocate (a Joint Secretary Level Officer) and he is assisted by 03 Additional Government Advocate, 02 Deputy Government Advocates, 01 Assistant Government Advocate and 02 Consultants (out of these 8 are Advocates-on-Record). There are 13 Law Officers and 1029 Legal Government Panel Counsels. The Central Agency Section functions from the Supreme Court Compound, New Delhi.

23.2 The functions of the Central Agency Section are as under:

- References of the Ministries/ Departments of Government of India received through the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice to obtain the opinion of Ld. Attorney General, Ld. Solicitor General and Ld. Additional Solicitor Generals.
- Engagement of Law Officers / approved Panel Counsels for various cases.
- Conduct and supervision of litigation on behalf of Union of India/ NCT of Delhi, C & AG and Union Territories in the Supreme Court of India.
- Supervision of Records, payment of fee bills of Law Officers, Panel Counsels, Computer Typists and Photocopy Machine Operators.

23.3 Government Advocates in the Central Agency Section require the qualification of Advocate-on-Record of the Supreme Court. They act, plead and appear before the Supreme Court in matters pertaining to the Union of India, NCT of Delhi, C&AG and Union Territories as per the Supreme Court Rules.

23.4 At present, the Litigation work in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has been distributed among 07 Units which are headed by AORs posted in Central Agency Section. Each Unit has been assigned various Ministries/Departments. The details are as below:-

Unit	Name of the AoR	Contact Details	Ministries/Departments/Other Assignments
Unit-I	Shri M K Maroria, Sr. Govt. Advocate & In-Charge, CAS E-mail: Ascas-dola@gov.in Mk.maroria@nic.in	Tel:23382136	In-charge, Central Agency Section NCT of Delhi, Civil Aviation, Tourism, Defence, Central Bureau of Investigation, PMO Settlement of List.

Unit-II	Shri Raj Bahadur, Addl. Govt. Advocate E-mail: bahadur.raj@gov.in	Tel:23384367	CBDT, Commerce, Economic Affairs, Expenditure, Financial Services, Industry, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministries/Departments not allocated to any other Advocate.
Unit-III	Shri G S Makker, Addl. Govt. Advocate E-mail: Gs.makkar@gov.in	Tel:23389869	Department of Revenue, CBIC including, COFEPOSA, DRI, Atomic Energy, AYUSH, Chemical & Fertilizers, Coal, Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Mines, Power, Road Transport & Highways.
Unit-IV	Shri Amrish Kumar, Addl. Govt. Advocate E-mail: amrish.kumar76@gov.in	Tel:23387813	CAG, New & Renewable Energy, NITI Aayog, Port Shipping & Waterways, Labour & Employment, Micro Small & Medium Enterprises.
Unit-V	Dr. N Visakamurthy, Dy. Govt. Advocate E-mail: n.visakamurthy@nic.in	Tel:20819541	DONER, Earth Sciences, Fisheries, Statistics & Programme Implementation, Science & Technology, Tribal Affairs, Textiles, Women & Child Development, Rural Development, Jal Shakti, Panchayati Raj, Petroleum & Natural Gas, Social Justice, Space, Sports & Youth Affairs, Steel, Planning, Skill Development.
Unit-VI	Shri S N Teral, Consultant E-mail: shreekant.nt@nic.in	Tel:23382450	Department of Personnel & Training, Union Public Service Commission, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Cooperation, Consumer Affairs, Culture, Food & Public Distribution,

			Food Processing, Union Territories of India (Chandigarh, Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Ladakh and Daman & Diu.)
Unit-VII-A	Shri A K Sharma, Consultant E-mail: aksharma.aor@gov.in aksnaji@gmail.com	Tel:23383619	Cabinet Secretariat, Ministry of Law & Justice, Ministry of Home Affairs (including Narcotics- Home & Revenue), Enforcement Directorate.
Unit-VII-B	Shri Sudarshan Lamba, Asst. Govt. Advocate E-mail: sudarshan.lamba@gov.in	Tel:23383231	Housing & Urban Affairs, Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, Information & Broadcasting, Minority Affairs, Parliamentary Affairs, Railways, Corporate Affairs, Electronics & Information Technology, Education, Health & Family Welfare and Communication.

23.5 As per computerized record of Central Agency Section during the period from 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024, the Central Agency Section has received 3784 references for advice/opinion from various Ministries/Departments of Government of India, NCT of Delhi, CAG and Union Territories for examining the feasibility of filing SLPs/Appeals & other petitions before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in which the Union of India or Union Territories are either petitioner or respondent and 9589 new cases have been filed during this period.

S. No.	Description	Number of Cases
1.	Number of Matters listed for hearing in the year 2024	20500
1.	Number of references received in CAS for seeking Legal opinion for filing SLP during the year 2024	3784
2.	Number of cases filed in the year 2024	9589
3.	Number of cases decided in the year 2024	3500 approx.

* Data collected from Legal Information Management and Briefing System (LIMBS).

23.6 PAYMENT OF PANEL COUNSEL FEE

With the implementation of Legal Information Management and Briefing System (*LIMBS*) in CAS, payment of panel counsel fee has become online. The dockets/work orders are now issued through LIMBS. Law Officers/Panel Counsels, Panel Typists/Photocopiers submit their bills online and subsequently the bills are processed on PFMS portal. The panel counsels are paid their fees as per the rates prescribed by the Government. An amount of Rs. 43,99,77,000/- has been paid to Law Officers and Panel Counsels in the Financial Year 2024-25 (till 31.12.2024).

23.7 COURT FEE

In case where large amounts of court fee are required to be paid the concerned Ministries/Departments are making arrangements for payment of court fee through M/s Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL). However, for smaller amount of court fee, Central Agency Section has entered into an arrangement for e-payment of court fee with Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL). Total payment of Court Fee in the Financial Year 2024-25 is Rs. 67,470/- (approx).

23.8 Statement Showing Total Number Employees In CAS as on 31.12.2024:-

Group	Total	SC	%	ST	%	OBC	%	PH	%
A	13	2	15.38	-----	-----	4	30.76	01	7.69
B	12	2	16.66	00	-----	4	33.33	01	8.33
C	24	12	50	01	4.16	02	8.32	-----	-----
Total	49	16	32.65	01	0.20	10	20.4	2	4.08

(*) 05 Consultants and 01 Legal Research Associate and have been hired in the Central Agency Section and they have not been included in the above table.

(#) There are no ex-servicemen in CAS as on 31.12.2024

➤ Number of regular female employees working in Central Agency Section

Group A	Group B	Group C	Total
0	01	01	02

23.09 PAYMENT OF COMPUTER TYPIST/PHOTOSTAT OPERATORS

A panel of Computer Typists/ Photostat Machine Operators has been constituted for discharging the work relating to litigation. The bills are submitted through LIMBS and the payment of their bills is made after scrutiny from all aspects. Total payment made to Typist & Photostat Operators during the Financial Year 2024-25 is Rs.3,09,86,340/-.

23.10 BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-25

The budget allocation for the financial year 2024-25 is Rs.49.75 Crores which includes Rs.38.65 Crores for Professional Services Head.

23.11 LIBRARY, CENTRAL AGENCY SECTION

Central Agency Section maintains a Library which maintains various kinds of books e.g. Law Books, Bare Acts, Newspapers, Magazines etc. **Central Agency Section** also procures many updated law books/Bare Acts as per the demand of the officers. SCC online for 5 users is timely renewed. The routine work like issue of books, payment of various bills, order placed for law books, clipping of news on Supreme Court and legal research from online software etc. are also done accordingly

23.12 ACHIEVEMENTS OF CAS DURING THE YEAR 2024-25

- I. Central Agency Section (CAS) has shifted to E-Office Regime. Further, all the Officers/ Officials in Litigation Units of CAS have been instructed to send all the files relating to Court Cases to all the concerned Law Officers/Panel Counsels through E-Office or as soft copy through Email only instead of physical files.
- II. A Unified Software Legal Information Management and Briefing System (*LIMBS*) has been implemented in CAS. With the implementation of this web based application (i.e. *LIMBS*), CAS has done away with manual acceptance of bills and related documents from Law Officers and Panel Advocates and processing these bills manually and has shifted to digitized form of working. Now the dockets/work orders are being issued mandatorily through *LIMBS*, bills and related documents are being submitted by Law Officers/Panel Counsels/Panel Typists/Photocopiers through *LIMBS* and payment to the concerned are also being made through *LIMBS* only.
- III. This year, with the new update in *LIMBS*, the SLPs/Appeals/& other petitions which have been assigned for drafting to Panel Counsels are required to be submitted within the period of 07 days, failing which, the Docket gets retrieved automatically. Consequent to this update, the delay in Drafting has reduced drastically.
- IV. After the Court Work, a daily review meeting under the chairmanship of In-Charge, CAS is held in his Chamber among all the AoRs and Unit heads in order to discuss the matters listed for hearing on the day and the important matters listed for hearing on the next day. Subsequently, the outcome of the important matters is sent to higher authorities.
- V. In addition, e-HRMS (Human Resource Management System) has also been implemented in CAS for digitizing HR processes in this office.

23.13 EVENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY IN CAS

- i. Swachhta Pledge was organized in Central Agency Section on 17.05.2024 administered by Sh. M K Maroria, Sr. Govt. Advocate.



(A picture of Shri M K Maroria, Sr. Govt. Advocate, CAS taking pledge along with the Officers/Officials of CAS.)

ii. Celebration of International Yoga Day, 21st June 2024 in Central Agency Section.





(Some Pictures of Sh. M K Maroria, In-Charge, CAS participating in Yoga Session with the Officers/Officials of CAS.)

iii. In order to ensure the smooth conduct of Litigation in Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, a meeting was held among Ld. Law Officers, Law Secretary and Govt. Advocates on 07.07.2024.



(A picture of Law Secretary & In-Charge, CAS welcoming Ld. Law Officers with a bouquet of flowers.)

iv. Preamble Reading Ceremony in the Corridor of Central Agency Section on account of Constitution Day, 26th Nov 2024.



(A picture of Sh. M K Maroria, In-Charge, CAS reading the Preamble with Officers/Officials of Central Agency Section.

v. Integrity Pledge was organized by Central Agency Section on the commence of Vigilance Awareness Week i.e. 28th Oct 2024 to 03rd Nov 2024.



(A picture of Sh. M K Maroria, In-Charge, CAS taking the pledge with the Officers/Officials of Central Agency Section)

- vi. 100 Indoor plants have been placed in the Central Agency Section for the purpose of Beautification of CAS under the Swachta Action Plan 2024.

