

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 85
TO BE ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, 9th FEBRUARY, 2023.**

Free legal aid to the poor

85. Shri Sanjay Raut:

Will the Minister of *Law and Justice* be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of authorities/institutions involved in providing free legal aid to the poor in the country;
- (b) whether Government proposes to strengthen these authorities/institutions, including the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has also launched the Nyaya Bandhu (Pro-Bono Legal Services) programme and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the number of Pro-Bono advocates along with the number of beneficiaries that have been registered under the programme?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE
(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)**

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (d) of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 85 for reply on 09.02.2023 regarding 'Free legal aid to the poor' asked by Shri Sanjay Raut.

(a) The following Authorities/Institutions are established to provide free legal aid to poor and weaker sections of the society :-

- i. National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) at National level
- ii. Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) at Supreme Court level
- iii. 39 High Court Legal Services Committees (HCLSCs) at High Court level
- iv. 37 State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) at State level
- v. 676 District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs) at District level
- vi. 2361 Taluk Legal Services Committees (TLSCs) at Taluk level

(b) The Government extends all support to strengthen the legal services authorities/institutions in the form of Grants-in-Aid. During the last 3 years i.e. 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23, grants-in-aid of Rs. 100 crore, Rs. 145 crore and Rs. 190 crore respectively have been allocated by the Government to NALSA for various legal aid activities like free legal assistance, Lok Adalats, legal awareness programmes across the country etc.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. The Government launched Nyaya Bandhu (Pro-bono Legal Services) with the primary aim of advancing the culture of pro bono and creating a framework for dispensation of offering pro bono legal services across the country. It links the persons eligible to avail free legal aid under Section 12

of Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 with the pro-bono lawyers. Under the programme, practicing advocates, interested in undertaking legal pro bono work, are connected, via mobile application, with eligible marginalised beneficiaries, for delivery of pro bono (free of charge) legal services. As on 31st January, 2023 there are total 5817 advocates enrolled and 2097 cases of the beneficiaries registered.
