

Report on Legal Aid and Legal Issues Pertaining to Minority Anglo-Indian Schools in India Programme, held at La Martiniere for Girls, Kolkata, by State Legal Services Authority, West Bengal in the 103rd National Conference of Association of Heads of Anglo-Indian Schools in India [AHAISI] on 6th January 2026 and Legal Awareness Camp conducted thereat from 5th to 7th January, 2026.

Introduction

In furtherance of the mandate of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 and in alignment with the objectives of legal awareness and access to justice, the Association of Heads of Anglo-Indian Schools in India[AHAISI], in collaboration with the State Legal Services Authority, West Bengal (WBSLSA), organized a programme in the 103rd National Conference on Legal Aid and Legal Matters Pertaining to Minority Anglo-Indian Schools in India.

The programme was conducted on 6th January 2026 at La Martiniere for Girl, Kolkata. The conference aimed to sensitise educational stakeholders of minority institutions regarding legal aid mechanisms, minority rights, and the role of Legal Services Authorities in strengthening institutional and individual legal empowerment.



Felicitation Ceremony

Prior to the commencement of the technical session, a formal felicitation ceremony was held to acknowledge the contributions of distinguished members of the legal fraternity and Legal Services Institutions. The following dignitaries were felicitated during the programme:

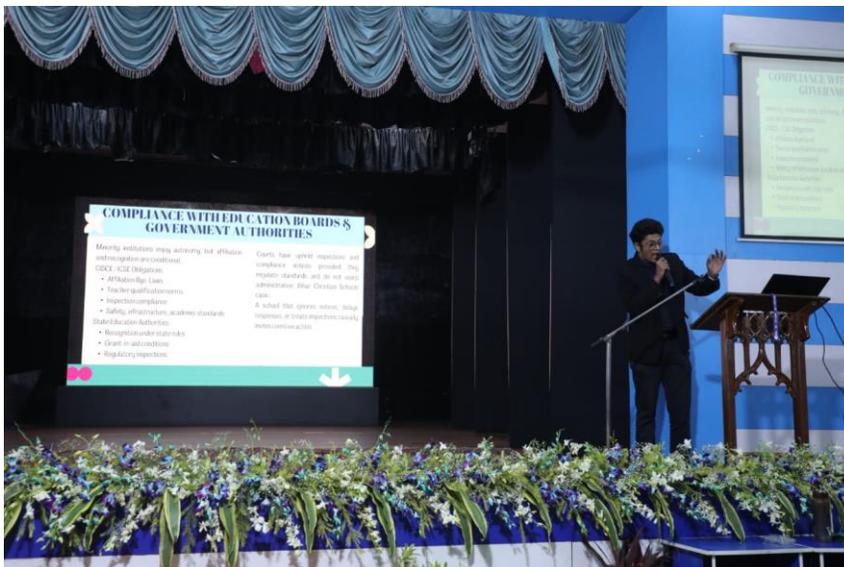


Shri S. Arnab Ghosal, Member Secretary, WBSLSA, Shri Sudip Banerjee, Secretary, High Court Legal Services Committee, Shri Shyamal Gupta, Former District Judge and Smt. Poonam Singhi, Deputy Secretary, WBSLSA.



Technical Session and Presentation

The technical session featured a PowerPoint presentation delivered by the law interns of the West Bengal State Legal Services Authority (WBSLSA), focusing on the structure, functioning, and outreach mechanisms of the Authority.



The presentation outlined the role and functions of the State Legal Services Authority and provided a comprehensive overview of minority rights in educational institutions,

including the constitutional and statutory safeguards governing such institutions, regulatory compliance requirements, key judicial pronouncements, child protection laws, and recent legal developments relevant to minority schools. Special emphasis was placed on the role of minority educational institutions in nation-building and the manner in which Legal Services Authorities facilitate access to justice, legal aid, and grievance redressal mechanisms for minority institutions and communities.

An interactive Question and Answer session followed the presentation, during which heads of various Anglo-Indian schools from across the country raised queries concerning legal challenges faced by minority institutions. Discussions centered on issues such as regulatory compliance, institutional autonomy, minority protections under the Constitution, and available legal remedies.



Legal Awareness Camp

In addition to the programme, a Legal Awareness Camp was organised at the venue in the form of an outreach stall from 5th to 7th January, 2026. Individuals were encouraged to approach the stall to share their legal grievances, where they were provided with appropriate guidance regarding legal remedies and available legal aid services. Pamphlets and books on legal awareness and primary legal education were distributed among everyone who visited the stall.



Objectives and impact

The primary objective of the programme was to empower school leadership to function as informed “Constitutional Custodians”, capable of upholding minority rights while ensuring compliance with the prevailing legal and regulatory framework. By clarifying the balance between institutional autonomy and statutory obligations, the session sought to:

1. Minimise the risk of legal disputes through enhanced awareness of documentation standards, procedural compliance, and transparent governance practices.
2. Safeguard the minority character of legacy minority educational institutions by promoting structured, rule-based, and well-documented administrative mechanisms.
3. Reaffirm the commitment of the West Bengal State Legal Services Authority towards ensuring “Access to Justice for All” by extending legal awareness, guidance, and institutional support to minority educational institutions.

Conclusion

The Programme was successfully conducted and served as an effective platform for promoting legal awareness, strengthening understanding of minority rights in education, and encouraging meaningful institutional engagement. The programme reaffirmed the pivotal role of the West Bengal State Legal Services Authority in facilitating access to justice, legal aid, and advisory support for minority educational institutions and communities, while fostering sustained dialogue between educational stakeholders and Legal Services Institutions.

