

Nicobar Islands was 994 as on 31.12.2013. The approved strength of Judges in High Court of Calcutta was 58 as on 01.08.2014.

Disposal of pending cases in various courts is within the domain of the Judiciary. The 'Policy and Action Plan' document formulated under the National Court Management Systems (NCMS) set up by Supreme Court has estimated that with the increase in literacy, per capita income and population, the number of new cases filed each year may go upto fifteen (15) crore *per annum* over the next three decades.

In order to create an enabling environment for judiciary, the Government has set up National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms. The major initiative under the National Mission relate to Infrastructure Development for Subordinate Judiciary and Computerization of Courts. The Central Government has provided financial assistance to the tune of ₹. 2,198 crores to State Governments and Union Territories for upgradation/ construction of court complexes and residential units for judicial officers in the last three years. Under the eCourts Project 13,227 courts have been computerized by 31st March, 2014. Computerization of courts would enable the courts to exercise greater control over management of cases in the docket. It will also provide designated services to the litigants and the lawyers.

To enable the High Courts to clear the backlog of cases, the Chief Justice of India has given *in-principle* concurrence to the joint recommendation in the Chief Ministers/ Chief Justices Conference to increase the sanctioned strength of High Courts by 25% of the existing strength. The High Courts and State Governments have been requested to convey their consent to the proposal, keeping in view the existing vacancies, as also the requirements of additional court room infrastructure, staff and budget. Specific proposals in respect of High Courts of Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab and Haryana have been received from the State Governments, and approved by the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India. In the case of other High Courts, the State Governments have been reminded to expedite their concurrence.

As a result of concerted efforts made by all stakeholders the sanctioned strength of judicial officers/judges in the District and Subordinate courts has increased from 17715 as on 31.12.2012 to 19421 as on 31.12.2013.

#### **Cluster counting instead of ward-wise declaration of vote count**

3323. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is seriously considering to introduce cluster counting

instead of ward-wise declaration of vote count in various elections in the country to protect the right to privacy attached to voting;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Election Commission has asked Government to amend the rule to do away with declaration of result of every polling booth;

(d) if so, Government's response thereto; and

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to protect the right to privacy attached to voting?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD):

(a) to (e) The Election Commission has submitted a proposal for introduction of a machine called Totaliser for counting the votes. The Election Commission is of the view that by use of Totaliser, a further level of secrecy in voting and the mixing of votes at the time of counting will be achieved, which will prevent the disclosure of the pattern of voting at a particular polling station. The Government has not taken a considered view on introduction of Totaliser in the counting of votes as proposed by the Election Commission. Secrecy of votes being the essence of Indian democracy will certainly be ascertained before introduction of any technological advancement in the voting or counting.

#### **Creation of All India Judicial Service**

3324. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is contemplating on creation of new All India Judicial Service in line with IAS and IPS, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has sought views of State Governments in this regard;

(c) whether any objections have been raised by States in regard to creation of such new service, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the benefits of the unified All India Judicial Service and hurdles being faced in its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD):

(a) to (d) A comprehensive proposal was formulated for the constitution of an All India Judicial Service (AIJS) in order to strengthen federal governance, attract the best talent in the judiciary, promote national integration, and establish standards of governance.