

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
LAW AND JUSTICE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4523

ANSWERED ON:03.05.2012

FREE LEGAL AID

Reddy Shri Modugula Venugopala ;Tanwar Shri Ashok

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

- (a) the total funds allocated for providing free legal aid to the poor and under trial prisoners during each of the last three years;
- (b) whether all the States have utilized the funds properly;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor along with the action taken by the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to revise the norms in this regard;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for providing adequate free legal aid to the poor, under trial prisoners and women?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID)

(a) No separate fund is provided for legal aid to the poor and under-trial prisoners. A total grant-in-aid is provided to National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) for implementation of legal aid programmes under Section 41 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. NALSA provides grant-in-aid to the State Legal Services Authorities, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee and NGOs for implementation of various schemes and programmes under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 which includes legal aid to poor and under-trial. Details of grant-in aid provided to NALSA and grant-in-aid provided to State Legal Services Authorities and Supreme Court Legal Services Committee by NALSA during the last three financial years are as under:

Years	Grant-in-Aid provided to NALSA	Grant-in-Aid provided to State Legal Services Authorities and Supreme Court Legal Services Committee by NALSA
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2009-2010 Rs. 1728306557/- Rs.173105899/-

2010-2011 Rs. 211901394/- Rs.220980541/-

2011-2012 Rs.423936325/- Rs.417621403/-

(b)&(c) Yes Madam, the State Legal Services Authorities have been utilizing the funds properly. NALSA obtains utilization certificates from the State Legal Services Authorities for the funds allocated to them by NALSA. However, in some States the Legal Services Authorities could not fully utilize the funds on account of lack of staff and infrastructural requirements which are to be provided by the State Government. They also have been impressed upon to utilize the funds.

(d)&(e) There is no proposal to revise the norms.

(f) The National Legal Services Authority (Free and Competent Legal Services) Regulations provide for setting up of Monitoring Committee for close monitoring of court-based legal services rendered and progress of the cases in legal aid matters. The National Legal Services Authority (Legal Aid Clinics) Regulations, 2011 provide for establishing legal aid clinics in villages or cluster of villages depending upon the geographical size. NALSA has launched its flagship programme of Para-Legal Volunteers who act as a bridge between the common people and the legal services institutions. The legal aid clinics in villages are manned by the Para-Legal Volunteers to assist the villagers and needy people and bring them to the nearest legal services institutions if need be. NALSA has

provided free legal services to 73453 under-trial prisoners, 105203 women and 1439220 economically backward people during the years 2010 and 2011.