

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 6
ANSWERED ON 29/01/2026**

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES FOR ST AND MARGINALISED PEOPLE

6 SHRI RYAGA KRISHNAIAH:

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

- (a) the legal aid services available for Scheduled Tribes (ST) and other marginalised people;
- (b) the functioning of specialised Legal Services Units for marginalised people;
- (c) the accessibility of Free Legal aid Services for such people;
- (d) whether eCourts Phase III includes enhanced easily accessibility features for rural and marginalised people; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

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 (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) IN RESPECT OF
RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 6 FOR REPLY ON 29.01.2026
REGARDING ‘AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES FOR ST AND MARGINALISED
PEOPLE’ ASKED BY SHRI RYAGA KRISHNAIAH

(a) The Government has set up National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) under the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 to provide free and competent legal services to the poor and marginalised sections of the society including Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) 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 the basis of equal opportunities.

In order to reach out to the citizens in every corner of the country, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk level up to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) functions at the Supreme Court whereas, there are 38 High Court Legal Services Committees (HCLSCs), 37 State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs), 707 District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs) and 2440 Taluk Legal Services Committees (TLSCs). The activities/programmes undertaken by Legal Services Authorities include Legal Aid and advice; Legal Awareness Programmes; Legal Services Clinics; Legal Literacy Clubs; Lok Adalats and implementation of Victim Compensation Scheme.

(b) NALSA has notified National Legal Services Authority (Legal Services Clinics) Regulations, 2011 which provides establishment of District Legal Services Clinics in:

- (a) all villages, or for a cluster of villages, depending on the size of such villages, which shall be called the Village Legal Care and Support Centre; and
- (b) jails, educational institutions, community centres, protection homes, courts, juvenile justice boards and other areas, especially where the people face geographical, social and other barriers for access to the legal services institutions.

The primary objective of these clinics is to facilitate access to legal services for individuals facing geographical, social, or other barriers. The clinics are manned by Panel Lawyers and Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs), who assist in providing legal aid and spreading legal awareness. There are 13,588 Legal Services Clinics which are functional across the

country. The details of persons benefitted through Legal Services Clinics during the last three financial years are as follows:-

Year	No. of Persons Benefited
2023-24	10,36,040
2024-25	13,41,986
2025-26 (upto November, 2025)	12,19,722

(c) The following steps have been taken by the NALSA to ensure the accessibility of free legal services to the poor and marginalised sections of the society including SC/ST:-

- (i) NALSA has created a web portal to file an application for getting legal assistance wherein application can be filed in ten different languages i.e. English, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Gujarati, Bengali, Odia and Kannada.
- (ii) The official website of NALSA has been revamped to ensure greater accessibility, efficiency, and responsiveness in service delivery. The upgraded digital platform enables easier navigation, faster access to legal aid-related information and seamless integration with Legal Services Authorities across the country. Websites of all State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) are directly accessible through the NALSA portal, providing a unified and user-friendly interface for citizens to access information on empaneled lawyers, PLVs and legal services.
- (iii) NALSA has launched a Legal Services Mobile App for Android and IOS version which facilitate seeking legal assistance, legal advice, tracking of application, applying for victim compensation, seeking redressal of other grievances etc.
- (iv) Legal Services Authorities are also providing legal advice through NALSA's National Toll-Free Helpline Number 15100 through IVRS Technology. From 09.11.2023 to 21.01.2026, 12.51 lakh calls have been received on NALSA helpline number 15100.

(d) & (e) The eCourts Mission Mode Project, under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), is one of the most significant initiatives to modernize the Indian judiciary through technology to make justice delivery faster, more transparent, and accessible to all citizens. Phase I, initiated in 2011, primarily focused on establishing the foundational digital infrastructure of the judiciary. It achieved computerization of 14,249 District and Subordinate Courts, installation of Local Area Network (LAN) in 13,683 courts, and software enablement of 13,672 courts for digital case management, video conferencing facilities in 493 courts and 347 jails. Building upon this groundwork, Phase II, implemented from 2015 to 2023, expanded the scope from basic computerization to providing citizen-centric digital services. The number of computerized courts rose to 18,735, Video conferencing facilities expanded to 3,240 courts and 1,272 jails, reflecting the growing reliance on digital hearings. Wide Area Network (WAN) connectivity reached 99.5% of court complexes, ensuring robust network access. This phase also saw the introduction of key platforms such as the Free and Open-Source Case Information System (CIS), the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) as a transparent online repository of case data, and the establishment of eSewa Kendras to provide front-end facilitation services to citizens and lawyers.

The Government has demonstrated its commitment in modernizing judiciary with advanced digital infrastructure by significantly increasing the budget of Phase III (2023–2027) to ₹7,210 crore to transform Indian courts into Digital and Paperless Courts by digitizing legacy and current case records, expanding video conferencing to all courts, jails, and hospitals, and extending online courts beyond traffic violations. It also aims for universal saturation of eSewa Kendras.

Overall, from its modest beginnings in Phase I to the deep technological infusion in Phase III, the eCourts Mission Mode Project has evolved into a cornerstone of judicial reforms in India. Each phase has not only expanded digital capacity but also progressively enhanced accessibility, transparency, and efficiency. This has resulted moving the Indian judiciary decisively toward a modern, technology-driven justice delivery system that is accessible anytime, anywhere, and on any device by citizens including rural and marginalised.
