

## **NOVEMBER 2018- REPORT ON THE STATUS OF E-COURTS PROJECT OF THE BOMBAY HIGH COURT**

The use of information and computer technology in the administration of Court establishments is now established with the successful implementation of various activities under the e-Courts Project, Phase-I. Critical information such as `**case status**' , `**court orders**' and `**cause lists**' is now easily available to litigants, advocates and the public.

The Case Information System (“**CIS**”) has been fully implemented in all 647 Court establishments of the judiciary in the States of Maharashtra and Goa, and the Union Territories of Diu and Daman as well as Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The information generated through the CIS is available to all litigants on “**ecourts.gov.in**”. Under the Bombay High Court’s supervision, another website at “**court.mah.nic.in**” provides case status, court orders and cause lists information in two languages, English and Marathi. Case Management Information System (“**CMIS**”) has been fully implemented for the Bombay High Court and its Benches at Nagpur and Aurangabad. Case status, court orders and cause lists are publicly accessible at “**bombayhighcourt.nic.in**”. This also features online display board functionality, an appointment facility for scheduling affirmation of affidavits and bespoke advocates’ cause lists. SMS alerts of Filing, Registration, Case Status, etc. are sent to the advocates. A ‘latest updates’ facility provides links to recent judgments.

A total of **1,83,38,646** cases and **53,49,349** Judgments /Orders are available from 484 Court Complexes under the National Judicial Data Grid (“**NJDG**”).

A second-tier CIS implemented in all District and Subordinate Courts also provides the functionality of SMS alerts to the litigants and advocates. SMS delivery service is managed in **413** Court locations. In **2017**, **1,29,22,768** SMSes were sent to the litigants/advocates. During the period from **1-1-2018 to 30-11-2018**, **1,48,10,586** text messages of case status were sent to the litigants and advocates. During the period from **1-1-2018 to 30-11-2018**, **3,46,618** emails of case status were sent by the Courts under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High Court to the litigants and advocates.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 100% Migration from CIS NC 2 to CIS NC 3 was achieved by Court Staff without any support from technical manpower.
- 649 establishments are migrated on the NJDG.
- Bilingual case information database is available on the Court’s website and CIS.
  
- Up-to-date information of all Court Complexes, Establishments and Districts is available on NJDG.

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- **1824** Courts have centralized filing: SMS delivery services are managed in **413** Court locations.
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- Unique JO Codes are assigned to **2,280** Judicial Officers.
- **372** Court Complexes are equipped with a video conferencing facility.
- The data of the Court Establishments in South Goa and North Goa is shifted to Cloud. These Establishments are the first in the Country to move to Cloud.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- **425** Court Complexes are equipped with latest technology Hardware such as All-in-One PCs, UPS, DG Sets, Printers, Servers, etc.
- **486** Information Kiosks are supplied to **485** Court Complexes for providing information on Case status to litigants and Advocates.
- **2079** Display Board Units are installed at **2079** Court Rooms for providing an instant status of Cases listed on the cause list.

- Video Conferencing Units are installed in 1830 Courts in **344** Court Complexes for speedy disposal of the cases of the Under Trial Prisoners. **80** Video Conferencing Units are functional in jails.
- 2,118 Judicial Officers are provided with laptops.
- Leased lines are operational in 49 Court Complexes and MSWAN is operational in 24 Court Complexes.
- A work order for installation of Grid Connected Rooftop Solar Power Hybrid Plants with Net Metering facilities at 25 locations of Courts in Maharashtra has been issued.
- **6408** LAN Points are installed in **905** Court Halls of **38** Court complexes.

#### **JUDICIAL SERVICE CENTRES:-**

Litigants and Advocates can receive information of the case status, stage and next hearing date from the Judicial Service Centres (JSC) located in the Court Complexes. There are 419 JSC in the Court Complexes under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High Court.

