

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3329

TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 17th DECEMBER, 2021

ACCESS OF POOR PEOPLE TO JUSTICE

†3329. SHRI GOPAL CHINNAYA SHETTY:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the remark made by the retiring Supreme Court Justice stating that legal system in India favours the rich and powerful;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has taken any steps to increase access to justice for poor people of the country, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government has received any representation in this regard, if so, the details thereof and the action taken or likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE
(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

- (a) to (c) The Government has undertaken several measures to make available affordable, quality and speedy justice to the common man. The Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 provides free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society including beneficiaries covered under Section 12 of the Act to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities, and to organize Lok Adalats to secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunities. The Government has not received any representation in this regard.

For this purpose, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk Court level to the Supreme Court. During the period from April, 2021 to

September, 2021, 3.10 lakhs persons have been provided with free legal services and 75.41 lakhs cases (pending in courts and disputes at pre-litigation stage) have been settled through Lok Adalats. Legal Aid Clinics have also been set up in jails, observation homes, juvenile justice boards which are manned by panel lawyers and para legal volunteers of legal services authorities. Further to enable equitable access to justice, National Legal Services Authorities (NALSA) has also launched Legal Services Mobile App on Android and iOS version to enable easy access to legal aid to common citizens.

In addition, the Government has launched two important legal empowerment initiatives which includes Nyaya Bandhu (Pro-bono Legal Services) programme to link the persons eligible to avail free legal aid under Section 12 of LSA Act, 1987 with the pro-bono lawyers. 3583 pro bono advocates have been registered under the programme and 1436 cases have been registered by the beneficiaries. The other initiative is the Tele-law programme, being run by the Government which provides legal advice to public including persons entitled for free legal aid under Section 12 of LSA Act, 1987, at pre-litigation stage by the Panel Lawyers through the Common Service Centre (CSC) at the Panchayats. Tele-law has served more than 12.5 lakh beneficiaries till date.
