

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

LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO. 335.

TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 9th AUGUST, 2017.

Common Service Centres

**335. SHRIMATI POONAM MAHAJAN:
PROF. RAVINDRA VISHWANATH GAIKWAD:**

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has launched an initiative to use Information Technology in order to streamline legal aid in rural areas of the country and if so, the details thereof including plans, if any, to attract legal aid clinics, lawyers and NGOs towards using Common Service Centres (CSCs) to provide assistance to rural citizens;

(b) whether the Government plans to provide infrastructure and hardware such as internet connections, video cameras, etc. to support tele-conferencing from CSCs and reduce financial burden on rural citizens and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government will also utilise the CSCs and online platform to provide court lawyers for those persons in rural areas who may be embroiled in court cases and if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number of States linked with CSCs during the first phase of legal assistance to common people along with the time by which the remaining States are likely to be linked with such CSCs; and

(e) the details of CSCs functioning in rural areas of the country, State-wise, and the response of rural people towards these CSCs along with the impact of these centres on lower judiciary?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE & ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY**

(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED
QUESTION NO. 335 DUE FOR ANSWER ON AUGUST 9th, 2017

The Government has launched a 'Tele Law' scheme on pilot basis, in select districts of UP, Bihar, North East and Jammu and Kashmir. The aim is to enable greater access to legal advice especially to people living in villages through the use of information technology. Poor and marginalised persons like SC/ST, women, senior citizens, victims of natural calamities, industrial workers, persons with disabilities, persons with low incomes etc. as mentioned in section 12 of the Legal Services Authority Act 1987 are eligible for legal advice under the scheme. The scheme is operationalized through the Ministry of Electronics & IT's Common Services Centres (CSCs), with special focus on those located at gram panchayat level. Lawyers have been engaged by the State Legal Services Authorities and the CSCs to provide legal advice to people through existing video conferencing facilities available at the CSCs. Para Legal Volunteers and Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) have been trained to efficiently implement the scheme. In the first phase 500 CSCs each in UP and Bihar and 800 CSCs in eight states of North East and Jammu and Kashmir have been selected for implementing this scheme as a pilot scheme. All these CSCs are adequately equipped with facilities like infrastructure and hardware such as internet connections, video cameras etc. to support teleconferencing and video conferencing. The details of State-wise CSCs is given at Annexure-I.

The Tele Law scheme is meant to supplement the existing legal aid services provided by Legal Services Authorities present at various levels across the Country who provide panel lawyers to eligible litigants free of cost. Since the scheme is launched in mid-April, 2017, as a pilot scheme, it is premature to expand in other States. As far as inclusion of legal aid clinics, NGOs and lawyers are concerned, as stated above in the scheme of things, no modification in the scheme is required as of now.

It is too early to conduct a study by the Ministry to measure the impact as the scheme has just been launched. However, the response of the rural people to the scheme is found very encouraging as nearly 1100 people have registered under the scheme for legal advice. The State-wise break-up is given at Annexure-II.

ANNEXURE –I**Total No. of CSCs Functional at Gram Panchayat level as on 30.07.2017**

S. No.	State	No. of CSCs
1	Andhra Pradesh	3119
2	Arunachal Pradesh	44
3	Assam	1559
4	Bihar	11960
5	Chhattisgarh	7940
6	Goa	30
7	Gujarat	13885
8	Haryana	4923
9	Himachal Pradesh	1952
10	Jammu & Kashmir	900
11	Jharkhand	5295
12	Karnataka	2333
13	Kerala	1111
14	Madhya Pradesh	11873
15	Maharashtra	17788
16	Manipur	207
17	Meghalaya	74
18	Mizoram	176
19	Nagaland	138
20	Odisha	5599
21	Punjab	3464
22	Rajasthan	14878
23	Sikkim	23
24	Tamil Nadu	4646

S. No.	State	No. of CSCs
25	Telangana	2855
26	Tripura	322
27	Uttar Pradesh	35804
28	Uttarakhand	3853
29	West Bengal	6330
	State Total	163081
	Union Territory	
1	Andaman & Nicobar	20
2	Chandigarh	21
3	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	9
4	Daman and Diu	1
5	Delhi	0
6	Lakshadweep	2
7	Puducherry	92
	UT Total	145
	GRAND TOTAL	163226

STATE-WISE CASES REGISTERED IN TELE LAW PORTAL SEEKING LEGAL ADVICE

Sr No.	Name of State	No. of cases registered
1	Assam	179
2	Bihar	14
3	J&K	801
4	Manipur	15
5	Meghalaya	1
6	Mizoram	2
7	Nagaland	3
8	Sikkim	1
9	Tripura	1
10	UP	83
	Total	1100