

Access to Justice for All



Legal Aid Clinic

National Law Institute University

**LEGAL AID CLINIC -
NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY BHOPAL**

Annual Progress Report 2019-2020

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ABOUT LEGAL AID CLINIC

The NLIU - Legal Aid Clinic ("LAC"), which is driven by the ethos of Article 39A of the Indian Constitution, has been established under the aegis of the National Legal Service Authority. It is a student-run initiative, which aims to provide free legal aid to the marginalized sections of the society. Our aim is to provide pro bono legal representation and advice to the weak and downtrodden sections of the society. Additionally, we also organize various legal literacy workshops and training programs to spread legal awareness to further the cause of legal literacy. All this has been made possible by the constant support of our collaborators:

1. Madhya Pradesh State Legal Services Authority,
2. Indian National Bar Association,
3. International Council of Jurists,
4. Committee for Legal Aid to Poor,
5. SCC Online,
6. EBC,
7. LiveLaw,
8. Red FM Bhopal, and
9. Everyday India.

NOTE FROM FACULTY-IN-CHARGE

The NLIU - Legal Aid Clinic has endeavoured to ensure access to justice for the needy and unprivileged sections of the society. The Clinic principally driven and managed by our students has rendered legal advice through rigorous research on legal problems and concerns faced by the common man and following it up by filing complaints at the appropriate forum. Assistance from the panel of advocates on board on a pro bono basis is also taken in the process.



Under its legal awareness initiative, the Clinic has been engaged in creating greater awareness among school going children on a diverse range of issues including Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Work Place Act, Cyber Bullying etc. In its drive to promote access to healthcare in the community, the Legal Aid Clinic has successfully organized the health camp in the villages in the neighbourhood of the university. The Legal Aid Clinic has also sensitized the student community to the cause of the downtrodden masses thereby inculcating a spirit of social responsibility within them.

I would also take this opportunity to thank my entire team of Legal Aid Clinic, which under the leadership of the **Mr. Ankit Gupta** (Convener 2019-20) and **Ms. Nayani Agarwal** (Co Convener 2019-20), has worked hard to achieve its objectives. I also earnestly wish and hope that the journey of the Legal Aid Clinic continues further and that it serves the legal needs of the marginalized sections of the society with a stronger and enduring sense of commitment and sensitivity.

MRS. KAVITA SINGH

(Associate Professor)

EMPANELLED ADVOCATES

A major portion of credit for LAC's success and growth can be attributed to the esteemed panel of advocates. They have been our pillars of strength since the inception of this organization and we would not have been successful in our efforts of providing legal aid and spreading legal literacy without them. The knowledge of their association with LAC comforts our underprivileged clients. We, at LAC, thank the following members of our panel for their efforts in making LAC-NLIU a beacon of hope for those in need:

1. Bhavil Pandey
2. Shashank Jain
3. Amitesh Martin
4. Manav Tanwani
5. Shantanu Shrivastava
6. Gunjan Chouksey
7. Anuj Shrivastava
8. Rohan Harne
9. Kapil Duggal
10. Aditya Vijay Singh
11. Harshit Pandey
12. Tanmay Pandey
13. Shantanoo Saxena

FACULTY HELPING US

We can't proceed further without thanking those faculty members of our university who guided us every step of the way and did not let us stray away from our goals. They are:

1. Dr. Debashree Sarkar (Assistant Professor)
2. Ms. Divya Salim (Assistant Professor)
3. Mr. Mahendra Soni (Assistant Professor)
4. Dr. Sanjay Kumar Yadav (Associate Professor)

OFFICE BEARERS IN 2019-2020

The Core Committee of LAC comprised of students spearheading this movement of spreading legal literacy and awareness. It included:

1. Convener: Mr. Ankit Gupta
2. Co-Convener: Ms. Nayani Agarwal
3. Secretary: Ms. Anushka Verma
4. Joint Secretary: Ms. Prashasti Singh
5. Treasurer: Mr. Rakshit Ranjan

LAC MEMBERS

Lastly, for the clinic to work like a well-oiled machine, the cooperation and effort of each and every member of the LAC was essential. Therefore, we proudly present to you the following members of LAC in the academic session 2019-2020.

