

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2517
ANSWERED ON 10.08.2023

LOW SPENDING ON LEGAL AID

2517.SHRI SUJEET KUMAR:

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

- (a) whether Government has taken cognizance of a Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative Report indicating spending on legal aid in India at INR 0.75 per capita, one of the lowest in the world;
- (b) whether Government has devised a plan of action to address the above;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether Government recognizes the problem of accessibility to legal aid infrastructure, as reflected in NALSA's report which finds only 5 legal aid lawyers per 100,000 Indians; and
- (e) whether Government has devised a plan of action to address the above and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS;
AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE
(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a) to (c) No Sir, Legal aid in India is rendered through National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) which has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 to provide free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society. For this purpose, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk Court

level to the Supreme Court. The Government extends all support to strengthen the legal services authorities/institutions in the form of Grants-in-Aid. Funds under Grant-in-Aid are allocated and released to NALSA by the Government on yearly basis.

The grants provided by the Government have consistently increased as seen from grants provided during last four years. During the years 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/released by the Government to NALSA for various legal aid activities like free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society including beneficiaries covered under Section 12 of the Act, organizing Lok Adalats, legal awareness programmes across the country etc. For the current year i.e. 2023-24, grants-in-aid of Rs. 200 crore have been allocated to NALSA out of which Rs. 50 crore have been released so far by the Government.

(d) to (e) Legal Services Institutions have sufficient number of panel lawyers to provide free legal services to all the beneficiaries. No beneficiary is denied free legal services for the reason that there is shortage of panel lawyer.
