

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 4106
TO BE ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, THE 7th APRIL, 2022**

Legal Aid to the Disabled

4106 **Dr. Amar Patnaik:**

Will the Minister of **Law and Justice** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to justice on an equal basis with others;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government has taken any measures/steps in pursuance of its Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real with Persons of Disabilities”;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the number of specially abled people who have benefitted from such initiatives, if taken?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE
(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)**

- (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has undertaken several measures to make available affordable, quality and speedy justice to the common man, including persons with disabilities. The Legal Services Authorities (LSA) Act, 1987 provides free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society including beneficiaries covered under Section 12 of the Act to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities and to organize Lok Adalats to secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunities. For this purpose, the legal services institutions have been setup from the Taluk Court level to the Supreme Court. Further to enable equitable access to justice, National Legal Services

Authorities (NALSA) has also launched Legal Services Mobile App on Android and iOS version to enable easy access to legal aid to common citizens including persons with disabilities.

- (c) to (e) India is party to Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for persons with disabilities (PwDs) in Asia and the Pacific. It sets out 10 goals such as reduction in poverty and enhancing work and employment prospects, promoting participation in political process and decision making, creation of barrier free environment, strengthening social protection, promoting early intervention and education of children with disabilities, ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment, promoting disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and management, improving the reliability and comparability of disability data, accelerating ratification and implementation of UNCRPD and harmonise National Laws and promoting sub regional, regional and inter-regional cooperation.

In addition, the Government has also enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD Act), 2016 which came into force on 19.04.2017. The Act inter-alia provides for reservation for PwDs in Government employment, creation of accessible feature for them, participation of PwDs in decision making process through Central and State Advisory Board on Disability, inclusive education etc. Section 12 of the said Act particularly deals with access to justice, which inter alia mandates the appropriate Government to provide for recording of testimonies, arguments or opinion given by person with disabilities in their preferred language and means of communication.

29,050 persons with disabilities have been provided legal services under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 during April, 2018 to January, 2022.