IV Year	
S. No.	Name
1	Ishaan Chauhan
2	Charu Vyas
3	Priyal Reddy
4	Muskan Agarwal
5	Kriti
6	Shubhi Nigam
7	Gokul Holani
8	Shefali Chawla
9	Pranjal Agarwal
10	Aditya Goyal
III Year	
S. No.	Name
1	Shiuli Mandloi
2	Priyanshi Mittal
3	Himani Dawar
4	Saumya Saraswat
5	Vivek Gautam
6	Himanshu Dixit
7	Parth Tyagi
8	Sneha Sanyal
9	Pravi Jain
10	Kartikey Bansal
11	Shreya Shankar
12	Utsav Garg
13	Sahil Sonkusale
14	Bobby Mahor

15	Nayanika Shukla
II Year	
S. No.	Name
1	Muskan Narang
2	Amritya Singh
3	Aura Anand Pandey
4	Vanshika Chansoria
5	Somya Yadav
6	Sharqa Tabrez
7	Payal Dubey
8	Vikramaditya Sanghi
9	Tejas Hinder
10	Shreya Chandok
11	Khushi Sharma
12	Devansh Malhotra
13	Hrishikesh Jaiswal
14	Koustav Bhattacharya
15	Gandharv Makhija
16	Jeezan Riyaz
17	Mahek Gupta
18	Gargi Singh
19	Aakash Arun Rao
20	Aadya Bansal
21	Prakarsh
22	Gauri Kinikar
23	Avneesh Deshpandey
24	Tanya Agarwal
25	Charvi Sharma
26	Ishita
27	Ritik Tenguria

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since, we come to the end of the academic session 2019-20, we would like to thank all those who contributed to every initiative of LAC. With your valuable contribution, this journey has been very fulfilling and last year has been very successful for LAC in terms of our aim of providing legal aid and furthering legal literacy.

Here's a list of initiatives taken up by NLIU-LAC in the year 2019-20:

1. As a part of the legal aid vertical, we dealt with 29 new cases.
2. LAC members featured on a talk show on DoorDarshan TV and discussed various basic issues about Negotiable Instruments Act, Consumer Rights, Women Rights, and Right to Information to further the cause of Legal Literacy.
3. We conducted a workshop at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (“AIIMS”), Bhopal on Prevention of Sexual Harassment.
4. We conducted a workshop at Delhi Public School (“DPS”), Bhopal to spread awareness about Right To Information (“RTI”).
5. Our then Convener, Mr. Ankit Gupta, filed an RTI appeal in the Central Information Commission, which was disposed in his favour.
6. Aawaz Uthao- A Street Play by Aahwan, the dramatic society of NLIU was organised by us in collaboration with Athena to spread awareness about domestic violence.
7. Our [#AapkeAdhikar](#) Initiative on our social media platforms to spread awareness about basic legal rights of people boasts of an impressive reach and positive reviews.
8. Our team participated in multiple talk shows on Red FM to further our objective of spreading legal awareness.

9. We also conducted a Weekly Quiz with attractive prize money to bring legal literacy in the mainstream discourse and incentivise our viewers to be aware of the legal framework that binds us all.
10. We published various legal awareness stories in different newspapers.
11. We also organised our flagship event, the Constitution/Law Day Celebration.
12. Our then Convener, Mr. Ankit Gupta raised the issue of absence of guidelines for proper handling and disposal of used face masks to prevent COVID-19 relapse before the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The petition was disposed when the Central Board of Pollution Control issued guidelines for the same.

