

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 3307
ANSWERED ON - 21/08/2025

ACCESS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

3307 # SHRI DHAIRYASHIL MOHAN PATIL:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that only 0.29% of legal aid beneficiaries are persons with disabilities in 2023-24, indicating their exclusion from justice services;
- (b) the steps being taken to implement guidelines related to access in courts, police stations and jails following the recommendations of the Supreme Court's Committee on Accessibility;
- (c) whether Government plans to mandate the collection of disability-disaggregated data within the justice system; and
- (d) the measures for the establishment of sign language interpretation, tactile paths and disability-friendly facilities in judicial institutions?

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 (d): Persons with disability are, inter alia, entitled to legal aid under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987. Data of beneficiaries benefitted through legal services provided, including persons with disabilities, is regularly compiled by National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) through reports received from Legal Services Institutions (LSIs) across the country. In the year 2023-24, 15,50,164 beneficiaries availed legal aid provided under the LSA Act, 1987 by State Legal Services Authorities under the aegis of NALSA, of which 11,591 beneficiaries were persons with disability which constitutes 0.74% of the total beneficiaries.

NALSA is also implementing specific schemes for persons with disability which include NALSA (Legal Services to the Mentally Ill and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024. This scheme aims to ensure that legal services are responsive to the specific legal and social needs of persons with mental illness and persons with intellectual disabilities. Through this scheme, it is ensured that such legal services are accessible in all civil, administrative, criminal or related matters to the persons with disability. This Scheme further aims to create a specialised unit of panel lawyers and para-legal volunteers in every district, who possess requisite knowledge about the special needs of persons with mental illness and persons with intellectual disabilities and that such persons have equal access to schemes, programmes, facilities or services. Under this scheme, specialised 'Legal Services Unit for Persons with Mental Illness & Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (LSUM)' units have been established in most of the States/UTs and training for these units has been completed. The LSUM incorporates provisions for providing legal services at Courts (including Special Courts), Prisons and Police Stations.

The Government is also implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of infrastructure facilities for the Judiciary by augmenting the resources of the State Governments for construction of court buildings and residential accommodation for Judicial Officers/Judges of District and Subordinate Courts. As per guidelines of the scheme, the States/UTs have to ensure that the proposed infrastructure have disabled-friendly design. The building design should be in conformity with the requisite norms/accessibility standards as laid down by Central Public Works Department, Department of Empowerment of persons with disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, from time to time.

Secondly, under eCourts Project Phase III, there are 24 components that have several significant measures devised to foster the creation of a robust and accessible digital infrastructure for citizens including persons with disability. Provision has been made for providing enhanced accessible ICT enabled facilities to persons with disabilities, at a budgetary outlay of Rs. 27.54 crore, migration of websites of 752 Courts (including High Courts) to S3WaaS platform (Secure, Scalable and Sugamya Website as a Service) that makes the website friendly for persons with disabilities, at a budgetary outlay of Rs. 6.35 crore. S3WaaS platform has features for easy visibility of content for partially and completely visually challenged citizens.