#### **CENTRALIZED CASE FILING COUNTERS:-**

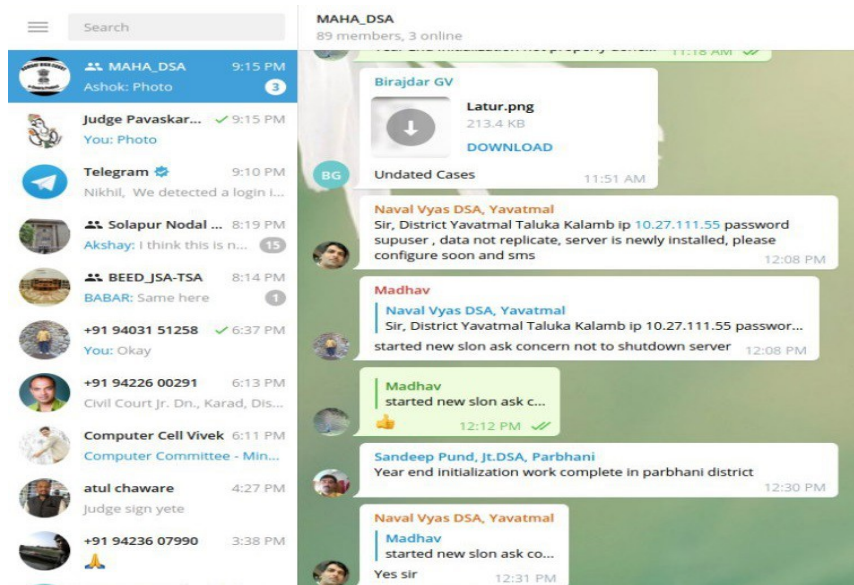
At present, there are 1824 Centralized Case Filing Counters in the Court Complexes under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High Court. At the Centralized Case Filing Counters, Filing, Scrutiny

check of complaints/ original petition (Objections), Registration and Allocation are done in accordance with procedural law. Immediately after the filing of a case, an acknowledgement slip is issued to a litigant.

### **EFFECTIVE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

All 31 DSAs are connected to CPC office through a Telegram Group. At the district level, each DSA is connected to his or her TSA through a TSA Telegram Group. These Telegram Groups and WhatsApp Groups of CPC, PDJ/PJ, DPC and Nodal Officers are used for reduction of undated cases and resolving e-Courts related issues. The WhatsApp Group of Registrars & Principal District Judge is used to discuss issues of pendency and disposal. These groups help in quick communication and resolution of issues.

### **Maharashtra DSA Telegram Group**



## STEPS TAKEN FOR DATA ACCURACY

A detailed report per district of the percentage of data deficiency in the data fields, and a chart showing the difference between a total number of pending cases and the total number of cases entered in CIS was prepared. The office was directed to prepare modalities for a special drive with specific direction to maintain Real Time Accurate Data updating at every Court complex. Circulars on maintaining CIS generated balance sheets and making correct entries in the age field of CIS, J.O. Codes were issued. An appeal went out to all Principal District Judges to motivate court staff to update accurate real-time data. Each JO was required to supervise and to intervene promptly where necessary. Guidelines were issued to the District and Subordinate Courts to ensure data accuracy. District Project Coordinators and Nodal Officers have been directed to conduct random checks of at least 5% of the data entries, and to use 'data health cards' to trace incorrect entries in CIS.

All Principal District Judges and other Principal Judges were directed to ensure a physical verification of pending cases and the institution register in all Courts under their jurisdiction within two months. Discrepancies noticed between the actual figures of pending cases and CIS entries were required to be corrected immediately.

### **USE OF NJDG FOR LOK ADALAT REPORT**

As a part of the data monitoring exercise, a new feature of a Lok Adalat Report was introduced. This is used in coordination with the Maharashtra Legal Services Authority (and its counterpart in Goa) to ensure that correct figures of the disposed of cases are entered by the District and Taluka Courts in the CIS and e-Courts portals. This activity ensures data accuracy of cases disposed of in periodic Lok Adalats.

### **SPECIAL EFFORTS FOR COOPERATIVE COURTS:-**

The Cooperative Courts' staff was specially trained in CIS use. Instructions in Marathi on data updating were circulated for their guidance.