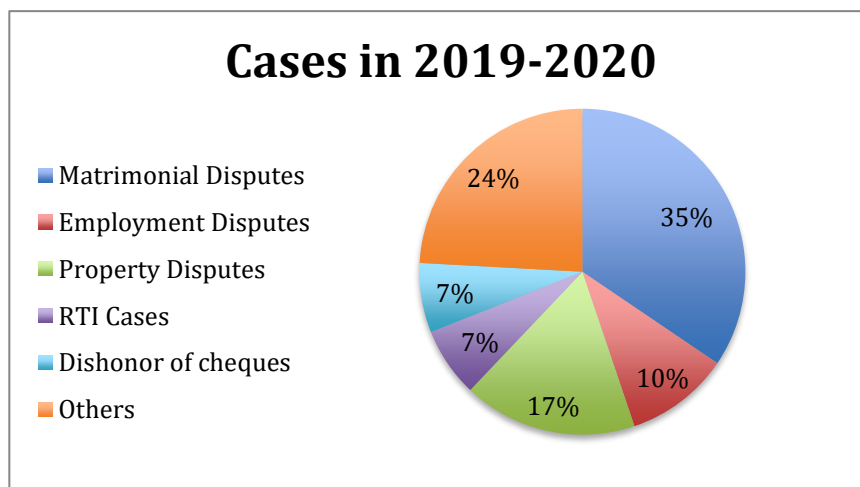
We would also like to express our utmost gratitude to our collaborators for providing us with resources and guidance to propagate our aims.

Lastly, we thank everyone who has been a part of this journey of LAC for your constant support and faith in us.

EVENTS IN 2019-2020

1. New Cases Undertaken by LAC

In the last academic session, LAC undertook 29 new cases from diverse fields of law while continuing to work for the cases pending from



the year before that. Out of that, 23 were disposed off by LAC while 6 are still pending. LAC consulted with each client that came forward with their query, researched on their legal problem, and further advised them the best course of action available to them. We usually consulted our professors before conveying our legal opinion to our client in order to ensure that our legal advice is without any loopholes. If the clients decided to proceed with litigation, we connected them to our panel of advocates who then took their cases. But we also offered options like mediation and out of court settlement if the clients did not want to pursue litigation.

One case, which stood out for LAC, was when we helped our own. The guards at NLIU were being denied their Provident Fund dues from their contractor. We served the contractor with a notice for the same and later conducted negotiations to reach an amicable settlement. Finally, it resulted in the disbursement of the Provident Fund in a phased manner and the guards eventually received their dues.

Here is a list of cases dealt by LAC in the last academic session:

Sr. No.	Facts of the Case	Action Undertaken	Case Status
1.	Denial of Information under Right to Information	Purused the matter right from the stage of first appeal. Entered into appearance as AR	Case closed

	Act	before the CIC and got a favourable order.	
2.	Denial of Provident fund dues from the contractor	Gave a notice and conducted negotiations to amicable settle the dispute. It ultimately resulted in disbursement of the PF in phased manner. Many of the guards have already received their dues.	Case closed
3.	Dishonor of cheques u/s 138 Negotiable Instruments Act	Client wished to file an appeal challenging the order of conviction. Bhavil Pandey was referred this case. The client could not pursue appeal since he was not willing to pay for the minimum security that was required for filing of an appeal.	Case closed
4.	The client complained of domestic violence and asked the procedure for divorce	After two days, she withdrew the complaint.	Case closed
5.	Case for divorce and maintenance	Case referred to Shashank Jain, but the client did not respond after the meeting.	Case closed
6.	Case of Domestic Violence: Domestic violence committed against the mother-in-law by the daughter-in law. The daughter-in-law has also kept the property papers and jewelry with herself. The son and daughter-in-law are not willing to maintain her or pay for her	12/11 - case was allotted. 15/11 - Talked to Deboshri Ma'am regarding the case. Took suggestions from her. 19/11: Called the NGOs in Bangalore and got in touch with Vimochana which directed us to call the Seniors' helpline No which resolves cases regarding the maintenance of seniors citizens. 19/11- Called Seema Prasad to tell her about the helpline number and the other suggestions worked out for her by us.	Case closed

