

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3794
ANSWERED ON-03/04/2025

LEGAL AID SYSTEM

3794# SMT. MAYA NAROLIYA:
SHRI BRIJ LAL:
SHRI RYAGA KRISHNAIAH:

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

- (a) the steps being taken to strengthen the free legal aid system in the country;
- (b) whether it is proposed to expand free legal aid services to remote and tribal areas;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the measures taken to ensure that the deprived communities are made aware of these services and can derive benefit from that?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a) to (c) :National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) was constituted under the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 to provide free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society including beneficiaries covered under Section 12 of the LSA Act, 1987. This Act ensures that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities, and to organize Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes. In addition, NALSA has also formulated various schemes for the implementation of preventive and strategic legal service programmes, which are implemented by the Legal Services Authorities at various levels i.e. State, District and Taluka level. During last three

years from 2022-23 to 2024-25 (upto December 2024), 39.44 lakhs persons have been provided with free legal services.

Government is also implementing a Central Sector Scheme named “Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice in India” (DISHA) for a period of five years (2021-2026), at an outlay of Rs. 250 crores. The DISHA scheme aims to provide easy, accessible, affordable and citizen-centric delivery of legal services through the Tele-Law, Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) and Legal Literacy and Legal awareness programme. Under the DISHA scheme, Tele- Law connects citizens with the lawyers through mobile app “Tele-Law” and Toll-Free number for rendering pre-litigation advice; Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono services) facilitates registered beneficiaries to avail pro bono legal representation in courts and under the Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Programme, citizens are empowered to know, understand and avail their legal rights, duties and entitlements. Till 28th February 2025, DISHA scheme through its various programmes has covered approximately 2.10 crore beneficiaries in the country.

The Government of India is implementing another Central Sector Scheme namely; Legal Aid Defense Counsel System (LADCS) Scheme through NALSA. LADCS Scheme aims to provide legal aid with regard to criminal cases only to the beneficiaries eligible for legal aid under Section 12 of the LSA Act, 1987. The approved financial outlay of LADCS scheme is Rs. 998.43 crore for 3 years (F.Y. 2023-24 to F.Y. 2025-26). As on 30th December 2024, LADC offices are functional in 654 districts across the country and has engaged 5251 staff including 3448 Defense Counsels. During the year 2024-25 (upto December, 2024), LADCS offices dealt more than 3.95 lakh criminal cases.

(d): Legal awareness programmes are held across the country by Legal Service Authorities on various laws and schemes relating to children, labourers, victims of disaster, SC and ST, persons suffering from disability, etc. Legal Services Authorities also prepare booklets and pamphlets in simple language on various laws and are distributed amongst the people. 12,49,496 and 1,26,966 legal awareness camps and programs organized by Legal Service Authorities during the year 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 (upto December 2024) which were attended by around 13.93 crore and 3.06 crore persons respectively.