Similar steps have been taken to ensure data accuracy in the records of the Industrial Courts, Labour Courts, Cooperative Courts and Family Courts and this data is also available on NJDG.

All DSAs have been directed to resolve CIS-related issues in the ex-cadre Courts in their respective districts.

## **EFFECTIVE USE OF THE NJDG MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE USER**

The Hon'ble Chairman of the Computer Committee has made a personal appeal to all the Guardian Judges to utilize the Management User section of the NJDG. A Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection is being provided to all the Guardian Judges for convenient use of Management Tools of NJDG.

All Principal District Judges and Principal Judges have been instructed to use the NJDG data analytics tools for court and case management, optimal case and work distribution, policy planning, resource estimation etc. A manual on the use of the various tools and software of the data analytics on NJDG is in circulation. The Management and Administrative User interfaces of NJDG are now in regular use for planning, monitoring and administration of Courts.

## **INCENTIVE TO JUDICIAL OFFICERS AND STAFF FOR ENSURING ACCURATE AND COMPLETE DATA ENTRY**

The Bombay High Court has decided to give credit in the Annual Confidential Reports of the Judicial Officers and Staff as an incentive for ensuring accurate and complete data entry and also for uploading the updated data on NJDG databases regularly.

## **EFFECTIVE USE OF THE NJDG ADMINISTRATIVE USER TOOLS FOR DATA UPDATING:**



The “Server Monitoring Report” and “Slony Status Report” facilities available on the Administrative User section of the NJDG are used to monitor data updating. A list of locations where data is *not* uploaded to NJDG is generated daily, and this allows for more efficient monitoring. The Registry sends these lists to the respective District Courts. The lists are also posted to the DSAs Telegram Group with directions to ensure updating or replication of data to the NJDG. The Registry sends out a daily list of ‘undated cases’<sup>1</sup> generated through the NJDG Administrative User interface to the respective Districts by email.

The DSAs Telegram Group and the WhatsApp Groups of CPC, PDJ/PJ, DPC and Nodal Officers are effectively used to resolve issues relating to connectivity, CIS and to minimize the number of undated cases.

## **STATE COURT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (SCMS) COMMITTEE**

The Bombay High Court has established a permanent secretariat of a State Court Management Systems (“**SCMS**”) Committee to fulfil the six principal objectives of the National Court Management Systems (“**NCMS**”) Committee. The SCMS Committee has made extensive use of NJDG data for effectively monitoring the disposal of 5- and 10- year old cases. The SCMS Committee has formulated a detailed Action Plan for this and evolved various strategies to analyze the data and to draw up a revised Action Plan to reduce pendency. On every Monday in the evening, a joint meeting of Computer Committee (e-Committee), SCMS Committee and Case

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<sup>1</sup> Cases with no date assigned.

Management Committee is held for at least two hours. The Computer Committee (e-Committee) have separate office premises in G.T. Hospital Building.

Statistical data on the NJDG is carefully collated and analysed and this is used to implement strategies for handling pendency. For instance, this analysis yields information about the number of cases yet pending, the length of the pendency and, most importantly, the causes of that pendency. These are then segregated and prioritized for disposal so that the main lawsuit can be quickly disposed of. This level of data analysis and, at a minimum, monthly supervision by the High Court e-committee facilitates the adoption of accurate, fine-grained, and targeted pendency disposal strategies. The analysis also allows for a proper distribution of workloads among judges.

## **MONITORING OF DISPOSAL AND PROGRESS OF OLD CASES**

The old cases are segregated according to 5 to 10 years, 10 -20 years and 20 to 40 years. Different time frames are given for the disposal of these cases. The SCMS Committee has circulated the Action Plan for disposal of the old cases. Fortnightly monitoring is done by the calling progress report fortnightly of 40 years old cases.

## **MONITORING ON DAILY DISPOSAL OF CASES**

The SCMS Committee monitors daily disposal of cases in the District and Subordinate Courts on day to day basis. The consolidated report of each District is called every day.