	<p>medical expenses either.</p> <p>Daughter of the victim has sought help and doesn't want any police involvement or legal proceedings to be conducted against her brother and her wife.</p>		
7.	<p>Divorce case: The client wanted to procure a certified copy of the judgment on his divorce from Ahmednagar Court and also sought advice related to custody of his child</p>	<p>The client received a copy of judgment after the suggestion that he shall file an application for the same. Later on he refused to do anything about the custody of the child.</p>	Case closed
8.	<p>Property related matter: The client wanted to sell his share in the property which he co-owned with his brother but the brother is resisting</p>	<p>Worked on the legal opinion but could not reach the client.</p>	Case closed
9.	<p>Property Dispute</p>	<p>The case has been transferred to Advocate Shantanu Shrivastava immediately because the date of hearing was in 2 days.</p>	Case pending
10.	<p>Service matter- Client, who works in RD University, Jabalpur has been denied of his salary since 2012, which</p>	<p>30/11/2019- the case was allotted. 02/12/2019- Spoke to the client in respect of his matter. 08/12/2019- Spoke to Mr. Mahendra Soni</p>	Case pending

	is still due. Further, he requested for ground floor facility in the university owing his physical disability, which has been denied to him even after having made multiple requests. He approached MPHRC, which passed an order in his favour, but the same has not been executed. Also, the client filed a Writ Petition the High Court, which passed an order in his favour and directed the concerned authorities to release the salary as per the relevant laws. However, no execution of the said order has been made till date.	for advice on this matter. 10/12/2019- Contacted our empaneled Advocate Shashank Jain for the matter and briefed him upon the same. 11/12/2019- The client and the advocate had a telephonic conversation. The client was supposed to get the NOC from his previous advocate but he did not get it. Though he called the advocate recently and said that he would get it after the lockdown.	
11.	Claim for maintenance and compensation for an accident from her in-laws.	Consulted Dr. Debashree Sarkar for taking action. She went for an out of court settlement.	Case closed
12.	Divorce from Husband	Withdrew her case.	Case closed
13.	Case of Section 138 NIA and Section 420 IPC	Informed the client that LAC cannot take up his case since he seems to be financially able to engage a lawyer on his own.	Case closed
14.	Husband died. The couple	The case has been referred to Advocate	Case pending

	has 5 children. The in-laws are not giving any maintenance.	Shashank Jain and the matter is still pending. The petition u/s 19 of HAMA is ready. Will be filed after the lockdown.	
15.	Divorce and Maintenance case	The matter was pending in the Lalitpur Court. We referred the case to Advocate Arpit Katiyar in Kanpur and he was ready to take the case forward to Allahbad HC. The client and the advocate are coordinating amongst themselves. No further assistance is required.	Case closed
16.	Medical negligence: The client wanted to sue the hospital for a knee surgery that didn't go well.	The case was sent to Advocate Shantanu Saxena.	Case pending
17.	Section 409 IPC case and RTI	The location of the case makes logistically impossible for us to grant relief at this point. However, we can help him before Indore HC later. Regarding RTI, he has agreed to come to clinic again with all the required documents.	Case closed
18.	Rent Control Act dispute	Client leased the first floor to his acquaintance without any written agreement or rent. When asked to evict the property he refused. A case was filed in the RCA and an order was passed in client's favour. However, this order was not executed. I advised him file an eviction suit against the tenant and referred the case to Manav Tanwani. He was	Case closed

		just looking for an opinion. He did not proceed with the case.	
19.	Disciplinary action against advocate under M.P. Bar Council Rules	The client availed the services of an advocate for some dispute. He paid Rs. 20,000 in advance as his fee. In a month, he asked for another installment of Rs. 20,000 saying that the previous one was used for stationary expenses. The client wanted to know what legal recourse does he have. We formulated a legal opinion, wherein, we gave him all the details to file a disciplinary complaint against the advocate in the State Bar Council.	Case Closed
20.	Railway dispute	Client's father was an employee in the Indian Railways. He died in an accident on duty. However, the railways showed it to be a natural death through fake medical reports. No compensation was given to the family. Legal opinions as to what recourses are available was furnished.	Case closed
21.	Property Dispute	Client's property was transferred through forged signature. The case was already pending in Hoshangabad. He just wanted an opinion from us regarding the matter.	Case closed
22.	Dispute against NLIU's mess contractors	While having her breakfast, the client found an earring in her food. She wanted to pursue the matter against our mess contractor. The dispute was settled through mediation and a compensation of Rs. 10000 was given to	Case closed

		client by the contractor.	
23.	Insolvency dispute	The client was a partner in a firm. He wanted to know whether he can convert to a LLP to avail the benefits of IBC, 2016. He also wanted to know whether he can use mental agony as a ground for plea in an insolvency proceeding. Legal opinion was furnished in this regard under the supervision of Prof. Amit Pratap Singh.	Case closed
24.	Matrimonial dispute	The client was a victim of domestic violence. She wanted to file for a divorce. The case was referred to our empaneled Advocate Shashank Jain. Firstly, they went in for a few mediation sessions with the husband because the client did not wish to divorce him immediately. However, since the mediation sessions did not work out, she agreed to file the divorce petition. I assisted in drafting the petition and it has been filed just before the lockdown. The advocate is waiting for the hearing date.	Case pending
25.	NDPS dispute	The client's brother was arrested under the NDPS Act three month ago. He wanted our assistance for bail. Later on, we came to know that his bail was rejected by the M.P. High court also. There is no recourse available as of now. We suggested him to wait for another 3-4 months, to file a fresh	Case closed

		bail application.	
26.	Matrimonial Dispute	Client's husband remarried without any divorce from her. She wanted to file for divorce and maintenance. The case was referred to Manav Tanwan in and the meeting is yet to happen.	Case pending
27.	Partition Dispute	The case was pending in Vidisha Court. We referred the case to Shashank Jain, who in turn referred it to his acquaintance in Vidisha. No further assistance was required on our part.	Case closed
28.	Denial of bank account balance of deceased father in-law owing to absence of nominee in bank records	The case involved mainly advice pertaining to the steps required to be taken in order to claim the money of the deceased father in-law. Advice tendered.	Case closed
29.	Threats of filing false FIR for the offence of rape	The client was from Maharashtra. Advice was tendered to register an intimation report to the concerned police station with all the call recordings and chat screenshots. Post these steps, the opposite party stopped its threat and never communicated with client.	Case closed

2. Presentation in the 4th Regional Consultation on Strengthening & Promoting Law School Clinics in India

NLIU-LAC was invited to the 4th Regional Consultation on Strengthening & Promoting Law School Clinics in India organized by the Legal Aid Clinic of the School of Law, Jagran Lakecity University, Bhopal in collaboration with Jindal Global Law School, Sonapat on 22nd October 2019, where our faculty- in-charge, Mrs. Kavita Singh was also invited as a speaker. Two of our

members, Mr. Rakshit Ranjan and Ms. Anushka Verma, took the stage to explain our *modus operandi* as a legal aid clinic.

3. DoorDarshan TV Talk Show

The LAC-NLIU,
Bhopal in
collaboration with
DoorDarshan TV,
conducted a talk



show on 6th November 2019 to aid the cause of legal literacy. The Clinic aims to provide free legal aid to the needy and this initiative was undertaken under the #thelegalliterate programme.

The panelists for the show comprised Mr Mahinder Soni (Assistant Professor, NLIU), Dr Debashree Sarkar (Assistant Professor, NLIU) and Mrs. Dyutima Sharma (Academic Counselor, NLIU) along with LAC Members wherein various basic issues and grievances regarding Negotiable Instruments Act, Consumer Rights, Women Rights, Constitutional Rights and Right to Information were discussed. They consulted upon concerns that a layman might have with regards to the said topics along with things that one should be aware of.

