



Access for Persons with Disabilities in Judicial Environments

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The Government has undertaken several measures to make available affordable, quality and speedy legal services to the common man, including Persons with Disabilities. The legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 provides for free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society including Persons with Disabilities. In order to assess the quality of legal aid to the citizens including Persons with Disabilities, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) organizes All India Meets and Regional Meets both virtually and physically from time to time. Further, the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Ministry of Law and Justice also assess the working of Legal Aid under the Legal Services Authorities Act (LSA), 1987.

National Judicial Academy (NJA), under guidance of the National Judicial Academic Council (NJAC) chaired by Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, is regularly conducting programs for judiciary that include specialised sessions focusing on sensitization towards the needs and rights of Persons with Disabilities and ensuring access to justice for them. These programs feature renowned dignitaries and subject experts to guide the participants on relevant legal frameworks, best practices, and the practical implementation of accessibility standards. Understanding the significance of this crucial issue, NJA has been proactively incorporating this sensitization component into its various academic programs for judiciary.

NALSA has prepared 'Module for the Training of Lawyers' which also includes training on Persons with Disability. The inter-alia objective of the said Module is to help participants in understanding disability, their attitude towards the disabled, both socially as well as individually, constitutional rights of the PWD and the laws relating to disabilities.

The Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of infrastructure facilities for the District and Subordinate Courts by augmenting the resources of the State Governments/UTs for construction of Court Halls, Residential Units for Judicial Officers, Lawyers' Hall, Digital Computer Rooms and Toilet Complexes. As per guidelines of the scheme, the States/UTs ensures that the proposed infrastructure have disabled-friendly design. The building design are in conformity with the requisite norms/accessibility standards as laid down by Central Public Works Department, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, from time to time. It is ensured that the funds allotted to States/UTs under Central Sponsored Scheme are utilised for the designated purpose.

Under eCourts Project Phase III, there are 24 components that have several significant measures devised to foster the creation of a robust and accessible digital infrastructure for citizens including Persons with Disabilities. Provision has been made for providing enhanced accessible ICT enabled facilities to Persons with Disabilities, at a budgetary outlay of Rs. 27.54 crore, migration of websites of 752 Courts (including High Courts) to S3WaaS platform (Secure, Scalable and Sugamya Website as a Service) that makes the website friendly for Persons with Disabilities, at a budgetary outlay of Rs. 6.35 crore. S3WaaS platform has features for easy visibility of content for partially and completely visually challenged citizens.

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 Rajya Sabha today.

Samrat

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