### **MONITORING OF DELIVERY OF JUDGMENTS WHICH ARE RESERVED FOR MORE THAN 30 DAYS**

The SCMS Committee has instructed all the District Courts to report the instances of any delay in delivery of Judgments and orders by the Courts. The information is called daily in the prescribed format.

### **EFFECTIVE USE OF THE NJDG MANAGEMENT USER TOOLS FOR CLEARING CASE PENDENCY**

- 1. Query Builder-Search by Act** is used to find pendency of cases under a particular Act. The SCMS committee continuously monitors the data with the help of this tool.
- 2. The Data Monitoring-Year wise Pendency Report tool** has been used to trace 20+ year old cases in Maharashtra. The data was analysed and a policy was formulated to clear the backlog of 40 year old cases on a priority basis. This is included in the revised action plan.
- 3. Dashboard-Pending cases - Top (oldest) Civil and Criminal Cases tool** is used to find the oldest pending cases. These are then listed for priority disposal before the Court concerned.

**4. Query Builder-Search by Purpose-Stayed Matters tool**

is used to find out how many matters are stayed by the High Court and District Courts. SCMS Committee forwards lists of 5- and 10-year-old matters stayed by the High Court and the District Courts to the respective Benches of the Bombay High Court and the District Courts. Resultantly, many old cases have been disposed of.

**5. Query Builder-Search by Purpose- Dormant File tool**

is used to find out how many cases are on the dormant list. The SCMS Committee analysed the data collected and issued directions to deal with such cases on a priority basis.

**6. Pending Cases—10 Years old menu on the home dashboard**

is used to assess the burden on each Court and to achieve an equalized distribution. It was noticed that some courts were burdened with 10 year old matters while others did not have any such old cases. This prompted the SCMS committee to include the point of 'equitable distribution' of such old cases in its Action Plan. An equal distribution has been done throughout Maharashtra.

**7. Use of other tools in NJDG Management User**

The Query Builder and Dashboard tools in the NJDG Management User are used to understand trends of pendency and disposal of cases at particular locations.

**USE OF URGENT CASE OPTION IN CIS**

Judicial Officers have been directed to use Urgent Case Option in CIS to show old / time bound cases high on Board. A User Manual

prepared by the CPC office on the use of Urgent Case Option in CIS has been circulated to all Judicial Officers.

### **USE OF “DELAY STATUS” FUNCTIONALITY IN CIS 3.0**

The Computer Committee has circulated the User Manual on the use of the Delay Status functionality in CIS 3.0 and directed all the Judicial Officers in the State of Maharashtra, Goa and Union Territory of Diu, Daman and Dadra Nagar Haveli at Silvassa to use the “Delay Status” functionality in CIS 3.0 for recording the reason for delay in disposal of the cases pending for more than 10 years.

### **USE OF FIR MODULE IN CIS**

Directions have been issued to all District and Subordinate Courts under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High Court to enter FIR details in the CIS. The New FIR module is successfully installed in CIS of all the Courts. Party details, Police Station details etc. are automatically fetched from the FIR Module. This has resulted in considerable savings of time and resources.

### **CIS-GENERATED BALANCE-SHEET**

Balance-sheets are mirrors of the cases pending in the Court. If CIS-generated balance-sheets are maintained (instead of manual

balance-sheets), greater data accuracy can be achieved. Hence, the Bombay High Court has issued

a circular directing all the Courts to maintain CIS-generated balance-sheets of proceedings by doing away with the present practice of preparing and maintaining these manually.

