

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1406

TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 10TH FEBRUARY, 2023

Gram Nyayalayas

1406. SHRI P. RAVINDHRANATH:

SHRI UPENDRA SINGH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of establishment of permanent 'Gram Nyayalayas' recommended by the 114th Law Commission, State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether there is any proposal to make it mandatory for the State Governments to establish 'Gram Nyayalayas' and appoint new judicial officers to ensure speedy and easy access to judicial system to the most underprivileged citizens living in rural and scheduled tribal areas of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to revise the "one time incentive" scheme providing financial assistance to the State Governments for establishment of 'Gram Nyayalayas', if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the tentative details including allocation of resources to the "Gram Nyayalayas" that are scheduled to be set up in the coming three years, State/UT-wise;
- (e) whether cases pending in lower courts would be considered in these Nyayalayas, if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the other steps being taken to provide speedy justice in rural areas?

ANSWER

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

(a): To provide access to justice to the citizen at their door steps, the Central Government has enacted the Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008. In terms of Section 3 (1) of the Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008, the State Governments are responsible for establishing Gram Nyayalayas in consultation with the respective High

Courts. However, the Act does not make setting up of Gram Nyayalayas mandatory.

The State-wise status of Gram Nyayalayas as on date is as under:

Sl. No.	Name of the State/UTs	Gram Nyayalayas Notified	Gram Nyayalayas Operationalised	Amount released (Rs. in Lakhs)
1.	Punjab	9	2	25.20
2.	Kerala	30	30	828.00
3.	Maharashtra	36	23	660.80
4.	Rajasthan	45	45	1240.98
5.	Andhra Pradesh	42	0	436.82
6.	Odisha	23	19	524.40
7.	Jharkhand	6	1	75.60
8.	Karnataka	2	2	25.20
9.	Goa	2	0	25.20
10.	Telangana	55	0	693.00
11.	Ladakh	2	0	0.00
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	20	0	0.00
13.	Madhya Pradesh	89	89	2456.40
14.	Haryana	2	2	25.20
15.	Uttar Pradesh	113	51	1323.20
Total		476	264	8340.00

(b) & (c): No Sir, no such proposal are under consideration.

(d) : As per the scheme, the Central Government provides one-time assistance to States towards non-recurring expenses for setting up of Gram Nyayalayas subject to a ceiling of Rs. 18.00 lakhs per Gram Nyayalaya. The Central Government also provides assistance towards recurring expenses for operating these Gram Nyayalayas subject to a ceiling of Rs. 3.20 lakhs per Gram Nyayalaya per year for the first three years. However, as per the revised guidelines issued in 2021, Gram Nyayalayas funds will be released only after they have been notified as well as made operational alongwith the appointment of Nyayadhikaris and reported on the Gram Nyayalayas Portal of the Department of Justice.

(e) & (f): The Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 provides for establishment of Gram

Nyayalayas for every Panchayat at intermediate level or a group of contiguous Panchayats at intermediate level in a district or where there is no Panchayat at intermediate level in any State, for a group of contiguous Panchayats. Gram Nyayalayas are deemed to be a Court of Judicial Magistrate of First Class with civil and criminal jurisdiction as provided in the Schedule to the Act. In terms of Section 9 of the Act, the Nyayadhikari shall periodically visit the villages falling under his jurisdiction and conduct trial or proceedings at any place which he/she considers is in close proximity to the place where the parties ordinarily reside or where the whole or part of the cause of action had arisen, provided that where the Gram Nyayalaya decides to hold mobile court outside its headquarters, it shall give wide publicity as to the date and place where it proposes to hold mobile court. Civil and criminal cases pending before District / Session Courts or courts subordinate to them falling within the jurisdiction of the Gram Nyayalayas can be transferred to Gram Nyayalayas. The Central Government has been encouraging the States to set up more Gram Nyayalayas by providing financial assistance.

Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice (DISHA) is a Government of India Scheme launched for a period of five years 2021-2026 to advance the cause of access to justice. It aims to design and consolidate various initiatives to provide citizen-centric delivery of legal services. Under DISHA at present Tele-Law: Reaching the Unreached, Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) and Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness programmes are being implemented at a pan India level. Moreover, in order to ensure its widened reach, dedicated Information Education and Communication (IEC) including (Technology) component has been embedded in DISHA. To strengthen pre litigation legal advice

and consultation, the Tele-Law Service connects the citizen with the Panel lawyers through the use of video /Tele conferencing facilities available at the Common Service Centres (CSCs) and via Tele-Law Mobile App. This service is free of cost and is currently operational in 1,00,00 Gram Panchayats across 755 Districts (including 112 Aspirational districts) in 36 States /UTs. As on 31st January 2023 advice has been enabled to 31 lakh beneficiaries. The Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services) programme aims to provide free legal assistance and counsel to the marginalized sections. Nyaya Bandhu Mobile Application, for android and iOS phones, has been developed to connect the registered Pro Bono Advocates with the registered applicants. As on 31st January 2023, 5817 Advocates have registered under the programme and 69 Law schools across the country have constituted “Pro Bono Clubs” under Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono) programme to instil a culture towards pro bono lawyering among the law students. In addition, a total of 5 lakh beneficiaries and participants have been touched through various Pan India legal literacy and legal awareness programme and webinars in the country being implemented under DISHA. To provide for a more robust framework, Legal Service Institutions network at the National, State and District and Taluk level, constituted under the Legal Services Authorities, Act, 1987 have been integrated under the DISHA scheme to expand the outreach of Tele-Law and Nyaya Bandhu (Pro bono) and embed a dedicated Legal Literacy programme across 112 Aspirational districts in the country.