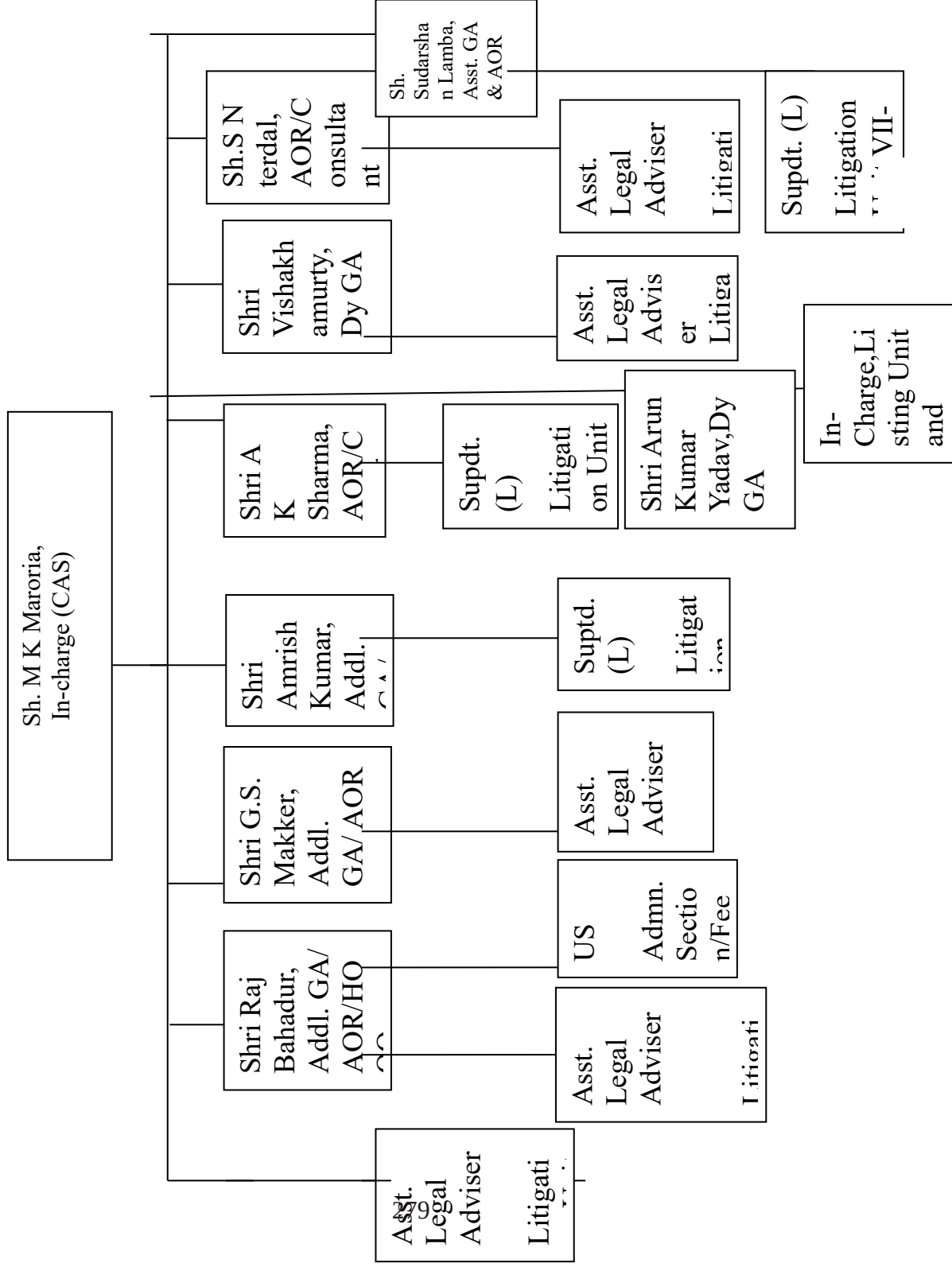


(A picture of the Gallery of Central Agency Section)



(A picture of the Gallery of 2nd Floor, ILI Building)

A Flow-Chart of Organizational Set-Up of Central Agency Section for 2024-25 is placed below:-



24. INCOME-TAX APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

24.1 Origin Section 252 of the Income-tax Act, 1961 provides that the Central Government shall constitute an Appellate Tribunal consisting of as many Judicial Members and Accountant Members as it thinks fit, to exercise the powers and discharge the functions conferred on the Appellate Tribunal by the said Act. The Income-tax Appellate Tribunal was established on 25th January, 1941, in pursuance of a similar provision contained in the erstwhile Indian Income-tax Act, 1922.

24.2 Constitution

As per the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021 and the Rules framed thereunder, *vide* notification G.S.R. 635(E) dated 15th September, 2021 issued by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue), New Delhi; a person shall not be qualified for appointment as,

- a. *President* unless he is a sitting or retired Judge of a High Court and who has completed not less than seven years of service as a Judge in a High Court or a Vice-President of the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal;
- b. *Vice-President*, unless he has been a Member; and
- c. *Judicial Member*, unless,
 - i. he has, for a combined period of ten years, been a District Judge and Additional District Judge; or
 - ii. he has been a member of the Indian Legal Service with ten years of experience in litigation and has held a post of Additional Secretary or any equivalent or higher post for two years; or
 - iii. he has been an advocate for ten years with substantial experience in litigation under Income-tax laws in Income-tax Appellate Tribunal, High Court or Supreme Court;
- d. *Accountant Member*, unless,
 - i. he has for twenty-five years been in the practice of accountancy,
 - (A) as a chartered accountant under the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 (38 of 1949); or
 - (B) as a registered accountant under any law formerly in force; or partly as such registered accountant and partly as a chartered accountant; or
 - ii. he has been a member of the Indian Revenue Service (Income-tax Service Group 'A') and has held the post of Principal Commissioner of Income-tax or any equivalent or higher post and has performed judicial, quasi-judicial or adjudicating function for three years.

24.3 Bench Strength

As constituted presently, the Tribunal consists of 63 Benches. For 63 Benches spread over 30 stations (including 02 Circuit Benches) throughout the country, present sanctioned strength of Members is 126 including one (01) President and ten (10) Zonal Vice-Presidents. The present position of sanctioned, filled up and vacant post as on 31.12.2024 is as under:-

Sr.No.	Posts	Sanctioned	Filled up	Vacant
1	President	01	01	00
2	Vice-President	10	10	00
3	Accountant Member	63	53	10
4	Judicial Member	63	57	06
	TOTAL	126*	110**	16

* Including 01 President and 10 Vice-Presidents.

** including 01 President and 10 Vice-Presidents.

24.4 Powers and Functions

The Income-tax Appellate Tribunal, constituted under the Income-tax Act, deals with second appeals in all matters of direct taxes, including appeals against the revisionary orders of Administrative Commissioners as well as orders denying registration under Section 12A or under Section 80G of the Income-tax Act 1961, etc. The Appellate Tribunal also deals with second appeals in all matters of the Black Money (Undisclosed foreign income and assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015 including any revisionary order passed by the Principal Commissioner/Commissioner under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015.

The powers and functions of the Appellate Tribunal are exercised and discharged by the Benches constituted by the President of the Tribunal from amongst the Members thereof. Generally, a Bench consists of one Judicial Member and one Accountant Member. However, in appropriate cases, at the discretion of the President, a Bench may consist of more than two Members. The President or any other Member of Tribunal authorised in this behalf by the Central Government may, sitting singly, dispose of any case which has been allotted to the Bench of which he is a Member and which pertains to an assessee whose total income as computed by the Assessing Officer in that case does not exceed fifty (50) lakhs rupees and the President may, for the disposal of any particular case, constitute a Special Bench consisting of three or more Members, one of whom shall necessarily be a Judicial Member and one Accountant Member, subject to the provisions of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

24.5 Procedure and Rules

The Appellate Tribunal has the power to regulate its own procedure and the procedure of its Benches in all matters arising out of the exercise of its powers or in the discharge of its functions, including the places at which the Benches shall hold their sittings.

The Appellate Tribunal has, accordingly, framed its own rules called the Income-tax (Appellate Tribunal) Rules, 1963. The said Rules are best suited for the expeditious disposal of all matters pending before the Appellate Tribunal.

The Appellate Tribunal functions as the final fact finding authority not only in the matters concerning Income-tax but also in all matters of taxation such as Wealth-tax, Gift-tax, etc. The Appellate Tribunal is manned by efficient personnel discharging their functions to the best of their ability and balancing the scale of justice evenly between the tax payer and the Revenue, without fear or favour.

The matters, which the Appellate Tribunal disposes, are of vital importance involving revenue to the tune of several crores. The Tribunal is entrusted with the responsible task of deciding intricate questions of law and fact. The presence of both the Judicial and Accountant Members ensures that Questions of Law and facts, which arise for consideration are properly enquired into and that the accountancy point, as well as the legal angle, are weighed properly. The Appellate Tribunal allows the representatives of both the parties to appear before it and invariably hears them before passing any order. The Members hear the parties, peruse the evidence on record, make their own notes, refer to the authorities cited at the Bar, confer among themselves and then pass final orders. The procedure, which ensures that Questions of fact and law are properly and judicially decided, is by itself a succour to the parties and inference drawn by the Tribunals are found to be beyond reproach.

24.6 Pendency of Appeals

At the beginning of year 2024 i.e. 01.01.2024, the Pendency of the appeals was **34429** and upto 31.12.2024 the number of appeals pending in the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal stands at **43675**.

It may be seen from the following table that the in the year 2024 physical verification of pending appeals was carried out at 04 Benches of ITAT i.e. at ITAT, Delhi, Cochin, Rajkot and Lucknow. Due to which the institution has increased resultantly the pendency has increased from the previous year.

Year	Institution	Disposal	Pendency at the end of year
2020	14617	24256	79754
2021	15046	40473	54315
2022	21364	39096	38311

2023	29126	33008	34429
2024	47613	38367	43675

24.7 Efforts for reduction of pendency

Necessary instructions have already been issued to all the Benches to scrutinize and identify cases which are covered by decisions of I.T.A.T., High Courts, and the Supreme Court and post them on priority basis. This includes group and small matters. The members of the Bar have also been requested to bring all such covered cases to the notice of I.T.A.T., for out of turn posting. Besides, appeals dealing with Search & Seizure matters and appeals against Order passed under Section 263 by the Administrative Commissioners are also given priority in their disposal. Similarly, appeals against the denial of registration to charitable institutions under Section 12A and denial of recognition under Section 80 G are also given priority. Appeals of Senior Citizens are also taken up for priority hearing, wherever the Tribunal is so approached. Further, as per amendment made in Income Tax Act, 1961 by Finance Act, 2015 now the appeal involving assessed income upto Rs. 50 lakhs can be heard by Single Member Bench. The said amendment has further in speedy disposal of cases. The pendency figure of Single Member Cases is as under:-

Month	Total Pendency
January, 2024	3834
February, 2024	4359
March, 2024	4830
April, 2024	5276
May, 2024	5618
June, 2024	5596
July, 2024	5602
August, 2024	5829
September, 2024	5712
October, 2024	5826
November, 2024	5915
December, 2024	5917

The pendency figure of Wealth Tax Cases is as under:-

Month	Total Pendency
January, 2024	63
February, 2024	51
March, 2024	56
April, 2024	53
May, 2024	44
June, 2024	44
July, 2024	37
August, 2024	24
September, 2024	39
October, 2024	27
November, 2024	27
December, 2024	31

Out of 126 sanctioned post of Members, required for running 63 Benches of the ITAT, 110 posts of Members are filled up. Despite all the constraints imposed by Covid-19 pandemic, the Tribunal made serious and honest attempts to continue with dispensing impartial, easy and speedy justice to the tax litigants. ITAT has started hearing of cases through Video Conferencing. The Court Room hearing by way of Video Conferencing were devised and carried out by the existing staff of the ITAT and no outside expert agency was utilized. The system of virtual court hearing has yielded satisfactory results.

24.8 Computerization

The process of computerization started in the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal in early 2000 and in recent years, this process has gained great momentum with several innovative projects being implemented in day-to-day activities of the Tribunal. Over the years, various projects have been undertaken and implemented by the Tribunal to live up to its motto “**Nishpaksh Sulabh Satvar Nyay**”. The details of such projects are as under: -

- ITAT Online Project:** This project was the first initiative to automate the process of judicial administration in the Tribunal starting from receipt and registration of appeals and applications up to the disposal and uploading of Tribunal orders. Activities like

registration, data updation, Tribunal order uploading, etc., are carried out through the web application. Web-cum-Database Server of this project has been set up in the NIC Cloud Server.

- b. **ITAT Official Website:** ITAT Official Website provides dynamic information like Cause Lists, Constitution, Case Status, Tribunal Orders, etc. Besides, information like Holiday Lists, Tenders and Auctions, Notice Boards, Right to Information are also published.
- c. **Digital Display Boards:** As an innovative and eco-friendly step, physical notice boards have been replaced by digital notice boards at ITAT, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Surat and Raipur Benches. Cause Lists, Constitutions, Friday lists, etc. are being digitally displayed in the digital notice boards.
- d. **Mobile Application:** The Android version of ITAT Judicial Information Portal has been developed and released for the benefit of appellants, respondents as well as their counsels. The Application will be re-designed to suit the latest mobile devices and environments.
- e. **JudiSIS Application:** JudiSIS is an internal desktop-based application developed in-house for managing various day-to-day judicial activities. JudiSIS enables the internal users to manage cause lists, hearings, preparation of notices, send email communications, updation of case status and publication of daily order-sheets on website, generation of periodical statements, etc.
- f. **Budget and Expenditure Monitoring System:** For monitoring and consolidating the budget availability and expenditure position efficiently and accurately in real-time basis, ITAT has implemented an online application namely BudgetMan, developed by in-house talent. This application has enabled the Head Office to generate periodical budgetary statements on click of a button.
- g. **CCTV Cameras:** CCTV Cameras with audio and video recording facilities have been installed in courtrooms and other important entry points at all Benches of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal.
- h. **E-Filing Portal:** ITAT has launched the e-Filing Portal for facilitating electronic filing of appeals and applications, and petitions and documents therein, by the stakeholders. So far, over 27,500 appeals by assessees and over 10,300 appeals by the department were filed through the e-Filing Portal.
- i. **Publishing of Daily Orders:** As a major step in promoting transparency in judicial administration, ITAT has started publishing the daily orders passed by various Benches of the Tribunal on the official website. All the Members have started signing the daily order sheets generated by the JudiSIS software (an in-house internal judicial application). These daily orders appear in the case details page on ITAT Judicial Information Portal.

