

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4719
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 20TH MARCH, 2026**

APPOINTMENT OF PANEL LAWYERS

4719. DR. BACHHAV SHOBHA DINESH:

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

- (a) the details of all official qualifications, eligibility criteria and procedures prescribed for appointment/empanelment of panel lawyers on behalf of the Union of India and the States;
- (b) whether there is any uniform national policy or statutory provision governing such empanelment and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken cognizance of judicial scrutiny and PILs alleging that a number of advocates empanelled as Government counsel before courts have not cleared the All India Bar Examination (AIBE) or lack requisite practice experience;
- (d) if so, the details of such cases and the clarification or action taken by the Government in response; and
- (e) whether any guidelines exist to ensure transparency, merit-based selection and periodic review of panel advocates and if so, the details thereof?

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) and (b): The Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice empanels suitable Advocates as 'Panel Counsel' with the approval of Hon'ble Minister of Law & Justice on the basis of Advocate's interest, qualification, experience, reputation, expertise, professional competence and standing at Bar, to represent Union of India's Ministries/Departments before various Courts and Tribunals. There is no statutory provision governing such empanelment.

(c) and (d): As per the circular dated 12.04.2013, issued by the Bar Council of India, candidates enrolled with State Bar Councils but yet to qualify the AIBE are enrolled provisionally, subject to the prescribed conditions. Such candidates are issued Provisional Certificates of Enrolment

indicating limited validity and are required to qualify the All-India Bar Examination (AIBE) within a period of two years from the date of enrolment.

(e): As per Directives for Efficient and Effective Management of Litigation by Government of India issued by Department of Legal Affairs dated 04.04.2025, the performance of empaneled counsel is provided for and the feedback received from the relevant Ministries/Departments are to be submitted annually by them. Based on their performance, as assessed, Government Counsel at the lower levels may be considered for upgrade to higher positions, have their tenure extended, or may be removed from the panel.