

Gram Nyayalayas

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In news- The Supreme Court has recently sought a reply from all high courts on a plea for the Centre and all states to take steps to set up 'Gram Nyayalayas' under the supervision of the apex court.

Key updates-

- The bench was hearing a PIL filed by National Federation of Societies for Fast Justice seeking the implementation of the Gram Nyayalayas Act.
- The plea contended that sections in the Act provide that the state government in consultation with the high court will appoint a 'Nyayadhikari' for each 'Gram Nyayalaya'.
- The bench said the high courts should be made a party in the matter as they are the supervisory authority. After hearing arguments, the bench issued notice to the Registrar General of all high courts and made them parties in the case.
- The Union Government has taken a stand that the establishment of Gram Nyayalayas by the States is not mandatory as the Act uses the word "may" instead of "shall."

About Gram Nyayalayas-

- **In 2008, the Parliament passed an Act for setting up 'Gram Nyayalayas'** at the grassroots level for providing access to justice to citizens at the doorstep.
- **Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008** was enacted for establishment of Gram Nyayalayas or village courts for speedy and easy access to justice system in the rural areas of India. The Act came into force from 2 October 2009.
- As per the act Gram Nyayalayas shall exercise both civil and criminal jurisdiction in the manner and to the extent provided under the act.

- **In 2020, the top court directed the state governments, which are yet to come out with notifications for establishing 'Gram Nyayalayas', to do so.**
- It also asked the high courts to expedite the process of consultation with state governments

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