

Report on Legal Awareness and Free Legal Aid Programme conducted by the State Legal Services Authority, West Bengal at the International Kolkata Book Fair 2026 in Kolkata (22 January – 3 February 2026)

Introduction

The State Legal Services Authority, West Bengal set up a stall (No. 326) at the International Kolkata Book Fair 2026 to spread legal awareness and provide free legal advice. The main goal of the programme was to help people understand their legal rights and to guide those who need legal assistance but may not know where to go.

The stall remained open throughout the Book Fair. People from different walks of life visited the stall, shared their legal concerns, and received guidance from advocates and retired judicial officers.

The programme was organised with the aim of promoting **Justice, Awareness, and Empowerment**.

Daily Legal Awareness Activities

Legal awareness activities were conducted every day at the stall. Visitors were informed about:

- Free legal aid services available to eligible persons
- The role and work of Legal Services Authorities
- Basic legal rights of citizens
- Ways to resolve disputes
- Important welfare and protection laws

Pamphlets and awareness materials were distributed among visitors. People were encouraged to discuss their problems freely and were guided about appropriate legal remedies and support services.

Visit of Hon'ble Chief Justice

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, **Justice Sujoy Paul**, visited the stall during the Book Fair.

His Lordship interacted with the Member Secretary, **Sri S. Arnab Ghosh**, and appreciated the efforts taken to spread legal awareness among the public.

The visit inspired the organisers and visitors and highlighted the importance of equal access to justice.

Participation of Advocates and Retired Judicial Officers

Free legal advice and awareness support were provided by the following advocates and retired judicial officers, who interacted with visitors and guided them on legal remedies and available services:

- Shyamal Gupta
- Shantanu Ganguly
- Biswanath Bhattacharyya
- Anant Farmania
- Debobrata Bhattacharjee
- Amit Chatterjee
- Vivekananda Sur
- Sumitra Das
- Suvankar Bhattacharjee
- Mit Guha Roy
- Mandhobi Choudhury
- Arijit Bhusan Bagchi
- Niloy Baran Mondal
- Sandipon Das
- Tuli Sinha
- Dr. Manobendra Bhowmick
- Soma Bandhu Chowdhury
- Achin Jana
- Sucheta Mitra

Their presence made the programme more effective and helped visitors receive clear and reliable legal guidance.

Public Response and Impact

The stall received a large number of visitors throughout the Book Fair. People approached with issues related to family matters, property disputes, consumer complaints, and other legal concerns.

Visitors were informed about:

- Who can receive free legal aid
- How to approach Legal Services Institutions
- Legal remedies available under law
- The importance of legal awareness in everyday life

Many visitors appreciated the opportunity to speak directly with legal professionals without any cost. The programme helped people understand legal processes and encouraged them to seek lawful solutions to their problems.

Legal Awareness Quiz Competition

To make legal awareness more engaging, a quiz competition was organised at the stall. Visitors of different age groups participated actively.

The quiz covered simple topics such as legal rights, duties of citizens, and availability of free legal aid.

Participants were encouraged to ask questions and clear their doubts. The activity created a friendly learning environment and helped spread awareness about access to justice.

Interaction on Republic Day

On the occasion of Republic Day, question–answer session was conducted at the stall. Visitors were engaged in discussions about the importance of Republic Day, the values of the Constitution of India, and the role of legal aid services.

Through simple questions and conversations, awareness was spread about:

- Constitutional rights and duties
- Free legal aid services
- The principle that justice should not be denied due to lack of financial means

The session saw enthusiastic participation and strengthened public understanding of legal empowerment.

Presence of Law Interns

Law interns of the State Legal Services Authority, West Bengal were present at the stall every day.

They assisted in organising activities, interacting with visitors, distributing awareness materials, and guiding people about available legal services.

The interns also explained basic legal concepts in simple language and supported advocates and retired judicial officers during public interaction. Their contribution helped in the smooth conduct of the programme and increased public outreach.

Conclusion

The Legal Awareness and Free Legal Aid Programme at the International Kolkata Book Fair 2026 was successfully conducted.

The initiative helped people understand their legal rights, promoted access to justice, and provided meaningful legal support to the public.

Through continuous interaction, awareness activities, and free legal consultation, the programme brought legal services closer to the people and reaffirmed the commitment to ensuring justice for all.
