

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 592
ANSWERED ON – 23/07/2026

EFFECTIVENESS OF FREE LEGAL AID IN JAMMU & KASHMIR

592 SHRI SAT PAUL SHARMA:

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 Jammu & Kashmir, 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) & (b): The Ministry of Law and Justice has conducted an independent third-party evaluation-cum-impact assessment study of the erstwhile DISHA Scheme (2021-26) through M/s Quality Council of India (QCI), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry which highlighted the relevance of the Scheme. DISHA Scheme has been extended as DISHA 2.0 for a period of five years (2026-31), for pan India implementation, including Jammu & Kashmir.

The DISHA 2.0 Scheme provides an easy, accessible, affordable, technology enabled and people-centric legal services through its components viz. Tele-Law (Reaching the Unreached), Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) Programme, Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Programme, and VIDHI (Vision for Integrated Delivery of Harmonised Legal Initiatives) – Sanjeevani.

The Tele-Law connects people with panel lawyers through mobile-app and Toll Free No. 14454 for rendering pre-litigation legal advice and through use of video/tele conferencing facilities available at the Common Service Centres (CSCs)/Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) at the panchayat level. Nyaya Sahayaks, who are active community based legal facilitators, have been engaged in the Aspirational Blocks to strengthen service delivery.

As on 30.06.2026, 7,63,148 pre-litigation legal advice have been provided by 5 panel lawyers, facilitated through CSCs in the UT of Jammu & Kashmir. 8 Nyaya Sahayaks working in 10 Aspirational Blocks have registered 1,222 calls.

The Nyaya Bandhu (Pro-Bono Legal Services) Programme promotes a pro bono culture among advocates and law students by facilitating free legal assistance to eligible beneficiaries under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987, through the Nyaya Bandhu Portal and Mobile Application, which enables seamless connect between registered beneficiaries and Pro Bono Advocates. As on 30.06.2026, 197 advocates are registered under the Bar Council of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Programme (LLAP) envisages engaging with institutions and building partnerships across stakeholder Ministries/Departments, to build capacity of the grassroot workers, legally empower them and spread legal awareness through workshops, webinars, IEC materials, collaboration with Prasar Bharati and others.

VIDHI (Vision for Integrated Delivery of Harmonized Legal Initiatives) - Sanjeevani is envisaged as a key component under DISHA 2.0 to enhance the monitoring mechanism of the scheme through development and operationalization of a centralized Integrated Dashboard. The dashboard aims to provide a unified interface integrating real-time data streams from multiple sources to facilitate monitoring of the programme performance, service delivery and implementation progress. It envisages integration with the Nyaya Setu AI Chatbot to facilitate technology-enabled service support and improve user interaction through AI-driven assistance mechanisms. VIDHI Sanjeevani envisages outreach to 50 lakh beneficiaries over a period of five years i.e., 2026-31.