4. Prevention of Sexual Harassment Workshop in AIIMS, Bhopal



The LAC-NLIU conducted a workshop at AIIMS, Bhopal on The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 popularly known as POSH Act on 29th November, 2019 as part of

its #thelegalliterate initiative. The workshop was lead by Dr. Debashree Sarkar (Assistant Professor, NLIU) and Pranjal Agarwal (LAC Member). The speakers explained the scope and applicability of the POSH Act to create awareness amongst the employees of the organisation

while covering important aspects such as the definition of Workplace, the ICC and LCC, and the nature of complaints filed under the act. A situation analysis test was also conducted through which the audience was asked to identify instances of sexual harassment wherein separate interaction with male and female staff and students was conducted in order to sensitize them about the nuances of the subject matter. Also, questions and queries were entertained from the audience, concluding the workshop with a positive result.

5. Right To Information Workshop in DPS, Bhopal



LAC-NLIU's first workshop under the #thelegalliterate initiative was conducted at DPS, Bhopal, on Right to Information ("RTI"). The session was conducted by Mr. Ankit Gupta (Convener, LAC 2019-20) and Mr. Pranjal Agarwal

(Senior Member, LAC and presently Convener 2020-21). The initiative aimed to educate the public with regard to developments in the legal field, which are of such nature that they ought to be known by the masses in order to stay immune to prevailing unethical and illegal practices surrounding them. This workshop aimed at familiarizing the students with what RTI is, when and when not to resort to filing a RTI, how to file a RTI and so on. The students were made aware of various rights and duties and the procedures to avail them to exercise the RTI. A few major topics like the 'Steps involved in drafting an RTI' were discussed with the aim to create awareness among the students. It was a very enriching session for the students of DPS Bhopal where they learnt the practical aspects of this right. The session was a fruitful one and saw participation from the students of classes 11th & 12th. LAC succeeded in its aim of making the students legally literate with regard to filing an RTI.

6. RTI appeal filed in the Central Information Commission

The then convener, Mr. Ankit Gupta, represented LAC and appeared in person in an RTI appeal as a pro-bono authorized representative for the wife of his house help. She had a grievance regarding the results of an examination that she had appeared for. He helped in filing the first and second appeal in the Central Information Commission (“CIC”), after the preliminary appeal was dismissed on grounds of not corresponding to the facts of the case. The first was also rejected with a similar response for the issue. Aggrieved and dissatisfied, he approached the Commission instantly with a second appeal, which was registered. Even after six months, the CIC took no action. Upon further probing into the matter, he filed an urgency application to the Information Commissioner and he proceeded to fulfill the requirements. One month later, the appeal was brought into hearing for which Mr. Ankit Gupta appeared in person and finally the decision was declared in his favour directing that the answer script and marksheet be revealed. Not only did he take LAC to new heights but also taught us that a little persistence can make a huge difference in the pursuit of helping others.

7. Aawaz Uthao: Street Play by Aahwan

LAC collaborated with Aahwan, the drama society of NLIU, to disseminate information about the unacceptable and illegal but extremely prevalent practice of domestic violence. Aahwan prepared a street play or a ‘nukkad natak’ showing



various scenarios how people can be subjected to this heinous offence and not even realize that they have recourse to a remedy! The drama society practiced for week and finally showcased their skills in DB Mall, which is a prime location attracting lots of eyes. The audience became immensely

engrossed in the play and understood the rights they were entitled to. It was a successful event as the audience received the message we were trying to send across.

8. #AapkeAdhikar Initiative

‘Aapke Adhikar’ was a novel initiative by LAC that aimed to spread legal awareness amongst a target audience easily accessible through social media. In the process, we hoped to expand our reach to the underprivileged masses that are unaware of their rights. This was achieved through creating and sharing a series of specialized posts on all our platforms. The posts were designed to allow grasp readers with its appealing appearance and crisply laid down information that was easily comprehensible and settled well with our readers. The premises of all these posts were selected to best capture those aspects of law, which most civilians are unaware of. It informed them of the rights they possess and the laws that protect them.



For example, we covered the essentials of the amendments made to the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. The rights and responsibilities of people involved in the act of travelling by air were also covered as per the Director General of Civil Aviation requirements. This initiative was undertaken as a part the #legalliterate

initiative and throughout its run we saw a considerable amount of positive responses and plenty of positive feedback from the readers, which was a proof of our success. It has also provided a great learning curve for many new members of the cell who were involved in the process.

