

## General Studies-2; Topic: e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential

### Legal Information Management and Briefing System (LIMBS)

#### 1) Introduction

- Legal Information Management and Briefing System (LIMBS) is a web based application created by the Department of Legal Affairs under the Ministry of Law and Justice.
- The idea is to make the legal data available at one single point and streamline the procedure of litigation matters conducted on behalf of Union of India.
- It is in line with Digital India to digitalise the details of court cases and bring various stakeholders on a single platform.

#### 2) Background

- Earlier, information about cases involving 64 ministries/departments was scattered in different places, typically, in the form of physical files.
- That information is now available on a single platform, in electronic form.

#### 3) Benefits

- LIMBS will help in organizing scattered Information at one single database.
- LIMBS provide a low cost web technology access to all the stakeholders involved in a court case.
- It is now possible to know the various stages of a case and monitor its progress on a continued basis.
- LIMBS is meant to improve the Union government's handling of cases.
- Speedy resolution of disputes.
- SMS prompts are sent to concerned officials for a timely action.
- It reduces the quantum of cases that come to the courts.
- It aims to reduce financial burden, save time and bring efficiency in the working of various Departments of a Ministry.
- It will help to introduce transparency during the life cycle of a court case.
- It will help authorities to take 'data driven decision making'.
- It will help in achieving 'minimum government and maximum governance' and Ease of Doing Business.
- LIMBS bring the entire litigation process to an online platform, which is a paperless green initiative.
- LIMBS has a huge database of court cases information which provides space for further research in to court cases analysis to bring in new innovations in to litigation matters.

#### 4) Why LIMBS?

- According to the Ministry of Law and Justice, government departments are a party to around "46 percent" of court cases.
- Government litigation crowds out the private citizen from the court system.
- Excessive litigation is a constraint on the public exchequer
- Government litigation has contributed to judicial backlog, thus affecting justice delivery in India.
- Large number of cases against the government is not a positive sign of good governance.

### 5) Way Forward

- LIMBS involves civil cases, it should be extended to criminal cases also.
- At present it is for the Union government, the idea must be extended to state governments also.
- LIMBS is in its infancy. To make the working of the government more coordinated, various departments must submit the data as early as possible in a time bound and integrated manner.

### 6) Tackling Government Litigation

- A multi-pronged approach needs to be adopted to tackle the issue of “government litigation”, depending on the kind of litigation.
- A relook at the functioning of litigation-prone departments and formulating solutions unique to each department.
- Robust internal dispute resolution mechanisms within each department as a means of addressing their grievances against the management.
- The state must ensure that quasi-judicial authorities are judicially trained or create a separate class of judicial officers to discharge quasi-judicial functions.
- Ministries and departments should conduct focused monitoring on pending cases particularly those pending for more than 10 years.
- To further bring down pendency of cases in courts, both the Centre and states should withdraw “frivolous and ineffective cases”.
- To discourage future litigations, the government should compulsorily introduce arbitration and mediation clauses in work contracts of its staff and public sector employees.
- Learn from other countries like France who are following a model approach toward government litigation.