

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1874
ANSWERED ON 16/03/2023

EFFORTS FOR EASY ACCESSIBILITY OF JUSTICE

1874. SHRI MASTHAN RAO BEEDA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether any efforts are being made by Government to ensure easy, accessible and affordable judicial system for the people belonging to socially and economically backward classes;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor;**
- (c) whether the court premises and proceedings have become more accessible for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities; and**
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the manner in which Government proposes to do the same?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

(a)& (b): The efforts made by the Government to ensure easy, accessible and affordable judicial system for the people belonging to socially and economically backward classes are as follows :

- i.** The Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 was enacted with a view to provide free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society including beneficiaries covered under Section 12 of the Act to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities.
- ii.** Under the aegis of the Legal Services Act, LokAdalats are organised to promote justice on a basis of equal opportunities. For this purpose, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk Court level to the Supreme Court.
- iii.** 9.75 lakhs persons have been provided with free legal services during the period April, 2022 to January, 2023 and 5.54 crore cases (pending in courts and disputes at pre-litigation stage) have been settled through LokAdalats April, 2022 to February, 2023.
- iv.** In addition, the Government has launched NyayaBandhu (Pro-bono Legal Services) programme to link the persons eligible to avail free legal aid under Section 12 of LSA Act, 1987 with the pro-bono lawyers. 5954 pro bono advocates have been registered under the programme and 2180 cases have been registered by the beneficiaries.
- v.** Tele-law programme, being run by the Government provides legal advice to public including persons entitled for free legal aid under Section 12 of LSA Act, 1987, at pre-litigation stage by the Panel Lawyers through the Common Service Centre (CSC) at the Panchayats. Tele-law has served more than 33.54 lakh beneficiaries till date.

(c)& (d): The responsibility for the development of infrastructure facilities including facilitating accessibility for persons with benchmark disabilities rests primarily with the respective State Governments. The Central Government only supplements the resources

of the States in this regard through the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Judicial Infrastructure in District and Subordinate Courts.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the development of infrastructure facilities for the Judiciary, funds are provided for construction of court buildings, residential units, lawyers hall, toilet complexes and digital computer rooms for the convenience of lawyers and litigants. However, funds are released to the States/UTs only when their project proposals mandatorily comply with disable friendly norms/accessibility standards as laid down by CPWD/Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. A certificate to this effect is also asked for from the States as part of the CSS guidelines. Under the Scheme, the States have enough liberty to provide for additional facilities including those that facilitate easy accessibility for persons with benchmark disabilities to the court premises.
