

The proposal was approved by the Committee of Secretaries in November, 2012. The proposal was included as an agenda item in the Conference of Chief Ministers of the States and Chief Justices of the High Courts held in April, 2013 and it was decided that the issue needs further deliberations and consideration. Therefore, the views of the State Governments and High Courts have been sought again on the proposal.

### **Filling up of vacancies of High Court Judges**

3325. DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes, to adopt the pre 1993 proposition with regard to appointment of judges and to fill up the vacancies on fast track; and
- (b) if so, whether there is any time-frame to fill up around 200 vacancies in High Courts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Government proposes to change the existing system for appointment and transfer of Judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts by establishing the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) with a view to broad base the process of appointment. The matter is presently under active consideration in consultation with various stakeholders. The Minister of Law and Justice has written to Chief Justices of High Courts to take steps to expedite the filling up of vacancies in High Courts.

### **Pending court cases**

†3326. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the pending cases in all courts of the country are rising continuously;
- (b) if so, whether Government is planning to control it; and
- (c) if so, how and by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) The data on pendency of cases is maintained by Supreme Court and High Courts. As per available information, number of cases pending in Supreme Court, High Courts and Subordinate Courts during last three years are as under:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

At the end of the year	2011	2012	2013
Supreme Court	58,519	66,692	66,349
High Courts	43,22,198	44,34,191	44,62,705
Subordinate Courts	2,69,86,307	2,68,89,203	2,68,38,861

(b) and (c) Disposal of cases in courts falls within the domain of the judiciary. In order to create an enabling environment for judiciary to deal with the problem of pendency and backlog of cases, the Government has set up National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms. The major initiatives 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. In order to reduce government litigation in courts the Central Government has encouraged the States to notify their litigation policies which contain provisions for weeding out infructuous cases and promote dispute resolution through alternative mechanisms. The Government is also looking into the areas prone to excessive litigation for adopting suitable policy and legislative measures to curb such litigation.

#### **Chennai-Cuddalore Railway Line**

3327. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of the East Coast Railway line from Chennai to Cuddalore; and
- (b) the reasons for delay in starting the work on this railway project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Chennai-Cuddalore (179 Km) new line project has been sanctioned at an anticipated cost of ₹ 1200 crore. An expenditure of ₹ 29 crore has been incurred on the project upto March, 2014 and an outlay of ₹ 5 crore has been provided in 2014-15. Final location survey has been taken up.

(b) The project is delayed due to the fact that Government of Puducherry has not approved the alignment plan. Further, detailed soil investigations are required as the proposed line passes through coastal region which has poor soil conditions.