9. Red FM Talk Show



The LAC in collaboration with Red FM 93.5, conducted a radio programme in order to create awareness regarding the rights and duties of the citizens. The first programme with RJ Arsh aired on 27th July 2019, with an introduction to what the legal aid clinic is and the work done by the organisation. Mr. Ankit Gupta (Convener, LAC) and Ms. Nayani Aggarwal (Co-Convener, LAC) gave an insight about the need and purpose of forming LAC and the initiative of this year, #thelegalliterate. The second programme was

aired on the occasion of Teacher's Day, on 5th September 2019, where Mr. Ankit Gupta and Mr. Pranjal Agarwal talked about the needs to spread awareness about quintessential laws with the objective of spreading legal literacy. The programme was a step forward in creating awareness in the society and to educate the public with regard to developments in the legal field, which are of such nature that they ought to be known by the people.

10. Weekly Quizzes on Social Media Platforms

On its social media platform, LAC conducted a Weekly Quiz for Five Fridays in November 2019 as part of its #thelegalliterate initiative with attractive prize money to bring legal literacy in the mainstream discourse and incentivise the viewers to be aware of the legal framework that binds us all. The main objective of the quiz was to sensitize the



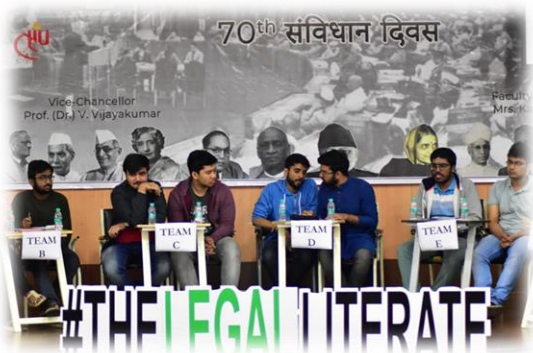
audience regarding the basic legal knowledge one should be aware of. We received great enthusiasm from the participants, which furthered our motto as well as our resolve to spread legal awareness and educate everyone about their rights.

11. Petition before Delhi High Court

Our then convenor, Mr. Ankit Gupta took the initiative and represented the LAC by filling a petition in the Delhi High Court challenging the exorbitant additional fees charged by Bar Council of Delhi (“BCD”) and Bar Council of India (“BCI”) at the time of enrolment. He argued in-person and submitted that the additional enrolment fee of Rs. 8350 as prescribed by the BCD is violative of Section 24(1)(f) of the Advocates Act, 1961. He also submitted that the circulation fee levied by the BCD to expedite the process of enrolment is also ultra vires the substantive provision of Advocates Act, 1961 viz. Section 24(1)(f).

He further challenged the vires of the levy of fees towards transfer of name of an advocate from one state roll to another. He submitted that Section 18 of the Advocates Act, 1961 is crystal clear that transfer of name from one state roll to another is to be done without payment of any fee. However, the BCI charges Rs. 2000 as process fee and similarly BCD charges Rs. 1000 towards granting No Objection Certificate for such transfer. Therefore, an advocate ends up paying Rs. 3000 for such transfer, which is totally ultra vires Section 18 of the Advocates Act, 1961.

It turned out to be a successful litigation as the Court issued notice to the CI and BCD and ordered in favour of the petitioner, Mr. Ankit Gupta.



12. Constitution Day Celebrations

The Legal Aid Clinic successfully planned and organised Constitution Day celebrations within the University on a scale that had never been done before. It comprised of two main events; first being

the Constitutional Law Quiz. With two very talented quizmasters onboard, the quiz saw

participation from more than fifty teams in the preliminary rounds as it drew the interest of many students, out of which six teams qualified for stage rounds. We also tried to engage the audience by offering them rewards for answering specific questions. After an intense round of question and answers and tie breakers in the finals, the top two teams were declared as joint winners of the quiz and the event was indeed thrilling for everyone witnessing it.



