

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO. 71

TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY- 07.02.2025

AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE JUSTICE TO CITIZENS

†*71. SHRI ARUN KUMAR SAGAR:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken/proposes to take any steps to ensure availability of affordable and accessible justice to the citizens along with the usage of Official Language and Regional Languages in all the courts across the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (c) OF LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.*71 FOR ANSWER ON 07.02.2025 REGARDING
'AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE JUSTICE TO CITIZENS.'**

(a) & (b): The Government has taken several steps to ensure availability of affordable and accessible justice to the citizens. National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) had been setup under the Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 to provide free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society as 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. The activities/programs undertaken by Legal Services Authorities include Legal Aid and advice; Legal Awareness Programmes; Legal Services/Empowerment camps; Legal Services Clinics; Legal Literacy Clubs; Lok Adalats and implementation of Victim Compensation Scheme.

Further, under the aegis of the LSA Act, 1987, Lok Adalats are organised to promote justice on the basis of equal opportunities. For this purpose, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk Court level to the Supreme Court. There are three types of Lok Adalats namely State Lok Adalats, National Lok Adalats and Permanent Lok Adalats. National Lok Adalats are organized simultaneously in all Taluks, Districts and High Courts on a pre-fixed date. State Lok Adalats are organised by State Legal Services Authorities as per local conditions and needs and Permanent Lok Adalats are conducted as per the number of sittings decided per week. 10.57 crore cases (pending in courts and disputes at the pre-litigation stage) have been settled through National Lok Adalats, State Lok Adalat and Permanent Lok Adalat in the year 2024.

In 2021, a comprehensive, pan - India scheme titled “Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice in India” (DISHA) was launched for a period of five years (2021-2026) at an outlay of Rs. 250 crores. The DISHA scheme aims to provide easy, accessible, affordable and citizen- centric delivery of legal services through the scheme of Tele-Law, Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) and Legal Literacy and Legal awareness programme. Till 31st January 2025, Tele- Law service has been made available across 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats in 785 districts across 36 States and UTs and has rendered pre - litigation advice to 1,06,85,242 beneficiaries. The Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal services) enables seamless connect through the Nyaya Bandhu Application (available on Android/iOS) between the interested Pro Bono Advocates and registered beneficiaries who are entitled for free legal aid

under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. As on 31st January, 2025, there are 8783 Pro Bono advocates registered under the Nyaya Bandhu program. Through the Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness programme, approximately 1 crore beneficiaries at the State and district and local levels have been made aware and sensitized on various rights, duties and entitlements.

The Government of India has approved a new Central Sector Scheme namely Legal Aid Defense Counsel System (LADCS) Scheme on 12.03.2024. LADCS Scheme shall provide legal aid to the beneficiaries w.r.t. criminal cases only and the beneficiaries shall be as per eligibility criteria as stated in Sections 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The approved financial outlay of LADCS scheme is Rs. 998.43 crore for 3 years (F.Y. 2023-24 to F.Y. 2025-26). As on 30 September 2024, LADC offices are functional in 653 districts across the country and has engaged 4674 staff including 3167 Defense Counsels. During the year 2024-25 (upto September, 2024), LADCS offices dealt more than 2.54 lakh criminal cases.

The Constitution of India, under Article 348 (2) provides that the Governor of a State may, with the previous consent of the President, authorize the use of Hindi Language, or any other language used for any official purposes of the State, in proceedings in the High Court having its principal seat in that State. Further, Section 7 of the Official Language Act, 1963 states that the Governor of a State may, with the previous consent of the President, authorize the use of Hindi or the official language of the State, in addition to the English Language, for the purposes of any judgment, decree or order passed or made by the High Court for that State and where any judgment, decree or order is passed or made in any such language (other than the English Language), it shall be accompanied by a translation of the same in the English Language issued under the authority of the High Court.

The Committee of the Cabinet appointed to consider the different aspects of the official language policy in its meeting held on 21.05.1965 has stipulated that consent of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India be obtained on any proposal relating to use of a language other than English in the High Court.

