

Any practicing Advocate may become member of the Advocates' Welfare Fund on payment of an application fee and annual subscription. The Fund shall vest in and be held and applied by the Trustee Committee established by the concerned Governments. The Fund is, *inter alia*, used for making *ex-gratia* grant to a member of the fund in case of a serious health problem, payment of a fixed amount on cessation of practice and in case of death of a member, to his nominee or legal heir, medical and educational facilities for the members and their dependants, purchase of books and for common facilities for advocates.

A scheme namely, "Stipend Scheme for Junior Lawyers" has been proposed by the Bar Council of India.

As per the Scheme, a lawyer is eligible to take benefit under the Scheme, Who is enrolled with the State Bar Council and also a member of Bar Association, who is practicing, below age of 25 years. In case of SC, ST and OBC the age limit will be 27 years.

A lawyer whose family income exceeds more than 2 lakhs per annum shall not be eligible to avail the benefits of the Scheme.

A lawyer who receive the benefits under the Scheme, if chooses to leave the profession within a period of 7 years from the date of his enrolment will have to refund the entire amount he received as stipend with 6% interest.

For two years eligible advocates will be provided stipend of Rs. 2500/- per month. The said assistance will be provided through funds directly allotted to the Bar Council of India for this purpose.

Working of Lok Adalats

4250. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T. : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Lok Adalats conducted in the country during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) the number of cases filed in Lok Adalats and the number of cases settled by Lok Adalats during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) to what extent the Thirteenth Finance Commission has helped Lok Adalats to work more vigorously and clear more and more cases; and

(d) to what extent Lok Adalats are helping in reducing the pendency of cases in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) and (d) Based on the recommendation of the 13th Finance Commission, a sum of Rs.100 crores has been allocated for the period 2010-2015 for release to the State Legal Services Authorities, through State Governments, for holding about 10 Mega Lok Adalats per High Court per year and about 5 Lok Adalats for each of the 1500 court locations per year. The 13th Finance Commission has set a target of disposal of 15 lakhs cases every year by the Lok Adalats till the year 2015, which is expected to reduce the pressure on regular courts.

Participation of private sector in foodgrains procurement

4251. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has worked out any mechanism for enhanced participation of private sector in foodgrains procurement operations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to counter the tendency of private companies of not purchasing wheat and rice when supplies are abundant and then want Government to liquidate its inventories at cheaper rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) and (b) As per