

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2664
ANSWERED ON -23/03/2023

Legal aid to poor and marginalized sections

2664.SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY:

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

- (a) whether, under Article 39A of the Constitution, Government has to provide free legal service to weaker and marginalized sections of society;
- (b) if so, whether Government is achieving the objectives of Article 39A through NALSA, DISHA, Nyaya Bandhu and through other interventions;
- (c) how Tele-Law is helping in providing legal aid to poor and the marginalized, with a particular reference to women, SCs and STs, State-wise;
- (d) allocation made in 2023-24 budget for above purposes; and
- (e) reasons that allocation for Department of Justice has come down from 61% of total Budget of the Ministry to just 37% in 2023-24?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE

(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

(a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 constituted under Article 39A of the Indian Constitution, provides 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, and to organize Lok Adalats to secure that the operation of the legal system promotes 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. 9.75 lakhs persons have been provided with free legal services during April, 2022 to January, 2023 and more than 5.53 crore cases (pending in courts and

disputes at pre-litigation stage) have been settled through Lok Adalats April, 2022 to February, 2023. A sum of Rs.200 crores in the Budget Estimates during the financial year 2023-24 has been allocated to NALSA.

In addition, Department of Justice initiated a scheme titled Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice (DISHA) to provide for easy, accessible and affordable delivery of legal services. Its key initiatives include Tele-Law: Reaching the Unreached that aims to strengthen pre-litigation advice and consultation to all citizens at the Gram Panchayat level and Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) that aims to enable a pan India Pro Bono dispensation framework for delivery of legal services. Tele-Law seeks to connect the beneficiary with the Lawyer via tele/ conferencing facilities available at the Common Service Centers and through Tele-Law Citizens Mobile Application. As on 28th February, 2023, Tele-Law services is available across 1 lakh Gram Panchayats in 755 districts across 36 States and UTs and has rendered legal advice to 33,54,545 beneficiaries, which includes women, children, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe etc. The Nyaya Bandhu platform enables seamless connect on the Nyaya Bandhu Application (available on Android/ iOS) between the interested Pro Bono Advocates and registered beneficiaries entitled for free legal aid under section 12 of Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. As on 28th February, 2023, there are 5954 Pro Bono advocates and 69 law schools have constituted Pro Bono Clubs to facilitate the culture of Pro bono among law students. Panel Lawyers of NALSA has been onboarded to provide Tele-Law Services and to provide Pro Bono Legal services at the district level. A total budget of Rs 40 Crore in the Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2023-2024 has been allocated under DISHA.

e) The Ministry of Finance makes the final allocations under BE/RE. The allocation for Department of Justice has increased from 33.05% in the FY 2022-2023 to 34.16% in the FY 2023-2024. Details of the BE/RE for the Financial Year 2022 -2023 and 2023 -2024 is placed at **Annexure A**.

ANNEXURE- 'A'

Statement as referred to in reply to part (e) Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No.2664 for answering on 23.03.2023 raised by Shri Prabhakar Reddy Vemireddy on details of allocation made to Department of Justice and Ministry of Law and Justice

Statement containing the information of B.E allocation year-wise.

	B.E-2022-2023	%	B.E 2023-2024	%
Department of Justice	1121.80	33.05	1358.31	34.16
Total Ministry of Law and Justice	3393.48		3875.43	