### **DIGITIZING RECORDS**

The project of scanning and digitization of about 129 Crore pages in the District and Subordinate Courts has been undertaken. With a view to reduce the burden on the staff, for greater accuracy, and to ensure completeness of digital records, a decision has been taken to discontinue the present practice of writing roznamas manually. Earlier, these were not digitized. At present, they are required to be entered and uploaded to the CIS. Civil and Criminal Manuals have been amended to achieve data accuracy and enhance the use of CIS in Court proceedings, and to afford legal sanctity to Roznamas generated through the CIS. To facilitate the use of CIS Roznama, a CIS Manual in Marathi on the writing of digital Roznama was circulated for the quick reference of the staff members. The roznamas are now accessible online. The Technical team of the Bombay High Court has prepared e-Registers. In order to regularize the use of e-Registers, the Bombay High Court has made necessary amendments in the Civil and Criminal manuals.

## DIGITIZATION OF CHIEF JUSTICE OFFICE & HOUSE MANAGEMENT OF DIGITAL RECORD

A separate software has been developed to maintain and manage the record of the CJ Office in digitized form. This software is effectively used for administrative purposes and management of the CJ Office and CJ House, optimum use of human resources as well as the preservation and retrieval of data.

Scanning of the records in Chief Justice Office was started in 2010-2011 in two parts: compulsory digitization of records received from 2011 onwards and available old record in phases.

The record of submissions, protocol programs, letters, Minutes of the Full House, District Judges Conference (1946 to 2014), Disciplinary Committee, Administrative Judges, Chief Justices Conference, CJ-CM Meetings, Bar Associations, photos, court references, speeches, old and historical data, etc, is digitized and uploaded in the software. Similarly, inward and outward entries are made in the software. So far, digitized records of about 200 GB is available with the CJ Office. Data is regularly updated in this software.

### CJ Office Software

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the URL `172.16.4.22/localhost/.../update/tourprnew.php?type=add`. The page title is "Bombay High Court - The Office of Hon'ble The Chief Justice". The user is logged in as "Demo User". The navigation menu includes: 1 Tour, 2 Meetings, 3 High Court & Benches, 4 Misc, 5 PA/PS Entry, 6 Judges PIS Entry, 7 Conferences, 8 Stationary, 9 CJ House, 10 CJ Office, and 11 Profile. The main content area is titled "Tour Details - Addition" and contains the following form fields:

- Tour Type:  Official  Private  LTC  LTC-Encashment
- Tour Period: From  To  (dd/mm/yyyy)
- Mode of Journey:  Air  Car  Railway
- Tour Location:
- Tour Details:

Below the main form, there are two sections:

**Accompanying Officials Details**

Name	Designation	Remarks if any
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Next

**Payment Details**

Payment Type	Payment Mode	Bill No./Cheque No.	Date(dd/mm/yyyy)	Amount	Remark if any
Select	Select	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Next

## **OFFICIAL WEBSITES**

On the official websites of the Bombay High Court and District Courts various citizen-centric services are provided. Advocates and litigants can view case status, judgments and orders, cause lists, etc. on these websites. Forms, manuals, notifications, bare acts and rules are made available on these websites. These websites are used for publication of details of the judges/judicial officers, tenders, notices, recruitment details and other information relating to the courts.

## **E-FILING APPLICATION**

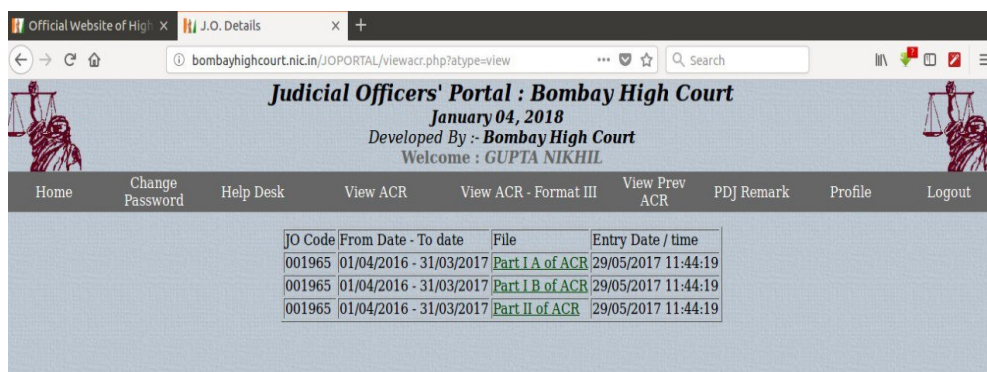
The Technical Team of the Bombay High Court has developed e-filing application. It is available at <http://bombayhighcourt.nic.in/ecasefiling/login.php>. Advocates, firms and parties-in-person can file cases online through this application.

