

Effectiveness of free legal aid services

Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice (DISHA) Scheme through its various programmes has outreached approximately 2.10 crore beneficiaries in the country

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The Department of Justice has been implementing a pan India Scheme namely “Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice India (DISHA) which aims to fulfil the Constitutional mandate as enunciated under the Preamble and Articles 39A, 14 and 21 of the Constitution. Presently, the scheme of DISHA is approved for the period of 2021-26. In order to continue the scheme beyond 31.03.2026 during the next Finance Commission Cycle, the scheme is required to undergo an appraisal and approval process based on an outcome review.

The DISHA scheme provides easy, accessible, affordable and citizen-centric legal services through its components viz. Tele-Law, Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) and Legal Literacy and Legal awareness programmes and does not involve disposal of pending cases. The Tele-Law connects citizens with the lawyers through video conferencing facilities and mobile app “Tele- Law” and also through Toll Free number for rendering pre-litigation advice. 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. Further, the third component of DISHA is Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness programme, through which the beneficiaries are sensitized about their rights, duties, and entitlements. Till 30th June, 2025 DISHA Scheme through its various programmes has outreached approximately 2.10 crore beneficiaries in the country.

In order to broadbase and strengthen the outreach of the services to the citizen, various measures have been undertaken. To enhance the outreach, the Tele Law web portal and Tele- Law application have been translated in 22 scheduled languages. Special endeavours have also been made to increase its outreach through both print and digital media. Further, special efforts have been made to integrate Tele- Law with Nyaya Bandhu (Pro bono Legal Services) platform for pre- litigation advice and legal representation of the beneficiaries. Toll free number for citizens through 14454 has also been operationalised for instant advice and counselling. The Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness program has been developed and mainstreamed through various regional implementing agencies like Sikkim State Women commission, Arunachal Pradesh SLISA, etc. Under a collaboration with Doordarshan, 56 legal awareness TV programs were developed in 6 languages, which were aired and the videos were disseminated through youtube and channel of Doordarshan reaching out to over 70.70 lakh citizens. In addition, 20 thematic legal awareness webinars have also been organised from September, 2021 to October, 2023 on socio-legal issues.

This information was given by the 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 in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha today.

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