

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 599
ANSWERED ON 24.07.2025

Effectiveness of free legal aid services

599. Dr. Syed Naseer Hussain :

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

- (a) whether Government has conducted any recent studies or consultations to evaluate the effectiveness of free legal aid services under the DISHA Scheme, in reducing case pendency for economically disadvantaged individuals; and
- (b) if so, a detailed breakdown of the major reforms or strategies identified to strengthen these services and improve case resolution delays?

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): The Department of Justice has been implementing a pan India Scheme namely “Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice India (DISHA) which aims to fulfil the Constitutional mandate as enunciated under the Preamble and Articles 39A, 14 and 21 of the Constitution. Presently, the scheme of DISHA is approved for the period of 2021-26. In order to continue the scheme beyond 31.03.2026 during the next Finance Commission Cycle, the

scheme is required to undergo an appraisal and approval process based on an outcome review.

The DISHA scheme provides easy, accessible, affordable and citizen-centric legal services through its components viz. Tele-Law, Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) and Legal Literacy and Legal awareness programmes and does not involve disposal of pending cases. The Tele-Law connects citizens with the lawyers through video conferencing facilities and mobile app “Tele- Law” and also through Toll Free number for rendering pre-litigation advice. The Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono legal services) enables seamless connect through the Nyaya Bandhu Application (available on Android/IOS) between the interested Pro Bono Advocates and registered beneficiaries, who are entitled for free legal aid under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. Further, the third component of DISHA is Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness programme, through which the beneficiaries are sensitized about their rights, duties, and entitlements. Till 30th June, 2025 DISHA Scheme through its various programmes has outreached approximately 2.10 crore beneficiaries in the country.

(b) In order to broaden and strengthen the outreach of the services to the citizen, various measures have been undertaken. To enhance the outreach, the Tele Law web portal and Tele- Law application have been translated in 22 scheduled languages. Special endeavours have also been made to increase its outreach through both print and digital media. Further, special efforts have been made to integrate Tele- Law with Nyaya Bandhu (Pro bono Legal Services) platform for pre- litigation advice and legal representation of the beneficiaries. Toll free number for citizens through 14454 has also been operationalised for instant advice and counselling. The Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness program has been developed and mainstreamed through various regional

implementing agencies like Sikkim State Women commission, Arunachal Pradesh SLSA, etc. Under a collaboration with Doordarshan, 56 legal awareness TV programs were developed in 6 languages, which were aired and the videos were disseminated through youtube and channel of Doordarshan reaching out to over 70.70 lakh citizens. In addition, 20 thematic legal awareness webinars have also been organised from September, 2021 to October, 2023 on socio-legal issues.
