

4. Functions of the Central Authority.—The Central Authority shall ^{1***} perform all or any of the following functions, namely:—

(a) lay down policies and principles for making legal services available under the provisions of this Act;

(b) frame the most effective and economical schemes for the purpose of making legal services available under the provisions of this Act;

(c) utilise the funds at its disposal and make appropriate allocations of funds to the State Authorities and District Authorities;

(d) take necessary steps by way of social justice litigation with regard to consumer protection, environmental protection or any other matter of special concern to the weaker sections of the society and for this purpose, give training to social workers in legal skills;

(e) organise legal aid camps, especially in rural areas, slums or labour colonies with the dual purpose of educating the weaker sections of the society as to their rights as well as encouraging the settlement of disputes through LokAdalats;

(f) encourage the settlement of disputes by way of negotiations, arbitration and conciliation;

(g) undertake and promote research in the field of legal services with special reference to the need for such services among the poor;

(h) to do all things necessary for the purpose of ensuring commitment to the fundamental duties of citizens under Part IVA of the Constitution;

(i) monitor and evaluate implementation of the legal aid programmes at periodic intervals and provide for independent evaluation of programmes and schemes implemented in whole or in part by funds provided under this Act;

1. The words “, subject to the general directions of the Central Government,” omitted by Act of 59 of 1994, s. 4 (w.e.f. 29-10-1994).

¹[(j) provide grants-in-aid for specific schemes to various voluntary social service institutions and the State and District Authorities, from out of the amounts placed at its disposal for the implementation of the legal services schemes under the provisions of this Act;]

(k) develop, in consultation with the Bar Council of India, programmes for clinical legal education and promote guidance and supervise the establishment and working of legal services clinics in universities, law colleges and other institutions;

(l) take appropriate measures for spreading legal literacy and legal awareness amongst the people and, in particular, to educate weaker sections of the society about the rights, benefits and privileges guaranteed by social welfare legislations and other enactments as well as administrative programmes and measures;

(m) make special efforts to enlist the support of voluntary social welfare institutions working at the grass-root level, particularly among the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, women and rural and urban labour; and

(n) coordinate and monitor the functioning of ²[State Authorities, District Authorities, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee, High Court Legal Services Committees, Taluk Legal Services Committees and voluntary social service institutions] and other legal services organisations and give general directions for the proper implementation of the legal services programmes.