

post, courier services, fax or e-mail and authorizing the courts to fix time limit for oral arguments.

- (v) With a view to ensuring speedy disposal of criminal cases, appropriate changes have been made in the Code of Criminal Procedure. The concept of plea bargaining has also been introduced.
- (vi) Alternative modes of disposal including mediation, conciliation and arbitration have been encouraged.
- (vii) The Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 has been notified and brought into force *w.e.f.* 02nd October, 2009. Government provides financial assistance to the States for setting up and operation of Gram Nyayalayas.
- (viii) The Government has decided, in principle, to set up a 'National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms' with the objective of reducing backlog of cases in courts from an average of 15 years at present to 3 years by taking a series of strategic initiatives.

Family courts in Kerala

2097. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the State Government of Kerala and the High Court of Kerala have made any proposal for establishing additional family courts in the State;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Central Government would be providing financial assistance for establishing new family courts in the State?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) and (b) As per the information received from the Government of Kerala, 16 Family Courts are functional (one each in 14 districts and 2 additional courts in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam Districts) in the State and 12 more courts are to be established by them.

- (c) Yes, Sir.

Manipulation of EVMs

2098. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state: