

Achievements of J&K State Legal Services Authority

1. Practices relating to management, performance assessment, evaluation and strengthening of basic units like Front Offices and Legal Services Clinics.

J&K State Legal Services Authority works with proactive approach in multifarious directions in accordance with the guidelines issued by NALSA from time to time. As far as performance assessment of the basic units like Front Offices and Legal Services Clinics is concerned, a rigorous assessment of the activities is given priority by the State Authority. The functioning of Front Offices and Legal Services Clinics necessitates a regular and periodic impact assessment, which enhances their performance simultaneously.

To give impetus to the efficiency of Front Offices and Legal Services Clinics, the State Legal Services Authority, lays emphasis on monthly reports from all Legal Services Institutions in the State. In view of the present strength which is; 2 Front Offices at SLSA, 22 at DLSAs, 33 at TLSCs and 2 at HCLSC, all Front Offices have been equipped with adequate furniture, Notice Boards, Computers, Suggestion Box, Complaint Box. Moreover, it has also been ensured that there is sufficient seating arrangement in the waiting area for visitors, drinking water facility, LED Monitor, Helpline for benefit of General Public, to make it One Stop Centre for seekers of Free Legal Services so that people visiting there can avail the benefits of free legal services scheme without any difficulty. The J&K SLSA, in compliance with the directions of Hon'ble Executive Chairman J&K SLSA has started an SMS service to update information to the litigants about the progress of their cases.

The Panel Lawyers have been assigned the duty of attending the Front Offices on all working days. To put it in actual practice all DLSAs have framed roasters in this regard. The Panel Lawyers attend the Front Office on rotational basis. The J&K SLSA is actively considering the creation of posts of Coordinators for Front Offices with the Government.

Chairmen DLSAs visit Legal Services Clinics under their control in order to ascertain that the people living in far flung areas, who have limited or no access to courts or a Legal Services Institution, get benefitted through Legal Services Clinics. Till date, 271 Legal Services Clinics have been established in the State. 630 PLVs working in these Clinics have also been assigned the duty of creating Legal Awareness in coordination with other Government Departments in the far flung areas of the District/Tehsil where the Clinic is located.

Apart this, 331 Legal Literacy Clubs have been established in different High and Higher Secondary Schools of the J&K State, out of which 105 Legal Literacy Clubs have been elevated as Model Legal Literacy Clubs. The purpose of establishing these clubs is to instill legal education among students.



Inauguration of Legal Literacy Club at Govt. Higher Secondary School Kothibagh Srinagar by Hon'ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal, Patron-in-Chief J&K SLSA.

2. Enhancing organizational capacities for ensuring Professional Services in Court based Legal services including timely filing of Appeals.

To augment legal aid, the Legal Services Authorities have constituted Panels of Advocates. Nevertheless, the greatest challenge before Legal Services Authorities is to improve the quality of services rendered by Panel Lawyers. Hence, it is imperative to devise and formulate strategies to improve the selection process and to identify those advocates who are competent and have sense of commitment towards the Legal aid work.

The J&K SLSA in order to enhance organizational capacities for ensuring professional services in rendering legal services particularly Court based legal services by Retainer and Panel lawyers in a professional way has constituted Monitoring and Mentoring Committees

which supervise their affairs for improving their efficiency so as to speed up the final adjudication of the cases assigned to them from time to time.

In order to strengthen the professional services in court based legal services, the Retainer and Panel Lawyers are imparted training as per the calendar issued by NALSA and in turn by SLSA in this regard. They are apprised of the fact that they have to restore confidence of litigants in view of the growing feeling of disillusionment and frustration amongst the litigants on account of delayed justice which looms large as one of the biggest threats. Therefore, it is reinforced that such erosion of faith cannot be afforded. J&K SLSA has a total of 236 Retainer Lawyers on its rolls who are working with different DLSAs and TLSCs. Besides, every DLSA has a separate list of Panel Lawyers who provide Court based Legal Services to the deserving at District and Tehsil Level. From September 2018 to August 2019 a total number of 3336 persons have been benefited by way of Court based Legal Services. These beneficiaries include 865 women, 86 children and 96 persons in custody.

A Number of Training cum Orientation Programmes were held for PLVs/Retainer Lawyers at District as well as State Level by J&K State Legal Services Authority, in accordance with the Training Modules of NALSA. One among such programmes was organised by J&K SLSA in collaboration with J&K State Judicial Academy at Judicial Academy Jammu on 23rd of December 2018. The Retainer Lawyers and PLVs from Jammu Division participated in the Day long Programme.



To give voice to the weaker, underprivileged and marginalized sections of the society, the J&K SLSA provides Free Legal Services by ensuring filing of their appeals well in time.

J&K SLSA besides organising 3 National Lok Adalats, conducted 93 Regular Lok Adalats through DLSAs in which 43,074 cases were settled and a compensation amount of Rs. 187.47 Crores was realized.



3. Approach towards development and management of Human Resources including redressal of Human Resource shortage at all levels.

The odyssey of Legal services Institutions would be meaningless had there been no systematic mechanism for implementation of Rules, Regulations and Administrative policies at the ground level to ensure justice to the public as enshrined in the Constitution of India. In recent years, the services rendered by such Institutions have increased manifold. However, the Legal Services Institutions have to work on other areas of activities including outreach programmes. Human Resource is the main pivot around which the whole activities in a Legal Services Institution revolve. Here the development and management of human resource comes in picture. In order to make the system more efficient, there must be no dearth of human resources at all Levels.

The Government of J&K vide order no.3981-LD(Leg) of 2018 dated 17-07-2018, created 22 posts of full time secretaries for 22 DLSAs. Accordingly, 14 Sub Judges were posted as secretaries for 14 DLSAs . These Secretaries being the full time officers in the concerned DLSAs are exclusively engaged in the implementation of Legal Services Schemes and activities in the State of J&K. Besides 22 Posts of Steno-typists having knowledge of Accounts were sanctioned by the Government. The posts were created in order to make the system more efficient and result oriented.

The J&K SLSA in order to further make up the deficiency of staff and enhance its sphere of activities has moved a proposal to the Government for creation of one hundred (100) posts at different levels. This Authority has tried to make up the deficiency to some extent by engaging Para Legal Volunteers at all levels. However, the matter needs to be taken up with the government for creation of more posts, so that the system is strengthened at all levels.

Orientation Training programme for DLSA Secretaries was organized at the State Judicial Academy, Jammu by the J&K State Legal Services Authority. In addition to this, the Secretaries were deputed to Delhi Legal Services Authority for specialized practical training and to see the functioning of the DLSAs at Delhi by themselves. Two days training programme for DLSA Chairpersons and Secretaries was organised by the J&K SLSA, which was inaugurated by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur on 23rd of December 2018.



4. Developing organizational culture for devising and implementing outreach Legal Services Programmes as appropriate to legal needs and socio-legal issues of local area.

The J&K Legal Services Authority is vigorously engaged in creating awareness and in this regard legal awareness camps, seminars etc. have been organized. In view of awareness to be made at the community level, the challenges of providing information on law in a way that can be easily understood with impact has been the area of concern. To break the monotony, use of films, skits, dramas, role play and other interactive methods are adopted. Legal literacy material is distributed amongst participants. The camps for legal awareness are organised as per the aspirations of local community. The programmes were also held with the involvement of NGOs on social, legal and climatic issues.



Hon'ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal, Patron-in-Chief J&K SLSA along with Executive Chairman Hon'ble Mr. Justice Alok Aradhe inspecting Legal Services Camp at Pantha Chowk Srinagar on 30th Sep. 2018

Mega Legal Services and Awareness Camps were held throughout the State as per the Module prescribed by NALSA, wherein, besides the State functionaries, Bank officials were also involved to aware the masses about the welfare schemes of the Central and State Governments, besides the Schemes of NALSA and SLSA. One such camp was inaugurated at Panthachowk Srinagar on 30th of September 2018 by Hon'ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal, Chief Justice High Court of J&K, in presence of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Alok Aradhe, Executive Chairman J&K SLSA, whereas, another such camp was inaugurated by Her Ladyship Ms. Justice Gita Mittal at Birpur (Parmandal) in Samba district in presence of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal Executive Chairman J&K SLSA and Hon'ble Ms. Justice Sindhu Sharma, Administrative Judge for district Samba, in the month of December 2018. In these camps besides educating the people about the welfare schemes launched by the Central and State Governments, the weaker and marginalised sections of society were provided on spot benefits including the support system to the disabled, marriage assistance to Girls , loans by the banks and pensions etc. Camps for Aadhar registration of people were also setup in these camps besides Medical camps wherein, thousands of participants were benefitted.



Chief Justice Ms. Justice Gita Mittal with an elderly disabled in MLSC at Parmandal Samba on 30th Dec. 2018

A Proactive approach is adopted for welfare of children and protection of their rights, as they are voiceless and more vulnerable to abuse, who need protection. J&K SLSA in coordination with Department of School Education of J&K Govt. devised and organised programmes in the educational institutions across the State. The students were engaged in plantation of saplings, drawing competitions on various social and environmental issues such as drug abuse, use of plastic and polythene, dowry, domestic violence, child abuse and issues of elderly people, speech and essay writing competitions, poetry, plays and skits. J&K SLSA stressed upon DLSAs of the State to hold regular programmes on the subject with the result 21 programmes on POCSVO Act, 8 programmes on illegal Trafficking of human beings and other related issues were held for information of general masses who often suffer in ignorance.



5. Establishment of Day Care & Recreation Centres (Ahata-e-Waqar)

With the objective of ensuring a pro-active approach in addressing the concerns of the senior citizens and to promote the concept of “Ageing with Dignity” J&K SLSA under the vibrant patronage of Hon’ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K, undertook an innovative initiative by setting up three Day Care and Recreation Centres for senior citizens at Srinagar, Jammu and Leh. These centres called “Ahata e Waqar” or space of dignity have been established by J&K SLSA in collaboration with J&K Government offering supervised day care and recreation facilities to senior citizens. The facilities include geriatric health, reading room, indoor games, group discussion and celebration of important days of their lives and festivals in these centres.





Hon'ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal Patron-in-Chief J&K SLSA inaugurating Ahata-e-Waqar at Roopnagar, Jammu on 11.10.2019

Ahata e Waqar aspires to be a platform for addressing the issues and needs of senior citizens simultaneously recognising their contribution in the holistic development of the society and also to utilize their experience and expertise in finding solutions to various problems confronting the society.

The centre is a facility which the senior citizens can call their own and primarily focuses on minimizing isolation of senior citizens in the society and maximizing their social interaction so that the senior citizens receiving care, honour and respect that belongs to them further enriches their lives with happiness. The centre also aims to provide all types of medical, legal, police/security, psychological and social support, meditation, recreation, yoga and community support to keep the senior citizens constructively occupied in the activities of their choice and intellect including reading, playing and listening music, watching TV and other interactive programmes, thereby, nurturing a healthy social and personal attitude.

More such centres are being set up by J&K SLSA in different areas to address the needs of senior citizens.

J&K State Legal Services Authority organized Week Long Programmes throughout the State w.e.f 10th – 15th of June 2019, to observe “Elder Abuse Awareness Day”. Out of various such camps, two camps were inaugurated at Leh (Ladakh) by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tashi Rabstan, Judge High Court of J&K on 14th and 15th of June 2019. In this regard, DLSA Jammu organized a sensitization programme on challenges faced by the Senior Citizen Prisoners in

Jails on 13th of June at District Jail Jammu and another sensitization Programme was also organized on Safety and Security of Citizens.



On the concluding day i.e., 16th of June 2019, J&K SLSA organized a programme at Ahata-e-Waqar, Chanapora Srinagar, where, besides 60 Judicial Officers from Kashmir Division, senior citizens also participated, who were educated about Legal Rights of elderly persons. The programme was inaugurated by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Kumar Gupta Judge High Court of J&K in presence of Mr. Sanjay Dhar Registrar General High Court of J&K. On the



occasion a geriatric Expert Dr. Aabha Choudhary from Anugraha Delhi delivered an extensive lecture about the theme “Ageing with Dignity”. Mr. M.A Chowdhary, Member Secretary J&K State Legal Services Authority also spoke on the issues confronting senior citizens.

In this connection, two days state level seminar on issues of elderly was also organised in collaboration with National Institute of Social Defence Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, and in association with Anugraha, Regional Resource and Training Centre on Ageing, Delhi on 12-13 October 2019. The participants of the seminar were officers from Legal Services, Judiciary, Administration, Police, academicians, social workers, activists and students.



6. Environment Protection:

For ensuring the protection of the existing natural environment and to repair and replenish the damage already caused to the ecology, J&K SLSA has focused on increasing the green cover by undertaking various initiatives. Under the effervescent patronage of Hon'ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal and talented guidance of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal, J&K SLSA undertook various plantation drives in different parts of the State. In these initiatives lacs of fruit and non fruit saplings were planted by all DLSAs with the involvement of school children. The District Legal Services Authorities organised 28 different programmes on Environmental Issues during the current year. The "Seed Ball" programme, is one of the flagship campaign in this direction. Recognising the seed ball programme as an afforestation technique having the advantage of being a quick and cost effective method, the entire process involves making seed balls out of a mixture of soil, seeds of various varieties, clay and humus and thereafter broadcasting them in places where plantation is required. The concept is self sustainable as germination occurs naturally without any human intervention especially in inaccessible areas where the plantation cannot be carried out in conventional way. Two awareness programmes on seed balls were held in district Samba; one at Mansar Morh at Samba and other at Mansar in which the school students participated and during the programme more than 2000 seed balls were distributed amongst students for broadcasting in the inaccessible and far flung areas.

Recently, during the visit of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal, Executive Chairman, J&K SLSA, to district Reasi, this flagship movement was introduced to the workers and the management of the construction company engaged in construction of railway line and the management of the construction company agreed to use drones for broadcastingly the seed balls.

In order to educate the students about the making of seed balls and their use for plantation, workshops were also organised in some schools of the state in association with the forest department of the state.



7. SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

J&K SLSA undertook its leading initiative “Skill Development” in the State of J&K. The underlying objective of the programme is to associate the youth with skilling programmes striving to harness their potential at an early age and to ensure their positive participation in the social development simultaneously enabling them to earn a dignified livelihood. The programme “Skill Development” was initiated as a pilot project in three districts of the state namely Leh, Srinagar and Udhampur with the objective of engaging the youth populace between the age group of 17 to 25 years targeting the marginalized sections of the society and the school dropouts, especially under the **Pradhan Mantri Koushal Vikas Yojana** and in association with **Primero-Skill and Development**. In the first instance, the training is being imparted to 60 persons in each District of the target group in various aspects ranging from Front Office Managers in Hospitality sector to other related areas with ample prospects of suitable placements. The First ever Youth Skill Development Training Programme ‘Mai Hunhar Hum’ – ‘I am Skilled’ was inaugurated on 11th April 2019 at Harwan Srinagar by Hon’ble Ms Justice Gita Mittal, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K in Presence of Hon’ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal, Executive Chairman, J&K SLSA, Hon’ble Mr. Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, Chairman, High Court Legal Services Committee, Shri Jayanta Das, Director Primero Skill Development and Training Limited and Mr. Surajit Roy, Mr. Aakarshan and Ms. Kahkashan Anjum, officers of National Skill Development Corporation. The Skilling Programme was also held in the districts of Udhampur and Leh, where 2 batches of 30 candidates (Male & Female) each received training for three months on Front Office Associate Job Role in Hospitality and Protocol.



The J&K SLSA under the patronage of Hon'ble Patron-in-Chief, Hon'ble Ms. Gita Mittal has conducted a number of Legal Awareness programmes, legal literacy camps and other related activities throughout the length and breadth of the State. In spite of the unfavourable conditions prevailing in the valley J&K SLSA managed to hold various Legal Literacy Programmes with the result a number of under privileged and marginalized class of the society got benefitted under various schemes of the Government. Special Programmes were held on important days during the calendar Year, be it Child abuse, Water conservation, Anti-Polythene Drive and Sexual Abuse particularly among the children. Some of the highlights of the programmes are as below:

8. Legal Services programmes on important Days:

(I) Celebration of National Voters Day on 25th of January 2019:

J&K State Legal Services Authority in order to celebrate the National Voters Day on 25th of January organised several programmes to sensitize the people about their Right to Vote and the citizens were also made aware about the use of E.V.Ms (Electronic Voting Machines).

(a) **Target population:** The Target population was citizens in general and those living in far flung areas in particular. The participants were educated about their right to vote and the power their vote has to form the government.



(II) Road Safety Week (4th February to 10th February):

J&K State Legal Services Authority carried out several programmes from 4-10 February 2019, on “Road Safety” through its DLSAs at their respective district headquarters. The people during the programmes were apprised about various traffic rules and the consequences of violating these road safety rules which prove detrimental in the long run. The camps



during the week were attended by the Retainer Lawyers, PLVs and the General Public. The ARTOs of the concerned areas made the people aware by power point presentation. The target population of these programmes drivers, school going children and public in general.



(III) International Women's Day :

J&K State Legal Services Authority organised International Women's Day on 8th of March 2019 through its DLSAs and TLSCs. The Women in large numbers attended these programmes wherein they were made aware about their Rights. The Anganwadi Workers, Asha Workers attended these programmes in large numbers and they were stressed upon to make awareness about the Rights of the Women in every nook and corner of the concerned districts since they are the primary workers dealing with the general public at the grass root level.



(IV) International Labour Day:

J&K State Legal Services Authority organized International Labour Day on 1st May 2019 in all Districts through its DLSAs and TLSCs. On this occasion, the labourers in unorganized sector were apprised about various welfare schemes propelled by the Government for the benefit of labourers from time to time.



(V) Anti- Polythene Day :

J&K State Legal Services Authority organized Anti- Polythene Day on 25th of May 2019. On this day, various programmes were held in several schools of the State wherein, the children were made aware about the ill effects of the polythene in our day to day life which proves detrimental to our environment in the long run. The children in large numbers attended the programmes with zeal and enthusiasm across the state of J&K.

(VI) Anti-Tobacco Day :

J&K State Legal Services Authority organized Anti Tobacco Day on 31st of May 2019 at its District Headquarters through its DLSAs and TLSCs. The International Day was observed against Drug Abuse and illicit trafficking in collaboration with Education Department. The Experts from medical and Legal field spoke on the occasion. Besides students from different schools also participated in debates and discussion.

(VII) World Environment Day:

Under the visionary guidance of Hon'ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal Patron -in -Chief J&K SLSA and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal, Executive Chairman J&K State Legal Services Authority and their Lordship's concern for environment protection, plantation drives were undertaken in different parts of the State by involving the school going children. Lacs of fruit and non fruit saplings were planted by all the DLSAs with the involvement of school children. The saplings and seeds were provided by the Forest and allied departments. Plantation was carried out in all the Court Complexes of the State also. Hon'ble the Chief Justice and the Hon'ble Executive Chairman graced one such occasion by inaugurating a plantation initiative at District Court Complex Srinagar.





(VIII) International Yoga Day:

J&K State Legal Services Authority organized International Yoga Day across the State on 21 June 2019. The main objective behind this was to make this ancient practice popular among the present generation, who are unaware of it and its benefits. The international Yoga Day aims to develop the habit of meditation among youngsters so that they can enjoy more peace of mind and self-awareness which is essential for a stress free existence. The Day was observed at schools and colleges across the State. Experts from the department of youth services and sports were present under whose supervision the 'asans' were performed at different places in the State. DLSA Srinagar organized such a programme at Jogers Park at Srinagar in collaboration with Health Department.



(IX) International Day against Drug Abuse:

J&K State Legal Services Authority organized several awareness programmes on Drug Abuse and illicit trafficking at all District Headquarters in collaboration with education department in which experts from medical and legal field spoke besides student from different schools. Debates and Discussions were also held among the students in different schools on the topics. Certificates and prizes were distributed among the best speakers.



9. Promoting Coordination of DLSA with HCLSC and SCLSC for smooth flow of information including copies of documents between them.

J&K SLSA works in close coordination with HCLSC and SCLSC through on line modes of communication such as e-mail. The said committees are often contacted in order to facilitate the convicts in filing of appeal by providing Free Legal services. 41 appeals of convicts have been facilitated by HCLSC this year, out of which 33 appeals have been filed in Jammu Wing of the Hon'ble High Court and 8 have been filed in Srinagar Wing of J&K High Court.

10. Strategies and framework for effective capturing of data with proper documentation of Legal Services activities and its projection.

The J&K SLSA framed a calendar of activities this year and circulated it among all DLSAs for strict observance by them. All DLSAs have been directed to capture the data of the activities so performed in the form of photographs and video recordings. They are further asked to send a copy to SLSA and to give wide publicity of all special occasions so celebrated/ organized through print and electronic media. The sole purpose of giving a wider publicity of all such activities is to make the masses aware particularly the ignorant class of the society about the benefits of Free Legal Services Scheme because it has been found that under privileged class of society mostly suffers in ignorance. J&K SLSA in turn reduces all these activities in the form of a book under the name "ENDEAVOUR", which is official Newsletter of JK SLSA published by this Authority quarterly.

Various Flagship programmes undertaken by SLSA under 'Access to Justice' were published in the form of booklet and pamphlets and in turn circulated among all DLSAs for onward circulation among the concerned TLSCs for information of public.

11. Promoting use of NALSA portal for feeding data and management of Legal Services (Statistical overview of applications received, uploaded and disposed of at state & District level (consolidated) may be given).

J&K SLSA uploads the official data on NALSA's web portal regularly. All DLSAs have been asked to upload all Statistical data on web portal of NALSA regularly. The information regarding Lok Adalats, Legal Services beneficiaries, under trial prisoners is being regularly uploaded in compliance with the directions issued by NALSA from time to time. All DLSAs upload the information regarding the disposal of the cases in the National Lok Adalats on the same day when the said National Lok Adalat is held.

Every effort has been put in place by J&K SLSA to process and to forward if required the applications submitted by the people directly on the web portal of NALSA who are in need of Free Legal Services. These applications are scrutinized and forwarded to concerned quarters with the direction to process these applications as per their requirement so that the people in need of Free Legal Services can avail the benefits without any delay.

In total, 97 applications were received by SLSA and DLSAs during the reporting period through NALSA portal and all the applications were uploaded and disposed of till July 2019. Because of suspension of Internet facility after 5th of August due to constitutional developments in the country in the wake of abrogation of few provisions of the Constitution of India, some kind of inconvenience has been caused to the seekers of the services as well as the legal services institutions.

Legal Assistance post abrogation of Article 370: After abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution of India, when people were facing difficulty in approaching the advocates, the SLSA ensured uninterrupted functioning of all the Legal Aid Clinics and front officers in the state to provide immediate legal assistance to the people in drafting application etc. for release of people especially children from custody.