- j. **ITAT Members' e-Library Portal:** ITAT Members' e-Library Portal was launched on 12th August 2022. This portal provides access to digital libraries of Hon'ble Supreme Court, various High Courts to the Members of the ITAT. This portal also provides seamless access to several tax portals.
- k. **Electronic Communication of Hearing Notices, etc.:** ITAT commenced electronic Communication of Acknowledgement of Filing of Appeals, Hearing Notices, Defect Notices, etc. to the parties.
- l. **Implementation of e-Office:** With the co-operation of Department of Legal Affairs, E-Office software has been implemented in the ITAT for forwarding various proposals to Department of Legal Affairs electronically. ITAT is also contemplating to implement eFile and SPARROW modules of eOffice for intra-organizational use.
- m. **API linkage with LIMBS:** For the purpose of minimizing manual data entry, LIMBS portal has been integrated through APIs with various Courts/Tribunal. Recently, the LIMBS portal has been linked with ITAT which shall facilitate seamless data transfer between the applications and shall help in auto updation of records on the LIMBS portal pertaining to cases in ITAT.
- n. **Paperless Courtrooms:** Consequent to implementation of e-Filing in the ITAT, the appeals and applications are filed in electronic form. This led to setting up of Paperless Courtrooms. The essential software interface has been developed to allow members to access files seamlessly before, during and after hearings. The courtroom infrastructure is being upgraded to meet the requirements of Paperless Courtrooms.
- o. **Cyber Security:** ITAT is fully cognizant of the growing cyber security threats and the need to protect the IT infrastructure from the threats by implementing strong cybersecurity measures and follow best practices. Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and National Informatics Centre, ITAT has been circulated to all stakeholders for strict adherence. ITAT has also taken up the security audit of the website and web application to ensure that Digital Nagriks experience a safe and trusted online experience with the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal.
- p. **Mandatory e-Filing of Revenue Appeals:** In compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, ITAT has implemented the mandatory e-filing of appeals, etc. by the Income Tax Department w.e.f. 30.06.2023. From the same date, the erstwhile requirement of physical submission of appeals after e-filing was also done away with.
- q. **Virtual / Hybrid Hearings:** In compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, ITAT has implemented hybrid / virtual hearings at all Benches of the Tribunal in letter and spirit. Free and high-speed wireless internet is being provided at all Benches for the use of stakeholders. Necessary infrastructure upgradation has been taken up actively.

24.9 Recent Achievements in Year 2024-25

- a. **e-Filing of Appeals and Applications:** Between April and December 2024, more than 5,760 appeals and applications were filed by the Department through the e-Filing Portal. Though e-Filing is optional for Assessee, a total number of 14,910 appeals and applications were also filed by the Assessee through e-Filing Portal. It is important to note that a large number of appeals (55%) are being filed through the e-Filing Portal.
- b. **Virtual / Hybrid Hearings:** In compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, ITAT has enabled hybrid / virtual hearings at all Benches of the Tribunal. Free and high-speed wireless internet is being provided at all Benches for the use of stakeholders.
- c. **Re-development of ITAT Website and Web Application:** As required by the guidelines of National Informatics Centre, ITAT has re-developed and security-audited the website and web application including the e-Filing Portal to meet the security standards set by the CERT-In. The re-developed application is migrated to the NICSI Cloud Server at NDC, Bhubaneswar.
- d. **State-of-the-Art Court Rooms:** Court Rooms at new office premises of ITAT, Delhi and Lucknow Benches have been equipped with state-of-the-art video conferencing infrastructure to provide better Hybrid / Virtual Hearing experience to the stakeholders.
- e. **Infrastructure Up-gradation:** ITAT has taken up the infrastructure upgradation to meet the needs of Hybrid Hearings, Paperless Courtrooms, etc. Accordingly, ITAT has been replacing the old and obsolete Computers, printers and other equipment with the latest ones in a phased manner. 39 nos. of new laptops have been provided to the new members of ITAT. High-speed internet connectivity is being provided at every bench for meeting the bandwidth requirements of various projects and applications.
- f. **RTI Online Portal:** All Public Authorities of ITAT have been on-boarded on the RTI Online Portal (<https://rtionline.gov.in>) enabling the applicants to file their request for information and receive the response online.

24.10 Other Important Events and Activities In Year 2024-25

a. ITAT FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATION

ITAT's Foundation Day was celebrated on 25.01.2024 at various Benches of ITAT in the year 2024-25.

83RD FOUNDATION DAY OF ITAT HELD AT ITAT MUMBAI BENCHES, MUMBAI



**b. INAUGURATION OF NEW OFFICE CUM-RESIDENTIAL PREMISES OF
ITAT, LUCKNOW BENCHES**

Inauguration of new office-cum residential Premises of ITAT, Lucknow Benches by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law & Justice, Minister of State for parliamentary Affairs, on 29.01.2024. One of the photos of this auspicious moments of the inauguration of the new building is given below: -



c. WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

Women's Day Celebration was conducted at various Benches on 08th March, 2024.
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY HELD ON 08TH MARCH, 2024 AT ITAT, MUMBAI



d. YOGA DAY CELEBRATION

International Day of Yoga was celebrated on 21st June, 2024 in all Benches of ITAT.

INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY HELD ON 21.06.2024 AT ITAT, MUMBAI





INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY HELD ON 21.06.2024 AT ITAT, HYDERABAD



INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY HELD ON 21.06.2024 AT ITAT, BANGALORE



INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY HELD ON 21.06.2024 AT ITAT, AHMEDABAD



INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY HELD ON 21.06.2024 AT ITAT, KOLKATA



e. INTERACTIVE MEETING WITH THE STAKEHOLDERS OF ITAT

An interactive meeting with the stakeholders of ITAT was conducted at Mumbai on 29th June, 2024. Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Law & Justice chaired the meeting. Justice (Retd.) C. V. Bhadang, President, ITAT, Vice President, ITAT, Delhi Zone, Members of Bar Association and officers of Income Tax Department attended the meeting.

AN INTERACTIVE MEETING WITH THE STAKEHOLDERS OF ITAT ON 29TH JUNE, 2024.





f. INAUGURATION OF NEW OFFICE PREMISES OF ITAT, DELHI BENCHES, NEW DELHI ON 19.07.2024

The new office Premises of ITAT, Delhi Benches, New Delhi in Tower “B” Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi was inaugurated by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon’ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Law & Justice on 19.07.2024. Some of the photos of this auspicious moments of the inauguration of the new building are given below: -

INAUGURATION OF ITAT , DELHI BENCHES , NEW DELHI NEW OFFICE BUILDING AT WTC, NAUROJI NAGAR ON 19TH JULY, 2024





g. HINDI DIWAS & HINDI PAKHWADA

Inauguration of the Hindi Pakhwada at New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Shri. Amit Shah, Hon'ble Home Minister of India. All the Benches of the ITAT organized Hindi Diwas on 14.09.2024 and Hindi Pakhwada successfully in the month of September, 2024.

HINDI DIWAS AND HINDI PAKHWADA HELD AT ITAT MUMBAI ON 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2024



h. WORLD HEART DAY

World Heart Day was celebrated at ITAT, Mumbai Benches on 29th September, 2024 virtually at all Benches participated virtually.

WORLD HEART DAY HELD AT ITAT, MUMBAI ON 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2024



i. Workshop on “POSH” Act in ITAT

An awareness & training programme on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (“POSH Act”) was organized at ITAT, Mumbai on 18th October, 2024 in order to upskill the members of the Internal Committee constituted under the Act, on the subject and to sensitize employees on the issues and its implications at workplace. All the Bench/es of ITAT attended the training programme virtually. The Hon’ble dignitary namely Hon’ble Ms. Justice (Retd.) Mridula Bhatkar and Advocate Varsha Bhogle shared their experiences and knowledge on the aspects of POSH Act.

j. Fit India SWACHHTA FREEDOM RUN 2.0

Fit India SWACHHTA FREEDOM RUN 2.0 was organised at ITAT, Mumbai Benches, Mumbai on 30th October, 2024 and also at various Benches of ITAT.

FIT INDIA SWACHHTA FREEDOM RUN 2.0 HELD AT ITAT MUMBAI ON 30TH OCTOBER, 2024





FIT INDIA SWACHHTA FREEDOM RUN 2.0 HELD AT ITAT BANGALORE ON 30TH OCTOBER, 2024



FIT INDIA SWACHHTA FREEDOM RUN 2.0 HELD AT ITAT AHMEDABAD ON 30TH OCTOBER, 2024



FIT INDIA SWACHHTA FREEDOM RUN 2.0 HELD AT ITAT PUNE ON 30TH OCTOBER, 2024



k. IN HOUSE TRAINING PROGRAM ON OFFICE ADMINISTRATION AND PRODCEDURES

A training program covering various topics such as Seniority & Promotion, Reservation, Concession and Roster Maintenance, APAR, MACP & ACP, and Departmental Promotion Committee was conducted at ITAT, Mumbai on 29th November, 2024, 2nd to 4th December, 2024 and 16th to 18th December, 2024. The objective of the training program was to enhance the skills, abilities and knowledge on various subject for the purpose of increasing efficiency of employees in performing their day-to-day office work. The sessions were conducted by Shri V. R. Ramankutty, ICAS (Retd.) Faculty, Institute of Government Accounts & Finance.

IN HOUSE TRAINING PROGRAM ON OFFICE ADMINISTRATION AND PRODCEDURES HELD AT ITAT, MUMBAI ON 29TH NOVEMBER, 2024 TO 18TH DECEMBER, 2024



1. CONSTITUTION DAY

Constitution Day was celebrated at all Benches and pledge was administered on 26th November, 2024.

