

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

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**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 6128  
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 04<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 2018**

**Legal Assistance to Survivors of Sexual Violence**

**6128: SHRI A.P. JITHENDER REDDY:**

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

- (a) the details of the steps taken by the Government to ensure effective legal assistance to the survivors of sexual violence;
- (b) whether any training programmes are conducted to sensitise the judicial officials on proper handling of the cases of sexual violence, if so, the details of the training programme and if not, the reasons for not conducting such a programme; and
- (c) whether there has been any nationwide study undertaken by the Government to determine the effectiveness of the 524 fast track courts established for expeditious trials in cases dealing with crimes against women and children, if so, the details and the results of the study and if not, the reasons for not conducting such a study?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY  
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)**

(a): Under section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 free legal aid is provided to all eligible persons including victimized women for fighting cases of sexual assault, rape, dowry, domestic violence, etc. Provision of free legal aid includes representation by an Advocate in legal proceedings; preparation of pleadings, memo of appeal, paper book including printing and translation of documents in legal proceedings; drafting of legal documents, special leave petition etc.; rendering of any service in the conduct of any case or other legal proceeding before any

court or other Authority or tribunal, and giving of advice on any legal matter. Free Legal Services also include provision of aid and advice to the beneficiaries to access the benefits under the welfare statutes and schemes framed by the Central Government or the State Government. Legal services are provided by legal services institutions at all levels from taluk court to Supreme Court to all eligible persons including women under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. Further, National Legal Services Authority has formulated two schemes namely, NALSA (Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation) Scheme, 2015 and NALSA (Legal Services to Victims of Acid Attacks) Scheme, 2016 aiming to provide legal assistance to address the concerns of women so as to ensure social protection and dignity of the victims available to any other citizen. Apart from above the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has established 20,134 legal aid clinics in the country . In addition, under Access to Justice Project 46 legal aid clinics were set up by the Government in Tuensang and Mon districts of Nagaland in 2016-17. The Government in partnership with UNDP also implemented another project during 2009-2017 on Access to Justice. Under the project, 4 legal aid clinics were set up in Odisha in partnership with National Law University, Odisha and 2 legal aid clinics were set up in Mumbai in partnership with Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Thus the total number of legal aid clinics comes to 20, 186.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing a One Stop Centre Scheme to provide integrated support including legal assistance to women affected by violence and a Scheme for Universalisation of Women Helpline to provide 24 hours immediate and emergency response to women affected by violence. Apart from this, the Ministry of Women & Child Development, in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs, seeks to engage Mahila

Police Volunteers (MPVs) in States/UTs, who act as a link between police and community and help women in distress.

In April, 2017, the Government has launched new legal empowerment initiatives, namely, Tele Law and Pro bono legal services. Tele Law scheme has been launched in 1800 gram panchayats in 11 States of the country for providing free legal aid to eligible persons including women. Out of 15621 cases registered under the scheme, legal advice has been provided in 12415 cases. Under the Pro Bono legal service scheme, 227 advocates have registered.

(b): The National Judicial Academy has conducted 4 training programmes during 2014-15 to 2017-18 to sensitize Judicial Officers on sexual violence cases. A total of 135 Judicial Officers have been trained in these programmes.

(c): A Study of Pre-Trial and Trial Stages of Rape Prosecutions in Delhi was conducted by the Government during January 2014 to March 2015 with support of United Nations Development Programme. This study covered different stages of procedure relating to rape trials, to examine their compliance with the legal norms designed to facilitate gender justice. The three stages pertain to: the pre-trial stage, the trial stage, and the need for as well as the availability of support services. These three stages were examined through close observation of 16 cases selected across four special fast track courts in Delhi, through a combination of methods. The Study Report is available at the website of the Department of Justice [at <http://doj.gov.in/page/towards-victim-friendly-responses-and-procedures-prosecuting-rape-study-pre-trial-and-trial>].bv

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