

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1420

TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 27th NOVEMBER, 2019

World Legal Service Day

1420. SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV:
SHRI GAJANAN KIRTIKAR:
SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA:
SHRI SANJAY SADASHIV RAO MANDLIK:
SHRI SUBRAT PATHAK:
SHRI SELVAM G.:
SHRIMATI SANDHYA RAY:
SHRI DHANUSH M. KUMAR:
SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:
SHRI VIJAY KUMAR DUBEY:
SHRI REBATI TRIPURA:

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

- (a) whether the Government observed World Legal Service Day, 2019 in the country recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken to achieve the aims and objectives of the event along with the details of programmes organized by the Government to mark this occasion;
- (c) whether the Government has made any efforts for providing legal aid to the poor and the people in urban and rural areas of the country and if so, the details of the legal aid clinics/legal service centres functioning in different parts of the country including Tamil Nadu and Tripura;
- (d) the norms and guidelines of the legal assistance system for providing free legal aid to the poor and weaker sections of the society and steps taken to open new legal aid clinics especially in Tamil Nadu;
- (e) whether the Government has any mechanism to monitor and evaluate implementation of legal aid programme for the poor and if so, the details thereof;
- (f) the funds allocated and spent for legal aid services in the last three years and the current year and the number of beneficiaries who received the help from the Government; and
- (g) whether the Government is aware of the large number of persons lodged in various prisons in the country due to lack of access to legal aid and if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE, COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 9th November, 2019 was observed as National Legal Service Day by all legal services institutions throughout the country to commemorate the commencement of the Legal Services Authorities Act. The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) also celebrated the Legal Service Day alongwith Commendation Ceremony of outstanding PLVs, Panel Lawyers, DLSAs and SLSAs. The outstanding PLVs, Panel Lawyers, DLSAs selected from the 36 SLSAs attended the said programme in New Delhi on 9th November, 2019.

(c) The legal services institutions at all levels constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 provide free legal services to the poor and marginalized sections of the society who are eligible to receive legal aid under Section 12 of the above Act. State-wise details of Legal Service Clinics, including that in Tamil Nadu and Tripura, are at Annexure A.

(d) The criteria/norms for providing free legal services to the poor and marginalized person of the society has been specified in Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

(e) The Monitoring and Mentoring Committees have been established at all levels for close monitoring of the court based legal services rendered. In addition, All India Meets of State Legal Services Authorities and the Regional Meets of State Legal Services Authorities which are convened from time to time also evaluate the progress of the legal aid programmes implemented in the country. The Central Authority chaired by Hon'ble Chief Justice of India also reviews the performance of the legal services institutions from time to time.

(f) The details of funds allocated to NALSA, funds utilized by NALSA and number of persons benefitted during the last three years and the current year are as under:

(Rs. In Crore)			
Year	Funds released by Government	Funds utilized by NALSA	Number of persons benefitted through legal services
2016-17	63.37	113.03*	5,56,689
2017-18	100.00	116.43*	8,22,856
2018-19	150.00	155.55*	14,75,577
2019-20 (till 20.11.2019)	140.00	132.66	4,10,989

* Amount utilized in excess over the grant received is met from the unutilized grant of previous years and other receipt of the National Legal Aid Fund.

(g) As per latest published data of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) for the year 2017, as against the total capacity of 3,91,574 prisoners, 4,50,696 prisoners were lodged in Jails in the country showing an occupancy rate of 115.1%.

To address the issue of overcrowding in prison, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued various advisories to States & UTs on steps to be taken by them for providing free legal aid to undertrials and for setting up Lok Adalats / Special courts in prisons for expediting the review of cases of undertrials. MHA has also circulated the Model Prison Manual 2016 to all States & UTs, which has a chapter on 'Legal Aid' which provides for facilities which may be provided to undertrials viz. legal defence, interview with lawyers, signing of Vakalatnama, application to Courts for legal aid at Government cost etc.

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) provides free legal service to all under trial prisoners through its legal service clinics running in jails all over India. NALSA has prepared guidelines in the form of "Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Undertrial Trial Review Committees". The SOP has been circulated by MHA to all States & UTs on 18.02.2019.

Annexure as referred to in reply to Part (a)&(b) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1420 for answering on 27.11.2019 regarding World Legal Service DayNumber of Legal Service Clinics in the country (as on 30.06.2019)

S. No.	SLSAs	Existing No. of Legal Services Clinics (excluding Jail Clinics)	Existing No. of Legal Services Clinics as on 30.6.2019 in Jails
1.	Andhra Pradesh	846	84
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	17	5
3.	Assam	231	27
4.	Bihar	557	57
5.	Chhattisgarh	464	49
6.	Goa	65	1
7.	Gujarat	616	49
8.	Haryana	500	19
9.	Himachal Pradesh	250	12
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	255	15
11.	Jharkhand	750	28
12.	Karnataka	849	71
13.	Kerala	1,165	53
14.	Madhya Pradesh	1265	105
15.	Maharashtra	837	54
16.	Manipur	129	2
17.	Meghalaya	245	5
18.	Mizoram	136	9
19.	Nagaland	121	11
20.	Odisha	298	86
21.	Punjab	598	24
22.	Rajasthan	8526	97
23.	Sikkim	30	02 (State Central Prison, Rongyek & District Prison, Boomtar)
24.	Telangana	384	36
25.	Tamil Nadu	527	128
26.	Tripura	482	13
27.	Uttar Pradesh	602	97
28.	Uttarakhand	267	14
29.	West Bengal	1146	133
30.	A&N Islands	25	25
31.	Chandigarh UT	23	01
32.	D&N Haveli UT	21	1
33.	Daman & Diu	9	1
34.	Delhi	52	17
35.	Lakshadweep	Nil	NIL
36.	Puducherry	9	4
	Total	22,297	1335