CONSTITUTION DAY PLEDGE TAKEN ON 26TH NOVEMBER, 2024 AT ITAT, MUMBAI



CONSTITUTION DAY PLEDGE TAKEN ON 26TH NOVEMBER, 2024 AT ITAT, CHENNAI



CONSTITUTION DAY PLEDGE TAKEN ON 26TH NOVEMBER, 2024 AT ITAT ALLAHABAD



24.11 The Premises of Benches of ITAT

At the following stations the ITAT is functioning from its own building:

- i. Jaipur
- ii. Bangalore
- iii. Cuttack
- iv. Lucknow
- v. Delhi

At the following stations, parcels of land have been purchased by the ITAT for construction of office-cum-residential building:

- i. Ahmedabad
- ii. Kolkata
- iii. Guwahati
- iv. Pune

24.12 Details of status of Land & Buildings

- i. **Ahmedabad:** A land admeasuring 11,559 sq Mtrs has been allotted for construction of office building/Staff Quarters for ITAT, Ahmedabad Benches, Ahmedabad land at FP No. 60, TP No. 694 of Joje Sola, Tal. Ghatlodiya for Rs. 76,46,16,869/- allotted by the state Government of Gujarat and transferred/entered in Govt. land records in the

- name of ITAT, Ahmedabad, vide U.O. dtd. 12.10.2021. The Preliminary Estimate received from CPWD, Ahmedabad for Rs.77.82 crores has been concurred by Ministry vide its letter dated 09.07.2022. Authorization issued for Rs.11,00,00,000/- (Rs.10,00,00,000 for Civil Work and Rs.1,00,00,000 for Electrical Work) against the concurrence of Rs.24,00,00,000/- towards construction of office building of ITAT, Ahmedabad for F.Y.2023-24. Out of that, an amount of Rs.5,06,05,446/- (Rs.4,09,27,716/- for Civil work and Rs.96,77,730/- for electrical work) has been surrendered in the last F.Y. 2023-24. In the current F.Y. 2024-25 an authorization issued for an amount of Rs. 10,21,77,730/- towards construction of office building of ITAT, Ahmedabad.
- ii. **Kolkata:** The WBHIDCO Ltd. has allotted 1.25 Acres of leasehold land vide letter dated 19.09.2019 at Financial & legal Hub developed by West Bengal Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (WBHIDCO). The entire consideration amount of Rs.16 Crores has been paid to the West Bengal Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (WBHIDCO) in the F.Y. 2019-20. A Preliminary Estimate received from CPWD, Kolkata for Rs. 66.39 crores has been concurred by Ministry vide its letter dated 09.07.2022. Authorisation issued for Rs.10,00,00,000/- to CPWD, Kolkata against the concurrence of Rs.35,00,00,000/- towards construction of office building of ITAT, Kolkata for F.Y.2023-24. Out of that, an amount of Rs.3,00,00,000 has been surrendered in the last F.Y. 2023-24. In the current F.Y. 2024-25 an authorization issued for an amount for Rs. 10,00,00,000/- to CPWD, Kolkata towards construction of office building of ITAT, Kolkata.
 - iii. **Guwahati:** ITAT purchased 1 Bigha, 3 Katha, 1 Lessa at Fancy Bazar, Uzanbazar, Guwahati from Central Inland Water Transport Corporation (CIWTC), A Govt. of India Undertaking Organization, under Ministry of Shipping for a consideration amount of Rs.4,03,00,000/-. Although the sale deed the land has since been executed, its transfer in the name of the ITAT is however, awaited. The process of transfer the land is in progress through a series of meetings and correspondence with the Director (NER) of Inland Waterways Authority of India, Ministry of Shipping, Govt. of India, the Regional Office, Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) at Guwahati. The matter has also been taken up at the level of Hon'ble Law Minister and Hon'ble Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways for handing over of the land to ITAT Bench at Guwahati.
 - iv. **Pune:** ITAT has acquired 4000 Sq. Mtrs. Land at Akrudi from Pimpri Chinchwad New Township Development Authority at a cost of Rs. 1.20 Crores in 1998 for construction of Office-cum-Residential complex. Land being outside the city limits and logistically inconvenient, objections were raised by the Bar Associations and other stakeholders. ITAT has proposed Ministry of Law & Justice vide D.O. letter dated 01.02.2022 of the then President, ITAT to consider utilization of land for setting-up a useful Resource Centre for instance, a residential legal Academy/training Centre for India Legal Service Officers, etc. to enable optimum utilization of the land, including the use of such facility by ITAT also for training its Officers and Staff.

24.13 Facilities for Members

The Hon'ble Supreme Court *vide* order dated 19.9.2003 in SLP (L) Mos.6905/1998 & TP(C) Nos. 659 and 672-673 of 1998 in the case of Union of India and others Vs. All Gujarat Federation of Tax Consultants, had directed the Government to provide certain facilities to the Members of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal and every effort has been made by the ITAT to provide such facilities to the Members.

24.14 Benevolent Fund

A Benevolent Fund, the corpus of which has been built out of voluntary contributions by the officers and staff, also exists in the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal. The President, Income-tax Appellate Tribunal, is the patron. Officers and staff contribute voluntarily to this fund and disbursements are made to officials in need of medical or other emergent situations on the recommendation of Committee formed under the Rules.

24.15 Right to Information Act, 2005

RTI Act, 2005 has already been implemented by the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal. All the 28 stations (63 Benches) of ITAT are registered on the website of CIC, Delhi. For facilitating quicker access of information to the RTI applicants in keeping with the letter and spirit of the RTI Act, all 28 Public Authorities of ITAT have been brought under the RTI Online Portal (rtionline.gov.in).

24.16 Implementation of Official Language Policy

In accordance with the provisions of the Official Language Act, 1963, every endeavour is being made to ensure the progressive use of Hindi in the Benches of the ITAT.

With a view of keeping a constant monitoring on the implementation of the official language policy prescribed by Department of official language, Government of India and to provide guidance, as and when required, Official Language Implementation Committees (OLICs) have been constituted at all the Benches of Income-tax Appellate Tribunal.

Progress in achieving the targets set for Hindi correspondence and implementation of Official Language Policies is monitored by the Official Language Implementation Committee (OLIC) of the concerned Bench and periodical reports, forwarded by the Benches regarding progressive use of Hindi, are regularly scrutinized by Head Office at Mumbai. Training in Hindi/Hindi Typing/Hindi Stenography is offered by nominating sufficient number of officials under Hindi Teaching Scheme, of the Department of Official language, Government of India.

Hindi workshops are also held in all the Benches for proper implementation of the Official Language policy and to encourage use of Hindi and to remove the hesitation of officers / employees to work in Hindi. This year sufficient funds are provided to purchase Hindi Books at all the Benches. All Benches of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal were instructed to make expenditure towards purchase of Hindi Books (i.e. 50% of total library grant) as per the Official Language policy and in accordance with the targets fixed by the Department of Official Language, Government of India.

With a view to create awareness with regard to the use of Hindi in official work as well as to accelerate the pace of its progressive use, Hindi Diwas and Hindi Pakhwada have been organized at all benches.

An Annual Magazine “**Srijan**” is published at Income Tax Appellate Tribunal, Mumbai. It contains articles, stories, poems and travelogues, etc. written by Members, Officers and employees of various Benches of ITAT, besides photos of the Hindi Pakhwada Programmes, Hindi Workshops.

BOOK RELEASE ON 25.01.2024 OF DEPARTMENTAL MAGAZINE “SRIJAN-2023” AT ITAT MUMBAI, COURT NO.-1



IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING REPRESENTATIVE IN SERVICES OF HANDICAPPED, SHEDULED CASTES & SCHEDULED TRIBES AND EX-SERVICEMEN, ETC.

The Government of India’s instructions regarding the concessions in appointments to the Handicapped, Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes and Ex-Serviceman etc., were duly implemented during the period under consideration. The statistics relating to representation of these categories in services of the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal are given below:

Total number of Employees of I.T.A.T. including SCs, STs, OBCs, ExS, PH as on
31.12.2024

GROUP A	No of employees	GEN	SC	ST	OBC	Ex-service	PH
President	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Vice President	10	5	1	-	4	-	-
Accountant Member	50	38	2	1	9	-	-
Judicial Member	49	36	6	0	7	-	-
Registrar	0	0	-	-	-	-	-
Deputy Registrar	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Assistant Registrar	11	6	2	1	2	-	-
Hindi Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	122	87	11	2	22	-	-

GROUP B	No of employees	GEN	SC	ST	OBC	Ex-service				PH			
						SC	ST	OBC	GEN	SC	ST	OBC	GEN
Senior P.S.	82	51	12	2	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Private Secretary	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Superintendent	6	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office Suptd.	40	24	6	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Hindi Translator	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senior Accountant	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Librarian	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	133	81	22	4	25	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

GROUP C	No of employees	GEN	SC	ST	OBC	Ex-service				PH			
						SC	ST	OBC	GEN	SC	ST	OBC	GEN
Upper Division Clerk	116	49	24	8	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Steno Grade 'D'	01	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Division Clerk	122	48	23	9	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1
Staff Car Driver	22	5	9	1	6	-	0	-	1	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	261	103	56	18	77	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3

		GEN	SC	ST	OBC	Ex-service				PH			
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	No of employees					SC	ST	OBC	GEN	SC	ST	OBC	GEN
Multi-Tasking Staff	153	43	50	14	35	0	-	1	3	4	-	2	1
TOTAL	153	43	50	14	35	0	-	1	3	4	-	2	1

NUMBER OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES WORKING IN THE ITAT AND FACILITIES PROVIDED TO THEM IN ADDITION TO THOSE GIVEN TO MALE EMPLOYEES:

INCOME TAX APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

Number of female employees working in this Department:

<u>Group A</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Group B</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>Group C</u>	<u>61</u>
<u>Multi-Tasking Staff</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>127</u>

2. **Any facilities provided to female employees in addition to those given to male employees: NIL**

PHOTOGRAPH OF IMPORTANT EVENTS HELD IN THE ITAT IN THE YEAR 2024-25:-

SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF ITAT, VISAKHAPATNAM BENCH ON 21ST DECEMBER, 2024



RELEASING THE SILVER JUBILEE INFORMATION HANDOUT ON THE OCCASION OF SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF ITAT, VISAKHAPATNAM



TREE PLANTATION DRIVE AT ITAT DELHI BENCHES, NEW DELHI



TREE PLANTATION DRIVE AT ITAT CHANDIGARH BENCHES, CHANDIGARH



TREE PLANTATION DRIVE AT ITAT PUNE BENCHES, PUNE



25. INDIA INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (“IIAC”)

25.1 ABOUT IIAC:

The India International Arbitration Centre (IIAC) was established by the India International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019. The purpose of this enactment is to create an independent and autonomous regime for institutional arbitration. IIAC has been declared as an institution of national importance.

The dispute resolution processes that are in place have a huge impact on the Indian economy and the global perception of doing business in India. To this end, the IIAC aims to inspire confidence amongst parties (both domestic and international) by providing a neutral dispute resolution platform for the resolution of commercial disputes through a seamless arbitral process.

25.2 OBJECTS OF IIAC:

- (a) to bring targeted reforms to develop itself as a flagship institution for conducting international and domestic arbitration;
- (b) to promote research and study, providing teaching and training, and organizing conferences and seminars in arbitration, conciliation, mediation, and other alternative dispute resolution matters;

- (c) to provide facilities and administrative assistance for conciliation, mediation, and arbitral proceedings;
- (d) to maintain panels of accredited arbitrators, conciliators, and mediators both at national and international levels or specialists such as surveyors and investigators;
- (e) to collaborate with other national and international institutions and organizations to ensure the credibility of the Centre as a specialised institution in arbitration and conciliation;
- (f) to set up facilities in India and abroad to promote the activities of the Centre;
- (g) to lay down parameters for different modes of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms being adopted by the Centre; and
- (h) such other objectives as it may deem fit with the approval of the Central Government.

25.3 FUNCTIONS OF IIAC:

- (a) to facilitate the conduct of arbitration and other forms of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, both international and domestic, in the manner as may be specified by the regulations;
- (b) to provide cost effective and timely services for the conduct of arbitration and conciliation at national and international levels;
- (c) to promote studies in the field of alternative dispute resolution and related matters, and to promote reforms in the system of settlement of disputes;
- (d) to undertake teaching and to provide for diffusion of knowledge of law and procedures on alternative dispute resolution and related matters and to award certificates and other academic or professional distinctions;
- (e) to impart training in alternative dispute resolution and related matters to those who are handling arbitration, conciliation, and mediation;
- (f) to co-operate with other societies, institutions and organizations, national or international for promoting alternative dispute resolution; and
- (g) to perform such other functions as may be entrusted to it by the Central Government for promoting alternative dispute resolution.

25.4 EMPANELMENT OF ARBITRATORS ON THE IIAC PANEL OF ARBITRATORS AS PER REGULATIONS:

India International Arbitration Centre (“IIAC”) initiated the process of empanelment of arbitrators on the IIAC panel of arbitrators pursuant to the India International Arbitration Centre (Criteria for Admission to the panel of arbitrators) Regulations, 2023. To that effect, IIAC has received many applications for empanelment as an Arbitrator with IIAC under categories viz. Former Judges, Advocates, Architects, Chartered Accountants, Company Secretaries, Cost & Work Accountants, Engineers, and Service etc., on IIAC’s online portal as well as through Post. Application for empanelment as an arbitrator may be made online at <https://indiaiac.org/empanelment>.