## **Judicial Officers (JO) PORTAL**

A JO Portal was developed by the Bombay High Court. This portal is used for uploading circulars, notifications, guidelines, administrative instructions, forms, etc. This portal is used by Judicial Officers in the States of Maharashtra and Goa to indicate options at the time of the Annual General Transfers and for uploading ACR forms and judgments.

## **ACR Module under JO Portal**





### **Software Development:**

Mobile Applications for Display Board of Bombay High Court and its Benches are available for download on the official website of the Bombay High Court.

The CPC team has developed online Bilingual Court Fee Calculator for the use of litigants and advocates, Rozanama Application, Mediation Progress 3-D Monitoring System, software for Compoundable Criminal Cases Balance Sheet, Child litigant Cases, Woman litigant Cases, Senior Citizen litigant Cases, Under Trial Criminal cases, Undated Cases, Cases for Charge, Cases for Issues and Cases Allotted to the Judicial Officer, Website for the Court Receiver and Bilingual Mobile App.

These software will be soon made available for the use of litigants, advocates and staff.

### **E-Payment Facility:**

Maharashtra is the first State, which provided the facility of e-Payment of the Court Fees to the litigants and advocates through Government Receipt Accounting System (GRAS). Initially, the

facility of e-payment of only the Court Fees was available under GRAS Portal. Now, the facility to make e-payment of the amount of fine, penalty, copying fees and other Judicial deposits is available under GRAS Portal.

Besides GRAS Portal, the Bombay High Court will soon make the facility of e-payment available to the litigants and advocates in Pune District through POS Machine and SBIEPay on a pilot basis. For that purpose, the District Court, Pune has opened a targeted account with the SBI. GRAS Portal and SBIEPay Portal have been integrated with the online payment portal namely pay.ecourt.gov.in developed by the NIC, Pune. The Bombay High Court has suitably amended the Civil Manual to facilitate e-payment of fine, penalty and Judicial deposits.

## **USE OF CNR**

The Case Number Record (CNR) of the case is used for obtaining information and status of cases as well as for downloading copies of judgments and orders from the e-Courts websites and e-Court Services mobile app. Searching a case with its CNR is easier than searching it with Case Type or Registration Number. Hence, directions have been to all the District and Subordinate Courts under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High Court to prominently state the CNR on all Court Proceedings, Orders, judgments, etc.

## **VIDEO CONFERENCING FACILITY**

Video Conferencing facility is functional in 1830 Court Halls of **344** Court Complexes for speedy disposal of the cases of the Under Trial Prisoners. **80** Video Conferencing Units are functional in jails. Permission to use laptops for video conferencing by the Judicial Officer has been granted. Video conferencing is also used for the meetings of Lok Adalats and for the workshops of the Judicial Officers. The Bombay High Court leads in using Video Desktop Application. For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018, 66,253 VC Calls were made for a total duration of 8880 Hours and 33 Minutes.

### **Capital Expenditure (E-Courts Project Funds Utilization)**

All expenditure by the Bombay High Court on the e-Courts project was based on the immediate necessity and techno-financial feasibility of individual projects. In making and implementing all these significant advances and achieving these milestones, the Bombay High Court has carefully and invariably adhered to a fully transparent, accountable and open procurement process. All State Government-mandated norms and policies have been followed in regard to e-tendering, technical and financial bids evaluations, rigorous follow up including imposition of penalties, etc. Where necessary, CVC and GFR rules, guidelines and norms have been invoked to ensure complete compliance and transparency. In no instance have any funds, though sanctioned, been spent without following the necessary processes and adhering to fully transparent protocols.

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