

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3156**  
ANSWERED ON – 19/03/2026

**DENIAL OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION**

3156 SHRI DORJEE TSHERING LEPCHA:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that tribal and women litigants often face denial of legal representation when their case is against the family members of an advocate registered in the same Bar Association, resulting in refusal by local advocates to accept the brief;
- (b) whether such situations amount to denial of access to justice despite the availability of legal aid provisions;
- (c) whether there exists any mechanism under the Legal Services Authorities framework to provide independent legal aid counsel from outside the concerned district or State; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to ensure impartial legal representation to vulnerable litigants in such circumstances?

**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):** The 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 the beneficiaries covered under Section 12 of the LSA Act, 1987, which aims to ensure that the opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities. 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.

NALSA has not come across the situation of denial of providing legal services to an eligible person. However, details of the persons under the category Women, SC and ST

benefited through legal services under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 during the last three financial years are as follows: -

<b>Year</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>Women</b>
2023-24	1,07,673	1,00,823	2,83,738
2024-25	1,29,402	1,28,440	3,16,151
2025-26 (upto January, 2026)	1,22,198	1,21,986	3,41,473

There is no bar that an advocate should be on the panel of a District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) from the same bar association. The National Legal Services Authority (Free and Competent Legal Services) Regulations, 2010 provides a robust framework for selection process of legal practitioners as panel lawyers, the process of removal of panel lawyers, monitoring and evaluating the quality and progress of legal aid services through constitution of Monitoring and Mentoring Committees (MMCs) within all the legal services institutions, viz. Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC), High Court Legal Services Committees (HCLSCs), State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs), District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs) and Taluk Legal Services Committees (TLSCs).

As per Regulation 7(6) of the aforesaid Regulations, “In case the Member-Secretary or Secretary of the Legal Services Institution decides to provide legal services through a panel lawyer, the choice of the panel lawyer, if expressed by the applicant, may be considered”. As per Regulation 8(15), “If a panel lawyer is desirous of withdrawing from a case, he shall state the reasons thereof to the Member-Secretary or the Secretary, as the case may be, and the panel lawyer may be permitted to do so by an order”. As per Regulations 8(17), “If the panel lawyer engaged is not performing satisfactorily or has acted contrary to the object and spirit of the Act and these regulations, the Legal Services Institution shall take appropriate steps including withdrawal of the case from such lawyer and his removal from the panel”. As per Regulation 11(5) and 11(8) of aforesaid Regulations, MMCs shall maintain a register for legal aid cases for monitoring the day-to-day progress of each case and the end results (success or failure) in respect of cases for which legal aid is allowed. This register is scrutinized every month by the Member Secretary or Secretary or Chairman, as the case may be and if the progress of the case is not satisfactory, the Committee may advise the Legal Services Institution to take appropriate steps.

This continuous follow up mechanism ensures accountability, transparency, and quality control in delivery of legal services to vulnerable litigants.

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