IIAC has developed a software application having a dashboard for the Chamber of Arbitration to scrutinize the applications (including consideration of eminent persons having specialized

knowledge and substantial relevant experience in the field of arbitration, identified by IIAC, for empanelment in the category of Eminent Persons) for admission to the IIAC panel of arbitrators (Domestic and/or International). Based on instructions from the Chairperson, IIAC, the Registrar forwards the profiles of the applicants (Domestic and/or International) to the Chamber of Arbitration for scrutiny and consideration as per the above said IIAC Regulations, from time to time.

For the period January, 2024 to December, 2024, IIAC has empanelled 21 (Twenty-One) persons on the IIAC Panel of Arbitrators for International Arbitration and 113 (One Hundred and Thirteen) on the IIAC Panel of Arbitrators for Domestic Arbitration. Link for accessing list of Arbitrators empanelled on the IIAC Panel of Arbitrators for domestic arbitration is available at https://indiaiac.org/arbitration/domestic_arbitrators and for international arbitration is available at https://indiaiac.org/arbitration/international_arbitrators

25.5 ARBITRATION PROCEEDINGS CONDUCTED BY IIAC AS PER REGULATIONS AND APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRATOR IN AD-HOC ARBITRATION:

IIAC administers arbitration as per the India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations, 2023. For the period January 2024 to December 2024, the IIAC has registered 03 (Three) arbitrations matters comprising of 01 (One) Domestic Arbitration matter and 02 (Two) International Arbitration matter, on the request of party (*i.e. either by uploading it on the portal provided on the website www.indiaiac.org, or by way of an e-mail to the Registrar, or by filing the physical copy of the request with IIAC*). Further, IIAC has registered 11 (Eleven) domestic arbitration matters upon receipt of a judgment, direction or order of Court referring the parties to the IIAC for arbitration. In 01 (One) ad-hoc arbitration matter, IIAC has appointed Sole Arbitrator as per India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations, 2023.

25.6 CONFERENCES ORGANISED/REPRESENTED BY IIAC

1. IIAC conducted a training session on "*How to Write an International Commercial Arbitration Award: Expert Tips for Arbitrators*" during the Delhi Arbitration Weekend 2024 (DAW 2024).
2. IIAC collaborated with Society for Construction Law India and it's Mumbai Chapter as Supporting Organisation for One Day International Conference on Construction Arbitration titled 'Catalysing robust ecosystem for Construction Dispute Resolution in India'.
3. **Contribution of IIAC towards establishment of Arbitration Bar of India:** Hon'ble Justice Hemant Gupta (Retd.), Chairperson, IIAC is the Honorary President of the Arbitration Bar of India. Presently, registered office of Arbitration Bar of India is located at IIAC premises.
4. **Interactive session with stakeholders on the topic "Dispute Resolution through India International Arbitration Centre in PSUs" organised by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).**

5. **IIAC organised a meeting on the topic "Dispute Resolution":** As part of its outreach program to showcase various initiatives and steps taken, IIAC in collaboration with the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice organised a meeting at IIAC Auditorium on 07 September 2024. Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, was the Chief Guest and Hon'ble Justice Hemant Gupta (Retd.), Chairperson, IIAC was the Guest of Honour. Meeting was attended by stakeholders from the legal fraternity, representatives of arbitral and mediation institutions, arbitrators and mediators.

25.7 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDINGS (MOU's):

25.7.1 MOU between IIAC and Digital India Bhashini Division (Bhashini), an Independent Business Division with Digital India Corporation under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology: On 27 June 2024, IIAC signed an MOU with Digital India Bhashini Division (Bhashini), an Independent Business Division with Digital India Corporation under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. The MoU underscores the collaborative efforts to integrate utilities and services of Bhashini into the IIAC's software for conduct of arbitral proceedings. The collaboration will streamline and optimize arbitration procedures, ensuring fair and swift resolutions for all parties involved.

25.7.2 Cooperation Agreement between International Commercial Arbitration Court ("ICAC") at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation, Moscow, and the IIAC, India: In a significant stride towards promoting trade and economic cooperation between economic entities of Russia and India, International Commercial Arbitration Court ("ICAC") at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation, Moscow, and the IIAC, India formalised a strategic alliance through the signing of a Cooperation Agreement dated 02 July 2024.

25.7.3 MOU between IIAC and MAHE (Manipal Academy of Higher Education): On 16 July 2024, IIAC entered into MOU with MAHE (Manipal Academy of Higher Education) to organize Training programme for Legal Professionals, Arbitrators and Non-Legal Professionals.

25.7.4 MOU between IIAC and international arbitration and mediation centres, across Asia on the sidelines of Asia ADR Summit, 2024 held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: On 27 July 2024, on the sidelines of Asia ADR Summit, 2024 held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, IIAC entered into MOU with various international arbitration and mediation centres, across Asia, namely, Vietnam Traders Arbitration Centre (VTA); Asian Institute of Alternative Dispute Resolution (AIADR), Malaysia; Borneo International Centre for Arbitration and Mediation (BICAM); and Maldives International Arbitration Centre. These MOUs are a significant step towards fostering international collaboration in the area of alternate dispute resolution (ADR).

25.7.5 MOU between IIAC and the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Government of India for establishment of India International Maritime Dispute Resolution Centre (IIMDRC) as a branch of IIAC at Mumbai, at the 20th Maritime State Development Council (MSDC) Meeting in Goa: On 13 September, 2024, at the 20th Maritime State Development Council (MSDC) Meeting in Goa, IIAC entered into an MoU with the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (India), Government of India for establishment of India International Maritime Dispute Resolution Centre (IIMDRC) as a branch of IIAC at Mumbai.

25.7.6 MOU between IIAC and Jindal Global Law School (JGLS) for jointly conducting International Arbitration Moot Court Competition: On 16 October 2024, IIAC entered into an MOU with Jindal Global Law School (JGLS) for the purpose of jointly conducting an International Moot Court Competition.

25.8 CREATION OF IIAC VIDEO:

IIAC has created a Video to provide its audience the details about the IIAC, the services that IIAC offers in relation to Arbitration and will introduce esteemed people associated with IIAC. The Video constitutes messages from the Hon'ble Chairperson IIAC, Members of the Chamber of Arbitration, Former Judges, Attorney General for India, Former Chief Justice of India, a special message from Hon'ble Justice Sanjeev Khanna, Chief Justice of India, highlighting their views about IIAC and its importance in relation to International Commercial Arbitration and that IIAC be the preferred institution for resolution of disputes amongst the parties.

25.9 MEDIATION TRAINING PROGRAMME ORGANISED BY ROYAL INSTITUTION OF CHARTERED SURVEYORS (RICS) IN ASSOCIATION WITH IIAC:

A Mediation Training programme was organised by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in association with IIAC from 13 May to 17 May 2024 at IIAC Auditorium, New Delhi.

25.10 INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (CONDUCT OF MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES ARBITRATION) REGULATIONS 2024:

IIAC with the previous approval of the Central Government has made IIAC (Conduct of Micro and Small Enterprises Arbitration) Regulations 2024 to contribute to the sustainable and holistic growth and development of the Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE) ecosystem by promoting faster and more effective resolution of disputes affecting Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE). These regulations will promote institutional arbitration in this very important sector in the Indian economy and streamline MSE dispute resolution process for disputes that will be referred to IIAC by Micro and Small Enterprises Facilitation Council under the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006 (“**MSMED Act**”). Regulations will offer parties, an efficient and time-bound process of arbitration and will synergise the framework for the redressal of delayed payments to Micro and Small Enterprises under the MSMED Act.

25.11 NOMINATION OF MEMBERS OF CHAMBER OF ARBITRATION FOR SEPARATE PANEL OF ARBITRATORS IN RELATION TO INDIA INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (CONDUCT OF MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES ARBITRATION), REGULATIONS 2024:

IIAC has nominated Shri Ajay Kumar Arora, Joint Secretary (Arbitration & Conciliation), Department of Legal Affairs and Shri Avnit Singh Arora, Director (Arbitration & Conciliation) Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, to act as member of the Chamber of Arbitration for scrutinizing and considering empanelment applications for admission in the separate panel of arbitrators in relation to India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Micro and Small Enterprises Arbitration), Regulations 2024.

25.12 1st IIAC-JGLS INTERNATIONAL MOOT COURT COMPETITION:

In furtherance to an MOU entered between Jindal Global Law School (JGLS) and IIAC, 1st International Arbitration Moot Court Competition was organised by IIAC in association with the JGLS at JGLS Campus, Sonipat, Haryana from 25 October to 27 October 2024. The aim of the Moot Court Competition was to inspire, promote, and inculcate in law students, the concept of International Commercial Arbitration, engaging in legal oration, high focus research acumen, and also subjecting them to the judicial trends in various fields of international arbitration in India and abroad.

25.13 IIAC SOFTWARE FOR CONDUCT OF ARBITRATION PROCEEDINGS:

25.13.1 IIAC Software for conduct of Arbitration Proceedings as per India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations 2024: IIAC has developed a Software for conduct of Arbitration Proceedings as per India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations 2024 which went live on 25th November, 2024 for the smooth and efficient working of the conduct of Arbitration Proceedings through online mode. Link for uploading the Request for Arbitration is available at <https://indiaiac.org/registerOrLogin>

25.13.2 Plug and Play Software for conduct of MSE Arbitration as per India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Micro and Small Enterprises Arbitration) Regulations 2024:

IIAC has developed a “Plug and Play” Software (with some modifications and customisation and its allied services), after following the procedure, so as to facilitate the conduct and administration of arbitration as per MSE Arbitration as per India International Arbitration Centre (Conduct of Micro and Small Enterprises Arbitration) Regulations 2024. The said Software is currently under customization and is likely to go live soon.

25.14 OTHER ACTIVITIES:

25.14.1 An Arbitration Room along with a waiting room has been setup in the premises of IIAC for administering arbitration proceedings as per India International Arbitration Centre

(Conduct of Arbitration) Regulations, 2024. Arbitration Room is provided for ad-hoc arbitration as per request received.

25.14.2 IIAC has been taking necessary actions for its day-to-day administration including procurement of goods and services as per rules, coordinating with Department of Legal Affairs, taking steps to promote objectives of IIAC, branding of IIAC, publicity of activities of IIAC, management of litigation of IIAC, preparation of annual accounts, annual report of IIAC, etc.

25.14.3 IIAC has registered with International Council for Commercial Arbitration (ICCA). ICCA is a worldwide NGO devoted to promoting the use and improving the processes of arbitration, conciliation and other forms of dispute resolution. Its activities include convening congresses and conferences, sponsoring authoritative dispute resolution publications, and promoting the harmonization of arbitration and conciliation rules, laws, procedures and standards.

25.15 PROPOSED ACTIVITIES OF THE IIAC:

25.15.1 Mr. Ganesh Chandru, Part-time Member, IIAC will attend First Gulf Cooperation Council Law and Arbitration Week at Bahrain from 26.01.2025 to 30.01.2025. The participation in the above event in the Bahrain will help in projecting IIAC as premier institute in the international forum where delegates of many countries will also be participating. The event is being organized by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Commercial Arbitration Centre in collaboration with the Federation of GCC Chambers, the Gulf Engineering Union and the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority.

25.15.2 IIAC will be organising a Colloquium on the theme “*International Arbitration: Indian Perspective*” on Saturday, the 01 March 2025 at Summit Hall, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Hon'ble Vice President of India has kindly agreed to grace the occasion as Chief Guest in the inaugural function. The colloquium will have participants from diverse jurisdictions. The colloquium aims to bring together professionals from diverse fields, arbitral institution, and legal practitioners to share insights and foster discussions on enhancing arbitration processes. IIAC intends to organize a seven-day training in the month of March/April 2025 on the topic “*Challenges faced in the Arbitration Ecosystem in Various Jurisdiction and Way Forward*” for 40-45 participants comprising of members of the Judiciary and Government, Legal advisors from Developing Countries like Asia, Africa and Latin America. The training is expected to be conducted under the aegis of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme administered by Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (MEA).