The second event was the Asian Parliamentary Debate. The motion of the debate was regarding abrogation of article 370 from the Constitution of India. The highlight of the debate was undoubtedly its format, wherein teachers were pitted against students, and the hour was filled with strong arguments and opinions from both sides as everyone

came to stage prepared with sharp wits as their primary weapon. The audience, which was already very charged with the idea of the two teams going head to head like never before, was delighted even further as the discussion gained a great amount of momentum to reach another level of argumentation. The Speaker of the house ultimately declared the student team as winners of the debate and it was indeed a close call as the performances were spectacular beyond the expectations of many. As the events

were completed, we received in large sums appreciation for the idea in its final form, which was executed brilliantly and saw major success and involvement. We are more than pleased with the aftermath for

the surge of information that was spread within our community without any shortage of entertainment.



13. Petition Before Supreme Court



One of the highlights of the year has definitely been this accomplishment of our then convener, Mr. Ankit Gupta, who has through his actions shown what having the spirit of legal aid really means by leading by example. He represented LAC and appeared in person to make an intervention in the Supreme Court regarding the proper handling and

disposal of used face masks to prevent COVID-19 relapse. The main motive for the petition was to create awareness regarding how the masks used by the public in large must be disposed of to enable the potent control over the virus and aver the community transmission. With the prevailing situation, he underwent the network of virtual courts and post-filing the petition. Finally, the Central Pollution Control Board issued the revised guidelines specifically addressing the said matter prayed for. Therefore, the Supreme Court disposed of the issue.

NEW INITIATIVES OF LAC FOR 2020-21

1. Project Saarthi

Owing to the increasing number of domestic violence issues and mental health matters as reported by the National Commission for Women, we have taken up an initiative under the name Project Saarthi to dedicate a helpline number aimed at providing free legal assistance to people coping up with mental health issues and domestic violence, and seeking legal advice in general.

Project Saarthi has three verticals to it –

- The Legal Aid vertical: Dedicated to the management of general civil and criminal matters with a special focus on domestic violence cases.
- The Mediation vertical – Aimed at providing online mediation and other ADR services by certified mediators.
- The Mental Health Counseling vertical – Aimed at providing free counseling by professional psychologists.

Our empanelled advocates, psychologists, and certified mediators will assist these three wings. The project, aimed at making effective legal aid accessible during the lockdown as well, was launched on 25th June 2020 and has successfully handled 12 cases from all three verticals.

We plan to continue providing relief through telephonic services in these uncertain times.

2. Project Pukaar

Arundhati Roy once said, “There is no such thing as the “Voiceless”. There are only deliberately silenced or the preferably unheard.” We at LAC take inspiration from this quote and to further our aim of spreading legal literacy, have started our new initiative - Project Pukaar. It is an initiative to spread awareness about the socio-legal issues being faced in our country, equip the general public with the knowledge of law and enable them to raise relevant questions. Under this we publish well researched reports for the general public.

3. Project Neev

The aim of this project is to help other budding colleges and newer NLUs to establish a Legal Aid Clinic in their respective colleges. The goal stems from the fact that a lot of new law colleges have come up, including various new NLUs. However, they do not have a functional Legal Aid Clinic, owing to factors like lack of support from their respective

administrations or lack of required knowledge and experience and without a formal LAC in place, carrying out legal aid tasks becomes a challenge. Keeping this in mind, we at NLIU-LAC would strive to help them establish and run legal aid clinics by starting a collaborative programme which includes support through document-guides and webinars.

CONCLUDING NOTE

We at NLIU-LAC thank our empanelled advocates, faculty-in-charge and administration of NLIU for supporting us with all our initiatives. Our little success in achieving our aims would not have been possible without it.

We are positive and excited for the academic session of 2020-21 and despite the challenge of working remotely, have been able to successfully carry on with our work.

Thank you for reading our report.

Sincerely and on behalf of the entire team of Legal Aid Clinic, NLIU:

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