

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 5705
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY - 04/04/2025

FREE LEGAL AID SERVICES IN TRIBAL AND REMOTE AREAS

† 5705. SHRI KALI CHARAN SINGH:

DR. MANNA LAL RAWAT:

SHRI KHAGEN MURMU:

SMT. MAHIMA KUMARI MEWAR:

SHRI BHOJRAJ NAG:

SMT. HIMADRI SINGH:

SMT. SHOBHANABEN MAHENDRASINH BARAIYA:

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH PATEL:

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

- (a) the measures being taken to strengthen the Legal Aid System across the country;
- (b) whether Government has any plan to expand free legal aid services to remote and tribal areas in Rajasthan and across the country, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken to ensure that marginalized communities are aware of and can access these services?

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): Government has set up National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) 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. For this purpose, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk Court level to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC) functions at the Supreme Court whereas, there are 38 High Court Legal Services Committees (HCLSCs), 37 State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs), 708 District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs) and 2439 Taluk Legal Services Committees (TLSCs). The Government extends all support to

strengthen the legal services authorities/institutions in the form of Grants-in-Aid. Funds under Grant-in-Aid are allocated and released to NALSA by the Government on yearly basis.

In order to monitor the performance of the legal services authorities, NALSA receives monthly activity reports from all the SLSAs highlighting all the activities carried out in a particular month. Thereafter, a final activity report on monthly basis is sent by NALSA to the Government. Apart from monthly activity reports, NALSA also receives Annual Reports from all the SLSAs and prepares its own Annual Report, which is laid before both Houses of the Parliament. Further, All India and Regional Meets are also organized by NALSA to monitor the performance of Legal Services Authorities.

The Government of India is also implementing a Central Sector Scheme namely; Legal Aid Defense Counsel System (LADCS) Scheme through NALSA. Under LADCS Scheme, legal aid is provided with regard to criminal cases only to the beneficiaries eligible for legal aid under Section 12 of the LSA Act, 1987. The objective of LADCS Scheme is to strengthen criminal court based legal services, and provide legal services to the beneficiaries in all criminal matters, at trial and appellate stages. As on 31st December 2024, LADC offices are functional in 654 districts across the country and has engaged 5251 staff including 3448 Defense Counsels. During the year 2024-25 (upto December, 2024), LADCS offices dealt more than 3.95 lakh criminal cases.

(b) and (c) Section 12 of the LSA Act, 1987 ensures free legal services to the entitled persons across the country including remote and tribal areas in Rajasthan. Legal awareness programmes are held across the country by Legal Service Authorities on various laws and schemes relating to children, labourers, victims of disaster, SC and ST, persons suffering from disability, etc. Legal Services Authorities also prepare booklets and pamphlets in simple language on various laws and are distributed amongst the people. 12,49,496 and 1,26,966 legal awareness camps and programs organized by Legal Service Authorities during the year 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 (upto December 2024) which were attended by around 13.93 crore and 3.06 crore persons respectively.