The use of Hindi in the proceedings of High Court of Rajasthan was authorized under Article 348(2) of the Constitution in 1950. After the Cabinet Committee's decision dated 21.05.1965 as mentioned above, the use of Hindi was authorized in the High Courts of Uttar Pradesh (1969), Madhya Pradesh (1971) and Bihar (1972) in consultation with the Chief Justice of India.

In order to make the judicial proceedings and judgments more comprehensive for the grasp of common citizen, specific efforts have been made for translation of proceedings and judgments from English to other regional languages. The Supreme Court is collaborating with the High Courts in translation of e-SCR Judgements in 18 vernacular languages. The Chief Justice of India has constituted the Artificial Intelligence Assisted Legal Translation Advisory Committee, headed by a Judge of the Supreme Court of India to monitor the translation of Supreme Court Reportable Judgements (e-SCR) into vernacular languages by using Artificial Intelligence Tools. A similar Committee has been constituted in all the High Courts, headed by the Judges of the respective High Courts.

Further in order to promote regional languages in judicial procedure, Supreme Court has developed Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software (SUVAS) which is a machine assisted translation tool trained by Artificial Intelligence. SUVAS has been developed with technical support from Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. This tool is specially designed for judicial domain and currently has the capacity of translating English Judicial Documents, orders or Judgments into ten vernacular languages which are: Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Malayalam, Bengali, Urdu and vice-versa.

As on date, 36,335 Supreme Court Judgments have been translated in Hindi language and 45,859 Judgments of Supreme Court have been translated in other vernacular languages and uploaded on e-SCR portal <https://judgments.ecourts.gov.in/pdfsearch/index.php>(Annexure-A).

As regards the High Court Judgments, 12,629 Judgments of 09 High Courts have been translated in Hindi language and 18315 Judgments have been translated in other vernacular languages as on 27.09.2024 and uploaded on the website of the respective High Courts. The High Court wise details of Supreme Court and High Court Judgments translated and uploaded after vetting is placed as (Annexure-B).

(c) : In view of (a) and (b) above, the question does not arise.

Details of Supreme Court Judgments translated in Hindi language and in other vernacular languages and uploaded on e-SCR portal as on 03.02.2025.

Supreme Court Vernacular Judgements Available on e-SCR Portal		
Sl. No.	Local Language	No. of Judgements
1.	Assamese	340
2.	Bengali	2789
3.	Garo	7
4.	Gujarati	3318
5.	Hindi	36335
6.	Kannada	1942
7.	Kashmiri	1
8.	Khasi	4
9.	Konkani	16
10.	Malayalam	2993
11.	Marathi	2594
12.	Nepali	153
13.	Odia	353
14.	Punjabi	24970
15.	Santali	40
16.	Tamil	2770
17.	Telugu	1655
18.	Urdu	1914

Source :- e-SCR portal (<https://judgments.ecourts.gov.in/pdfsearch/index.php>)

**Details of High Court Judgements translated and uploaded by the High Courts
as on 27.09.2024**

Sl. No.	High Court	Vernacular Language	HC Judgements
1.	Allahabad	Hindi	8338
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Telugu	811
3.	Bombay	Marathi	1161
4.	Calcutta	Bengali	324
5.	Chhattisgarh	Hindi	791
6.	Delhi	Hindi	469
7.	Gauhati	Assamese	65
8.	Gujarat	Gujarati	2253
9.	Himachal Pradesh	Hindi	877
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	Urdu	9
11.	Jharkhand	Hindi	795
12.	Karnataka	Kannada	745
13.	Kerala	Malayalam	611
14.	Madhya Pradesh	Hindi	152
15.	Madras	Tamil	892
16.	Manipur	Manipuri	83
17.	Meghalaya	Garo	6
		Khasi	5
18.	Orissa	Odiya	161
19.	Patna	Hindi	123
20.	Punjab & Haryana	Punjabi	9365
21.	Rajasthan	Hindi	616
22.	Sikkim	Nepali	3
23.	Telangana	Telugu	811
24.	Tripura	Bengali	1010
25.	Uttarakhand	Hindi	468
