

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1398
ANSWERED ON 28.07.2023

CAMPAIGNS FOR LEGAL AWARENESS IN RURAL AREAS

1398.SHRIMATI POONAM MAHAJAN:

MS. RAMYA HARIDAS:

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

- (a) whether any special campaigns are being run by the Government to create an awareness about the process of law and justice in rural areas;
- (b) if so, the details of the said campaigns;
- (c) the number of people who have availed the benefits from such campaigns so far;
- (d) the number of such campaigns being run in the State of Maharashtra and Kerala, location-wise;
- (e) whether the Government is considering to intensify such special campaigns across the country; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE
(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

- (a) to (c) National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) carried out a six week Legal Awareness and Outreach campaign from 2nd October to 14th November, 2021 as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to reach each and every village/Urban areas of the country in order to maximize the outreach of Legal Services Authorities as well as to spread awareness regarding the availability of free legal services.

The major activities carried out during the above campaign included door-to-door campaigns, legal awareness programs, awareness through mobile vans and awareness through legal aid clinics. Apart from these major activities, the Legal Services Authorities organised specific legal awareness programs for women and children, organised mega legal services camps, programs for children who lost either or both parents due to covid, exhibitions at State and District level, moot court competitions for students of law universities, etc. During this period 1623 Legal Services Mega Camps were organised wherein more than 75.64 lakh people were benefited.

Further, Nationwide Legal awareness and outreach programme campaigns namely “Empowerment of Citizens through Legal Awareness and Outreach” and “Haq_humara_bhi_to_hai@75” were conducted from 31st October 2022 to 13th November 2022, for bridging the gap between the institutions & the underprivileged by spreading legal awareness & ensuring delivery of legal entitlements to eligible beneficiaries and for providing basic legal assistance to persons confined in prisons and child care institutions to commemorate the 75th year of Independence respectively.

In addition, Department of Justice is running a scheme DISHA (Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice) under which there is a specific component of Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Programme through which awareness workshops on various national/local laws, rights, duties, entitlements, grievance redressals etc are organized and monthly webinar campaign covering broad-based social-legal issues are conducted. Since 2021, 18 webinars have been organized virtually with support from CSC e-Gov and other Ministries/Departments and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Topics like Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, Child Rights, Fundamental Duties, the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, Gender Justice

in India, Children in Conflict with Law and Children in Need of Care and Protection, Human Trafficking in India, Consumer Protection, Undertrial Prisoners; Rights of Transgender Persons; Disability Rights; Rights of Senior Citizens; Child Labour and Rehabilitation of Acid Attack Survivors have been included so far. These webinars have reached out to more than 4.2 lakh participants via various social media platforms.

(d) to (f) Location-wise number of such campaigns being run in the state of Maharashtra and Kerala is not maintained by NALSA. However, 14400 villages in Maharashtra and 733 villages in Kerala were visited thrice or more during the above campaign and 37 Legal Services Mega Camps in Maharashtra and 92 Legal Services Mega Camps in Kerala were organised wherein 3,26,796 and 8,763 people were benefited respectively. Regarding consideration of intensifying such special campaigns, it is submitted that State Legal Services Authorities may independently organise such campaigns at their own. Presently, there is no such proposal for organising any special campaign across the country.

Under DISHA scheme, in the state of Maharashtra, six law colleges have constituted Pro Bono Clubs wherein law students participate and organize legal awareness activities in the villages. In addition, Yashwantrao Chavan Academy Of Development Administration (YASHADA), State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Pune one of the implementing agency under DISHA scheme is executing legal awareness programmes in four Aspirational districts of Nandurbar, Gadchiroli, Osmanabad and Washim. In the first phase, the programme has trained 500 volunteers as "Vidhidoots" in 100 Gram Panchayats of these Aspirational districts. These Vidhidoots will conduct legal awareness at the community level. In the state of Kerala, one law college have constituted Pro Bono Club and legal awareness activities are organized in the villages adopted by the Law college.