25.15.3 Proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between IIAC and Asian African Legal Consultative organization (“AALCO”): IIAC intends to enter into an MoU with AALCO to promote arbitration as the preferred mode of dispute resolution so as to further

improve the economic and trade environment in the Asian-African Region in India. Ministry of External Affairs has conveyed it's no objection to the abovesaid proposal. Draft MoU has been shared with AALCO. On receipt of concurrence and/or comments from AALCO, the draft MoU will be shared with Central Government.

25.15.4 Hosting of International Council for commercial Arbitration (ICCA) Congress in 2030 by India: In furtherance to “in principal acceptance/approval” of the Government (Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs) to host XXIX International Council for Commercial Arbitration ("ICCA") Congress in 2030 by India, IIAC is working on detailed draft proposal including background, estimated expenditure/financial implications, benefits envisaged, draft agenda and activities involved for final approval of Competent Authority at Department of Legal Affairs and inter-ministerial consultation.

25.15.5 IIAC took steps for renovation and redesigning work of the IIAC building (Main Block) through CPWD. However, now, in furtherance to Joint Communique dated 05.09.2024 of Lokpal of India and IIAC addressed to Competent Authority, seeking permission for the office of Lokpal of India to use the building vested with IIAC (at Vasant Kunj, New Delhi) except an area for the administrative offices of the IIAC and IIAC to use 4th and 5th Floor Tower A World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi belonging to Lokpal of India, it is anticipated that IIAC will take requisite steps including entering into License Agreement with Lokpal of India and coordination with CPWD/or NBCC, as the case may be, for designing the 4th and 5th Floor, Tower A of World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar as per it's requirements for conducting arbitration and making sitting arrangements for the officers and staff of the IIAC.

25.15.6 IIAC, in association with Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), intends to conduct a 5-day mediation training program from 24 March to 29 March 2025.

25.15.7 IIAC intends to issue practice directions for providing valuable insights into the procedural nuances and guidelines for conduct of arbitration, among others.

25.15.8 IIAC intends to organise conferences and seminars on arbitration in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities for creating awareness about IIAC and arbitration in association with respective Chamber of Commerce at the Tier 2 cities.

26. THE INDIAN LAW INSTITUTE, NEW DELHI

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The Indian Law Institute (ILI) is a premier legal research Institute founded in 27th December, 1956. The first President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad formally inaugurated the opening of Institute on December 12, 1957 in the Central Hall of Parliament, New Delhi which was witnessed by the first Prime Minister of India Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru and Hon'ble Justice

Mr. S.R.Dave, the then Chief Justice of India.

Hon'ble Chief Justice of India is the President and Hon'ble Law Minister of Government of India is the Vice-President of the Institute. The Institute's regular administration is controlled by various committees headed by Senior Judges of Supreme Court of India and other members are chosen from the legal fraternity including Judges from various High Courts and prominent academicians.

The prime objective of the Institute is to promote advanced studies and research in law and to contribute substantially in reforming the administration of Justice, so as to meet the socio economic aspirations of the people through law and its instrumentalities.

The Institute got the status of Deemed University in the year 2004. The Institute got its first ever accreditation with 'A' grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) during March, 2017 with a CGPA of 3.35 on a 4.00 point scale through a vigorous assessment process by the peer team.

The Institute is conducting Masters in Law and Doctoral courses as well as few PG Diploma Courses in various areas of law, viz., Alternative Dispute Resolution, Corporate Laws and Management, Cyber Law and Intellectual Property Rights Laws.

The Library of the Institute is one of the leading law libraries in Asia and attracts scholars from all over world for legal research and contains around 82,000 volumes and about 190 current legal periodicals including serial publications. Digitisation of rare documents and Institute's publications are done on regular basis and placed in the repository for access by public at large. The library of the Institute has recently shared its Institutional repository at the coveted National Digital Library platform (NDL) which is the brain child of the MHRD-NME-ICT.

ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

After the declaration of Deemed University in the year 2004, the institute launched research oriented LL.M. programme. The admission in LLM programme is strictly on merit in Common Admission Test (CAT) conducting every year and Interview. Presently the following programmes are conducted by the Institute:

Programme(s)	Students Enrolled in academic session 2024-25
LL.M.- 1 Year (Full Time)	46
P G Diploma Courses (Alternative Dispute Resolution, Corporate Laws and Management, Cyber Law and Intellectual Property Rights Laws)	393
No. of seats in Ph.D in Law	09

Total No. of Students	448
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- The Institute has a Ph.D. programme. There are 26 scholars enrolled as on date.
- E Learning courses of three months duration on “Cyber Law” (47th batch) and “Intellectual Property Rights and IT in the Internet Age” (58th batch) were completed on July 26, 2024.

Common Admission Test-2024 for LL.M. 1 year programme

Common Admission Test (CAT) – 2024 for admissions in LL.M. 1 Year Programme was held on 5th May, 2024 at Maharaja Agrasen College, Delhi and the result was declared on 22.5.2024.

The viva-voce for admission to LL.M. 1 year programme (2024-25) was held on 27-30, May, 2024. The result as per merit was declared on 04.06.2024.

Ph.D. Entrance-2024

The Admission Test – 2024 for admissions in Ph.D. Programme was held on 05.05.2024 at Maharaja Agrasen College, Delhi and the result was declared on 31.05.2024.

PG DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

The Admission process for PG Diploma Programmes started on 15th March, 2024. The Institute received 636 applications for 458 seats.

LL.M. 1 YEAR (2nd SEMESTER) EXAMINATIONS

The examination for LL.M. Semester End Examinations (2nd Semester) was held during 15th – 29th May, 2024.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES/ SEMINAR/ CONFERENCE/ BOOK RELEASE

The ILI Law Review (ILILR) Legal Research Workshop themed “How to Review an Article for Law Journal” took place on January 20, 2024, as part of the ILILR-LRW initiative, initiated by the Indian Law Institute (ILI) and ILILR.



Participants in the programme.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Prof. (Dr.) Ranbir Singh and Prof. Dr. Manoj Kumar Sinha, Director ILI.

Inauguration of the ILI E-library – January 29, 2024

The E-Library of the Indian Law Institute was inaugurated by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Chairman, Library Committee, ILI, in the presence of Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Legislative Department, Ministry of Law & Justice, New Delhi, Prof. (Dr.) Ranbir Singh, Former Vice Chancellor, NLU Delhi and Prof. (Dr.) Manoj Kumar Sinha, Director, ILI.

CLEA- Commonwealth Attorney and Solicitors Generals Conference (CASGC'24) - February 2-4, 2024

CLEA-Commonwealth Attorney and Solicitors Generals Conference (CASGC'24) was organised by the Government of India (Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law & Justice) Office of the Attorney and Solicitor General of India, Commonwealth Legal Education Association with technical support from the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi. The conference began with a grand Inaugural Ceremony on February 3, 2024, with the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, as the Chief Guest and the Chief Justice of India, Hon'ble (Dr.) Justice D.Y. Chandrachud was the Guest of Honour. The Inaugural Ceremony had the presence of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Shri Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India and Dr. R Venkataramani, Ld. Attorney General for India and Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of Law and Justice, Government of India.





Dignitaries at the inaugural Session of the CLEA-CASGC'24 Conference.

The conference culminated with a notable valedictory ceremony with the august presence of Smt. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble President of India and Shri Amit Shah, Hon'ble Minister for Home Affairs, Government of India.



Snippets from the Valedictory Session.

Website Launch – April 26, 2024

The launch ceremony of the Indian Law Institute's new website was held on April 26, 2024. It was a grand and memorable event, marking a significant milestone in ILI's digital journey. The website was launched by Chief Guest, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge Supreme Court of India, along with Guest of Honour Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice and Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V.K Ahuja, Director, ILI.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Dr. Rajiv Mani, Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Director, ILI and other dignitaries at the dais.

Lecture Organised by the Indian Law Institute on Balancing Innovation and Access under IP Laws in India

On World Intellectual Property (IP) Day, April 26th, 2024, the Indian Law Institute organised an enlightening lecture on "Balancing Innovation and Access under IP Laws in India". The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered the lecture. It was

marked by the felicitation of Justice Surya Kant by Sr. Prof. Dr. V. K. Ahuja, Director of the Indian Law Institute.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivering the address.



Participants of the Programme.

Panel Discussion on “Exploring the Role of Dr. B R Ambedkar in Shaping the Democratic Institutions and Principles of Bharat” held on April 14, 2024

As part of “Commemorating 75th Year of Indian Republic-India @ 75: Past, Present and Future” Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice, in association with the Indian Law Institute, organised a Panel Discussion on the theme of “Improving Justice Delivery System through Constitutional Ideals” on April 14, 2024, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.



Conference on Criminal Law Reforms, 2023

The legislation, i.e., the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023; the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, replaced the earlier criminal laws, namely, the Indian Penal Code, 1860, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, respectively. To generate awareness about these legislative enactments, particularly amongst the stakeholders and legal fraternity, the Ministry of Law and Justice, in association with the Indian Law Institute, has organised the following Conferences titled **‘India’s Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System.’**

1. Conference on India’s Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System at New Delhi – April 20, 2024

The conference began with an introduction to the conference's theme by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice. The inaugural address was given by Hon’ble Justice Dr. D.Y. Chandrachud, Chief Justice of India and President of ILI. This was preceded by an addresses from Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon’ble Minister of State, Ministry of Law & Justice, Shri R. Venkataramani, Ld. Attorney General for India, Tushar Mehta, Ld. Solicitor General of India, Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Home Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri S.K.G. Rahate, Secretary and Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India.

The valedictory session began with a welcome address by Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India. The valedictory address was delivered by Hon’ble Mr. Justice P. S. Narsimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, preceded by addresses from Hon’ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Karol, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Hon’ble Mrs. Rekha Palli, Judge, Delhi High Court, Shri Sanjay Arora, Commissioner Delhi Police, Shri Chetan Sharma, Ld. Add. Solicitor General Delhi High Court. The session concluded with a Vote of thanks by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice.

2. Conference on Criminal Law Reforms, 2023–“India’s Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System” at Guwahati–18th-19th May 2024

The conference commenced with an introduction to its theme by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Govt. of India. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Judge, Supreme Court of India addressed the gathering, followed by

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Law & Justice and esteemed justices, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vijay Bishnoi, Chief Justice of the Guwahati High Court, and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Biswanath Somadder, Chief Justice of the High Court of Sikkim. Dr. Reeta Vasishta, Member Secretary of the Law Commission of India, and

Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India also delivered their addresses.

The valedictory session began with a welcome address by Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India. Chief Guest Shri Gulab Chand Kataria, Hon'ble Governor of Assam, delivered the Valedictory Address. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak, Judge of the Guwahati High Court, shared his insights, followed by speeches from Hon'ble Mr. Justice (Retd.) Mir Alfaz Ali, Vice Chancellor (I/C) of NLUJA, Assam and Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Director of ILI.



In his speech, Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V. K. Ahuja highlighted India's shift from colonial-era criminal laws to a modern, restorative justice system and the importance of embracing cultural roots while implementing new laws prioritizing justice, rehabilitation, and community service. The speaker emphasizes that community service offers numerous benefits. How it reduces social stigma for such persons and their families, prevents jails from overcrowding, and saves government resources. Additionally, it keeps such persons away from hardened criminals, allowing them to maintain their professional lives post-community service. This approach fosters empathy, suggesting that petty offences should be addressed through more culturally appropriate methods. The focus of the criminal justice system, according to the speaker, should not be solely on punishment but also on compassion, equity, and human dignity. The session concluded with a Vote of thanks by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice.

3. Conference on India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System at Kolkata, West Bengal, 15th-16th June 2024

The conference began with an inaugural session featuring an introduction to the theme by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice. The conference featured addresses from Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Law & Justice, followed by Hon'ble Mr. Justice T.S. Sivagnanam, Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court; Hon'ble Mr. Justice K. Vinod Chandran, Chief Justice of Patna High Court; and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh, Chief Justice of the High Court of Orissa. This was preceded by addresses from Dr. Reeta Vasishta, Member Secretary of the Law Commission of India, and Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India.

The valedictory session commenced with a welcome address by Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India. The valedictory address was delivered by Hon'ble Governor Dr. C.V. Ananda Bose of West Bengal, preceded by speeches from Hon'ble Mr. Justice Arun Bhansali, Chief Justice of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shree Chandrashekhar, Chief Justice (Actg.) of the High Court of Jharkhand; and Prof. (Dr.) N.K. Chakrabarti, Vice Chancellor (I/C) of NUJS, Kolkata. The session concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice.

4. Conference on India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System at Chennai-23rd June 2024



Snippet from the Conference.

The inaugural session began with an introduction to the theme by Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India. The conference

featured addresses from Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Law & Justice; Dr. L. Murugan, Hon'ble Minister of Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs; Hon'ble Mr. Justice R. Mahadevan, Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Madras; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Alok Aradhe, Chief Justice of the High Court of Telangana; and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ashish Jitendra Desai, Chief Justice of the High Court of Kerala.

The valedictory session began with a welcome address and summary of proceedings by

Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary and a valedictory address by Shri R.N. Ravi, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu. Prior to this, speeches were delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice P. Sathasivam, Former Chief Justice and Governor; Hon'ble Mr. Justice N.V. Anjaria, Chief Justice of the High Court of Karnataka; and Prof. (Dr.) N.S. Santhosh Kumar, Vice Chancellor of The Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Chennai. The session concluded with a vote of thanks by

Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice.

5. Conference on India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System at Mumbai-30th June 2024

The conference commenced with an inaugural session where Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India introduced the theme. The conference featured addresses from Shri Eknath Shinde, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra; Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Law & Justice; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya, Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court; Mr. Devendra Fadnavis, Minister of Law and Judiciary, Government of Maharashtra;

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava, Chief Justice of the High Court of Rajasthan; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia, Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Punjab and Haryana; and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chandrakant Vasant Bhadang, Former Judge of the Bombay High Court.

The valedictory session began with a welcome address by Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India and a valedictory address by Shri Ramesh Bais, Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra. Before this, speeches were delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice of the High Court of Chhattisgarh; Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice of the High Court of Gujarat; and Hon'ble Mr. Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The session concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice.



Snippets from the Inauguration Session.

One-Day Programme on “Human Rights: Issues and Challenges” for officials working in Juvenile Homes, Old-Age Homes and the Health Sector-June 14, 2024

The Indian Law Institute, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), organised a one-day training Programme for officials working in juvenile homes, old-age homes, and the health sector. The address by Mr. Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary of the NHRC, followed this. Shedding light on the programme, Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V. K. Ahuja, Director, ILI, cited Martin Luther, who once said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”. Injustice undermines the principles that uphold fairness and equality, impacting society on a broader scale. He stated that the international community continues to work towards addressing these challenges, but much remains to be done.



Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Director of the Indian Law Institute, warmly welcomed Mr. Devendra Kumar Nim, Joint Secretary and all attendees.

Two –days Training Programme for First Class Judicial Magistrates on “Human Rights: Issues and Challenges” held on July 26-27, 2024.

The Indian Law Institute, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission, organized a two-day training program titled “Human Rights: Issues and Challenges” for First Class Judicial Magistrates. Held at the Plenary Hall of the Indian Law Institute in New Delhi, the event aimed to enhance the understanding and enforcement of human rights within the judiciary. The Programme was inaugurated by Hon’ble Mr. Justice Arun Mishra, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India.



Hon’ble Mr. Justice Arun Mishra along with Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Director, ILI and Shri Shreenibas Chandra Prusty, Registrar, ILI.

The inaugural session commenced with a welcome address by Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Director, the Indian Law Institute. Dr. Ahuja’s speech touched upon several key issues at the intersection of human rights and intellectual property rights (IPR).



Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja felicitating Hon’ble Mr. Justice Arun Mishra in the presence of Registrar, ILI.

Firstly, Dr. Ahuja discussed the *Potato Farmer Case*, which highlights the struggles of farmers against large corporations claiming patent rights over seeds and agricultural products. This case underscored the need to balance commercial interests with the human rights of farmers who rely on traditional practices and biodiversity. Senior Professor Dr. Ahuja then moved on to the

Delhi University Photocopy Case, where the University was sued by publishers for allowing photocopying of textbooks for educational purposes. This case brought to the fore the conflict between copyright enforcement and the right to education, particularly for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.



Sr. Professor Dr. V. K. Ahuja, Director ILI addressing the participants of the programme.

The Chief Guest, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Arun Kumar Mishra, Former Chairperson, NHRC and former Judge, the Supreme Court of India, emphasized on the independence and courage of the Indian judiciary. He highlighted landmark decisions such as the *Ratlam Municipality Case*, which set a precedent for environmental protection and victim compensation, developing an entire jurisprudence on these matters over the past forty years. His Lordship stressed about the importance of judges adopting a human-centric approach in their rulings. Lordship also narrated the judiciary's role in environmental protection, noting that survival is a mutual

give-and-take with nature and discussed the enforcement of laws like the Water Act and the role of the Pollution Control Board, emphasizing the judiciary's duty to ensure these laws are followed.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Arun Mishra addressing the participants of the training programme.

Justice Mishra elaborated on the concept of equality, explaining that without equality, no rights can truly exist. He mentioned that the judiciary has a role in creating equality among the unequal through social engineering, as envisioned by the Constitution, beyond just Article 14. Quoting the *Rigveda*, he urged collective effort: “Let us work together.” He also referenced Guru Nanak’s teachings, “*Manas kee jat sabai ek hee pahchan ho*” emphasizing the unity of all human beings. Justice Mishra pointed out the limited reach of reservations and affirmative action, stating that despite significant financial aid from institutions like the World Bank, corruption has prevented these funds from reaching the intended beneficiaries. He called for holding corrupt officials accountable.

The two-day training Programme was highly enriching, providing First Class Judicial Magistrates with a comprehensive understanding of various human rights issues and challenges.



Participants of the NHRC Training Programme along with distinguished invitees.

Two-days Training Programme for Police Personnel on “Police and Human Rights: Issues and Challenges” held on September 21-22, 2024

The Indian Law Institute and the National Human Rights Commission jointly organised a two-day training program for Police Personnel titled “Police and Human Rights: Issues and Challenges” at the Plenary Hall of the Indian Law Institute.



Inaugural session of the NHRC training programme.

The inaugural session, along with four technical sessions, was scheduled for the first day. The event commenced with an opening address by the Director, ILI Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja. The session was graced by the presence of Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, as the honorable guest. Also in attendance was S.C. Prusty, the Registrar of the Indian Law Institute.



Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja felicitating Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ujjal Bhuyan in the presence of Registrar, ILI.

In his address, Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja emphasized the critical importance of sensitization and accountability mechanisms within the police force. He drew attention to the State Police Accountability Commission (SPAC) in Assam as an example of such mechanisms. To provide historical context, Prof. Ahuja referenced the famous Nuremberg and Tokyo trials following World War II, which set precedents for prosecuting military officials for human rights violations. He then delved into the challenges facing internal accountability systems in police forces. Prof. Ahuja pointed out a significant flaw in these systems: the tendency for responsibility to be shifted between senior and junior officers. He explained how senior officers often pass the blame for questionable actions to their juniors, while junior officers may attribute their actions to orders from above, creating a cycle of avoided accountability.



(From L-R) Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Shri Shreenibas C.Prusty.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, judge, Supreme Court of India in his address, emphasized the crucial role of the police as the primary representatives of the state, noting that their interactions with citizens shape the public's perception of law enforcement. He stressed that handcuffing should not be considered a standard practice. His Lordship highlighted three significant challenges currently facing the police force: custodial violence, extrajudicial killings, and the demolition of properties using bulldozers. In discussing these issues, he referenced the controversial Hyderabad rape encounter case. Justice Bhuyan firmly stated that as enforcers of the law, police officers are not above it and must not violate it. He strongly condemned custodial deaths, asserting that such incidents should never be a source of pride for the police force and are fundamentally wrong. To conclude his remarks, Justice Bhuyan invoked a quote from Lord Denning, beginning with, "The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail-its roof may shake - the wind may blow through it - the storm may enter - the rain may enter-but the King of England cannot enter-all his force dares not cross the threshold of the ruined tenement!". This quote reinforces the importance of protecting individual rights and upholding the rule of law, regardless of a person's social or economic status.



Participants of the NHRC Training Programme.

Two-Days Training Programme for Prison Officials on "Human Rights: Issues and Challenges" on November 16-17, 2024.

The Indian Law Institute (ILI) in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) organized a two-day training programme on “Human Rights: Issues and Challenges” for **prison officials** on November 16-17, 2024. The programme was held at the Plenary Hall of the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, bringing together distinguished speakers and experts from various fields to address critical aspects of human rights in the context of prison administration.



The programme commenced with Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Director of ILI, delivering the welcome address. Dr. Ahuja emphasized the importance of human rights education for prison officials and the crucial role they play in maintaining the dignity and rights of inmates. He highlighted ILI’s commitment to legal education and training, particularly in areas concerning human rights and criminal justice reform.

The chief guest, Mr. Jaspal Singh, IPS, Special Commissioner of Delhi Police, delivered the inaugural address. Given his extensive experience in law enforcement, Mr. Singh spoke about the intersection of law enforcement and human rights, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach that ensures both security and human dignity. He addressed the challenges faced by prison officials in maintaining this balance and the importance of human rights-oriented prison administration. The inaugural session concluded with a vote of thanks.





Snippets from the Programme.

Constitution Day Celebration

As part of the **Constitution Day** celebrations, the Indian Law Institute (ILI) organized a series of engaging and intellectually stimulating events from **18-25th November 2024 at ILI**. These events aimed to honor the principles enshrined in the Constitution of India while fostering legal discourse, academic excellence, and critical thinking among students and scholars.

The first round of the Debate Competition was conducted on November 18, 2024 wherein the preliminary round was judged by Dr. Sushmitha P. Mallaya, Professor, Delhi University. The preliminary round showcased the exceptional talent of participants, with 10 students qualifying for the final round. The final round of the Debate Competition was conducted on

November 19, 2024, judged by the esteemed Faculty Dr. Parineet Kaur, Asst. Professor, ISIL, Delhi. The competition was fierce, with participants presenting well-reasoned arguments on complex topics. The top three rankers were:

1. Mr. Bhushan Mahesh Raut
2. Mr. Sharyaurai Rieng
3. Ms. Astha and Ms. Khushi Rastogi (joint winners for the third position)

As part of the celebrations, on November 22, 2024, the renowned legal scholar and academician, Prof. (Dr.) Upendra Baxi, delivered a special lecture on Constitutional law for the LL.M. students. His profound insights into contemporary legal issues inspired the audience, fostering a deeper understanding of critical legal frameworks.



Snippet from the Programme.

The series of events culminated in a grand valedictory programme on November 25, 2024. The programme was graced by the presence of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice C.T. Ravikumar, Judge, Supreme Court of India, as the Chief Guest. In the programme, Hon'ble Mr. Justice C.T. Ravikumar was welcomed with great reverence and the ceremonial lamp was lit as a symbol of enlightenment and wisdom. In his welcome address, Director of the Indian Law Institute, Senior Professor (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, highlighted the institute's commitment to fostering legal scholarship and student development. Hon'ble Mr. Justice C.T. Ravikumar was honored for his illustrious contributions to the field of law and justice and his lordship delivered an inspiring speech, emphasizing the role of young legal professionals in upholding justice and equity. The Chief Guest also distributed awards to the winners and participants of the Debate Competition, commending their exceptional skills and efforts.

The 20th Asia Legal Information Network (ALIN) International Conference on “Good Legislative Practices: Strategies to Improve the Quality of Legislation in Asia” on November 30-December 01, 2024

The 20th Asia Legal Information Network (ALIN) International Conference on “Good Legislative Practices: Strategies to Improve the Quality of Legislation in Asia” was hosted jointly by the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, and the ALIN Secretariat at the Korea Legislation Research Institute from November 30, 2024 to December 01, 2024 at the Indian Law Institute. The conference brought together distinguished speakers, legal scholars, policy makers, and delegates from 16 Asian countries each bringing unique perspectives and rich scholarly traditions. Over two days, participants explored diverse strategies for improving legislative quality, sharing best practices and discussing challenges in their respective jurisdictions.



Snippets from the Programme.

The Conference started with the Inaugural ceremony on November 30, 2024 with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp in the presence of the Chief Guest, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India. Mr. Yeongsoo Han, President KLRI in his opening remarks emphasized the importance of collaborative legislative practices across Asia, stressing the need for accountable, balanced, and consistent laws. He expressed optimism about engaging with diverse perspectives and thanked participants from various jurisdictions.

Sr. Prof. (Dr.) V.K. Ahuja, Director Indian Law Institute in his welcoming address highlighted the significance of evolving legal frameworks to address contemporary challenges like AI, climate change, and block chain technology. Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, Senior Professor, ILI and Conference Chair in his address introduced the theme of this conference, presenting the “ABCs” of legislative drafting-laws should be Accountable, Balanced, and Consistent. He emphasized India’s commitment to contextual law making; ensuring laws reflect diverse societal needs.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India addressing the gathering.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Chief Guest in his address said that laws should reflect societal needs and adapt to emerging issues. He cited the challenges of drafting clear, concise laws, emphasizing the importance of plain language in legislation to ensure accessibility and reduce litigation.



Snippets from the Programme.

The 20th Asia Legal Information Network International Conference General Meeting, 2024

The 20th ALIN General Meeting held on November 29, 2024 at the Indian Law Institute,

New Delhi. The General Meeting started with the Opening remarks and declaration of the General meeting by Mr. Yeongsoo Han, President KLRI, ALIN Secretariat as co-chairperson. After the opening remarks, Prof. (Dr.) V. K. Ahuja, Director, Indian Law Institute was elected as the Chairperson and presided over the General Meeting. The Chairperson lead the discussion with the members on GM Agenda along with by Yeongsoo Han, President, Korean Legislation Research Institute, Prof. (Dr.) S. Sivakumar, Senior Professor ILI & Conference Chair, Hyung-

Gun Kim and Hyoyoung Kong from the Korean Legislation Research Institute, the Generals Meeting had the presentation by one Observer, the Ala-Too International University by

Ms. Zhyldyz Tegizbekova, Head of Law School, Ala-Too International University, Kyrgyzstan. Ms. Hyoyoung Kong, KLRI, ALIN Secretariat presented the ALIN Secretariat's Report and ALIN's activities over the past one year. The Chairperson closed the General Meeting with Commemorative group photos at the Lawns of Indian Law Institute, New Delhi.



Snippets from the Programme.

Special Lecture on “Fostering Collaboration Between Korea and India in Ocean

Affairs- Opportunities and Potential Areas of Cooperation” by Dr. Park Young Kil, Director of Korea Maritime Institute on November 20, 2024. Other guests present were Dr. Jungho Nam Senior Research Fellow, Korea Maritime Institute and Hyunwook Cheng Senior Researcher, Korea Maritime Institute.

Books:-

- **The Indian Constitution and Contemporary Challenges:
A Road Map**

The book discusses the challenges the contemporary social and political milieu presents before the Indian Constitution. It tries to critically engage with myriad aspects like agriculture, healthcare, gender justice, climate change, globalization, and technological transformation through the lens of the constitutional scheme. The book aims to offer researchers, policy makers, and academics a comprehensive guide that outlines the steps involved in cultivating a dynamic and transformative constitution. It allows the readers to contemplate the idea of justice as encompassed in the Constitution beyond the common annals of the Preamble and the Fundamental Rights. From the grassroots of Panchayati Raj to the Corporations, from social welfare policies to taxation, this book attempts to thread the essential spirit of justice, liberty, and equality of the Constitution into the rich tapestry of our society.

○ **Perspectives on Indian Constitution and Development**

The voyage of the magnificent document, constituting the bedrock of the Indian State, has spanned over seven decades, with myriad hopes and formidable challenges abound. The Constitution of India is not just a charter of our rights but also an emblem of our true freedom and the sovereign will of Indians. India has celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of independence this year. A compilation of lectures delivered by eminent academicians and scholars as a part of a lecture series organised to mark the momentous occasion was published by the Indian Law Institute as *India at 75: Reminiscences and Reflections*. On the occasion of constitution day this year, an endeavor to revise and update this collection of lectures was initiated by the Ministry of Law and Justice and the Indian Law Institute, which gave birth to this work. The insightful reflections of illustrious academicians and jurists about the constitutional democratic set-up of India, its work over the years, and the challenges and possibilities of reform are included in this collection to re-invigorate within all the spirit of the constitution and belief in the constitutional philosophy as we gear up for Vision 2047.

PUBLICATIONS

Research Publications Released

The following research publications have been released by the ILI during the period of report:

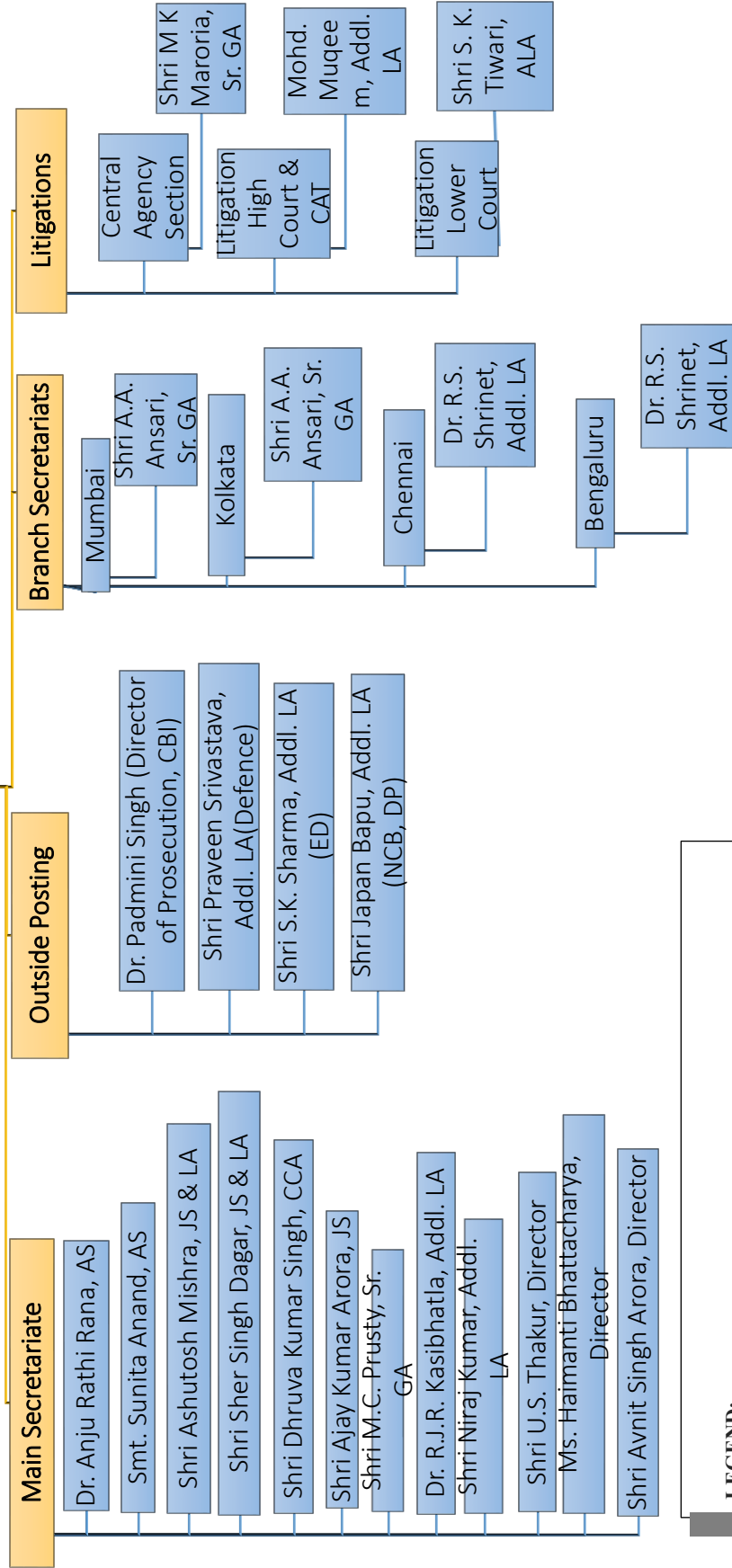
- ***Journal of the Indian Law Institute (JILI)***—Published quarterly containing research articles on contemporary legal issues of National/International Importance.
- ***ILI Newsletter***—Published quarterly referring various activities undertaken by the Institute during the year and forthcoming activities.
- ***Index to Legal Periodicals***—Published yearly and contains indexes, periodicals (including year books and other annual publications) pertaining to law and related fields being received (either by subscription or exchange or complementary) by the ILI Library.

- ***Annual Survey of Indian Law***—Published yearly and is a very prestigious publication of the Institute and contains Annual Survey of Indian Law including latest trends in every branch of law of importance.
- ***ILI Law Review*** (Summer) & (Winter).

ANNEXURE- VI

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State, (Independent charge)
Ministry of Law & Justice

Dr. Rajiv Mani, Law Secretary



LEGEND:

AS: Additional Secretary; CCA: Chief Controller of Accounts
JS & LA: Joint Secretary & Legal Adviser; JS: Joint Secretary
Sr. GA: Senior Government Advocate;
Addl. LA: Additional Legal Adviser; ALA: Assistant Legal Adviser

ANNEXURE-VII

Representation of SC/ST/OBC/Ex-S/PH amongst the employees of ILS Cadre (Legal Adviser & Government Advocate) & GCS cadre: -

Group	Total No. of Employees	Scheduled Castes	% of total employees	Scheduled Tribes	% of total employees	Other Backward Classes	% of total employees	Ex-service-men	% of total employees	Physically Handicapped	% of total employees
Group 'A' #	50	06	12%	02	4%	07	14%	00	--	03	6%
Group 'B'	45	05	11.11	03	6.66%	13	28.88%	00	--	02	4.44%
Group 'C' (excluding safaiwala)	61	16	26.22%	02	3.278%	16	26.22%	00	--	02	3.27%
Group 'C' (safaiwala)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	156	27	17.30%	07	4.48%	36	23.07%	00	--	07	4.48%

DATA IN RESPECT OF DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS (GCS AND ILS CADRE) (Regular)

ANNEXURE-VIII

Representation of female employees amongst the employees of ILS Cadre (Legal Adviser & Government Advocate) & GCS cadre:—

GROUPS	DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS	
	TOTAL NO. OF EMPLOYEES	NO. OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES
GROUP A	129	35
GROUP B	159	36
GROUP C (Excluding Safaiwala)	83	09
GROUP C (Safaiwala)	--	--
TOTAL	371	80

ANNEXURE-IX

STATEMENT SHOWING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AND THE NUMBER OF SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES, OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES, EX-SERVICEMEN AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AMONGST THEM [IN RESPECT OF CSS, CSSS, CSCS, CSOLS and GCS (Accountant and Jr. Accountant only) CADRES OF MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS AND LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT)] AS ON 01.01.2025:—

Group	Total No. of Employees	Scheduled Castes	% of total employees	Scheduled Tribes	% of total employees	Other Backward Classes	% of total employees	Ex-servicemen	% of total employees	Physically Handicapped	% of total employees
Group 'A'	79	18	22.78%	05	6.33%	01	1.26%	00	---	00	---
Group 'B'	114	28	24.56%	04	3.51%	29	25.44%	03	2.63%	07 (HH-1, OH-3, VH-2, MD-1)	6.14%
Group 'C' (excluding safaiwala)	22	03	13.63%	02	9.09%	05	22.73%	00	---	01(OH)	4.54%

Group 'C' (safaiwala)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	215	49	22.79%	11	5.12%	35	16.28%	03	1.39%	08	3.72%	

* The above statement includes information in respect of posts existing in Legislative Department, Law Commission and Central Agency Section also pertaining to cadres being controlled by this Department.

* The above statement does not include information about posts in Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT).



सत्यमेव जयते



सत्यमेव जयते

भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

विधि और न्याय मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE