

SCHEME FOR PARA- LEGAL VOLUNTEERS (REVISED) & MODULE FOR THE ORIENTATION-INDUCTION-REFRESHERS COURSES OF PLV TRAINING

- Under the new PLV training module, the Sikkim SLSA in co-ordination with all the District Legal Services Authorities and Taluk Legal Services Committees has so far conducted **06** training programmes as per the revised and module for the Orientation-Induction-Refreshers courses of training during the year 2013. A total of **139 nos.** of Para-Legal Volunteers comprising of NGOs, Panchayats, Educated unemployed youth, members of Nehru Yuva Kendra, self help groups and teachers were trained under the prescribed Module.
- As per the communication of Member Secretary, NALSA in his letter dated 02/12/2013 enclosing therewith the directions of the Central Authority, NALSA held under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Patron-in-Chief and Hon'ble Executive Chairman in the Judges Lounge, Supreme Court of India wherein it was resolved that the Taluk Legal Services Committee should be activated at Taluk level to assist the people in getting ration card and Below Poverty Line card and also participation in village markets periodically or monthly through the PLVs.
- The Sikkim State Legal Services Authority has taken note of and the directions have been issued to the concerned District Legal Services Authorities and Taluk Legal Services Committees whereby the trained Para-Legal Volunteers have been directed to assist the people for getting ration and Below Poverty Line cards.
- The District Legal Services Authorities maintains all the data of Para-Legal Volunteers and identity cards are issued for a validity of one year.
- Apart from the Para-Legal Volunteers manning the front offices in the legal aid centres,

their services were also utilized during the melas that were organized during Maghe Sankranti in various districts of Sikkim where the Sikkim SLSA had set up stalls for generating awareness to the public.

- The fees/honorarium are paid to the trained PLVs as prescribed under the said scheme.
- As per the direction of NALSA contained in its National Plan of Action 2014, the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority organized a State Meet of Para Legal Volunteers and District Legal Services Authorities on 26th April, 2014 at the Auditorium, High Court of Sikkim chaired by Hon'ble Shri Justice N.K. Jain, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim and Patron-in-Chief, Sikkim SLSA in the presence of Hon'ble Shri Justice S.P. Wangdi, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairman, Sikkim SLSA & Member, Central Authority, NALSA.
- During the said Meet, Presentation of Certificates of Commendation and Mementoes to the performing Para Legal Volunteers and Best performing Para Legal Volunteer by Hon'ble Shri Justice N.K. Jain, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim and Patron-in-Chief, Sikkim SLSA.
- Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation to the District Legal Services Authorities and Resource Person by Hon'ble Shri Justice S.P. Wangdi, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairman, Sikkim SLSA & Member, Central Authority, NALSA and Certificate for performing Para Legal Volunteers were distributed by Hon'ble Shri Justice A.P. Subba, former Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairman, Sikkim SLSA.

- A special address was provided by Shri Passang Tshering Bhutia, from South District, Namchi (recipient of the Best PLV for the North Eastern State at National Level on 26th October, 2013) followed by an interactive session.
- Three Para Legal Volunteers who had done some outstanding work namely Mrs. Indra Maya Nepal of Middle Khesay, Samdong, East Sikkim, Mrs. Nirmala Dhakal of Lower Chewrebotay, Central Pendam, East Sikkim and Mrs. Mingma Doma Bhutia of Rangrang, North Sikkim, in their respective District/Talukas were awarded with Certificates and Mementoes.

SCHEME FOR LEGAL SERVICES TO DISASTER VICTIMS THROUGH LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Pursuant to the natural calamity that hit Sikkim on 19/09/2011 and the flash folds that occurred in parts of North Sikkim during September, 10, the Sikkim SLSA rendered aid and took steps to co-ordinate with the Stat Administration Unit for Disaster Management in order to complement their efforts for managing the disaster at all levels and for providing free legal aid and services to the Victims in the aftermath of natural calamities.

NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY (LEGAL SERVICES TO THE MENTALLY ILL PERSON AND

PERSONS WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES) SCHEME, 2010

- In order to ensure that “Access to Justice” is not denied to Mentally ill Persons, the Sikkim SLSA has been organizing awareness camps regularly apart from observing 10th October, as World Mental Health Day in-coordination with the DLSAs and TLSCs. Visits to Hospitals in the Districts and Sub-Districts and Short Stay and Destitute Homes of Sikkim are made.
- In Sikkim there is only one Psychiatric Hospital situated in Gangtok. Whenever required, the Sikkim SLSA has been providing legal services to persons falling under this category. Counseling to 06 (six) such persons has also been provided during the year 2005-2013.
- Further, one psychiatrist has also been trained as a Mediator to ensure that grievances of Mentally ill persons are effectively met.
- During the visit of the Hon’ble Executive Chairman to Namchi at South District and Gyalshing at West District, on 29.03.2014 which was with regard to setting up of Legal Literacy Clubs and Implementation of Project of the Year 2013-2014 by the Schools and other Institutions. The Hon’ble Executive Chairman met with the Principals and teachers of all the schools and other Institutions where one of the matters discussed was with regard to “***Suicides and Drug Abuse***” which is becoming rampant in Sikkim.
- In furtherance to above, a meeting was held on 11.04.2014 in the Chamber of the Hon’ble Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairman, Sikkim SLSA with the Principal Secretary and other Head of Office of the Health Care, Human Service and Family Welfare Department, for adopting remedial measures for increasing rise of drug abuse and suicidal rates in Sikkim wherein the discussions delved on the following:-

Hon’ble Executive Chairman apprised about the social evils that was having a rampant growth in the State of Sikkim and sought for suggestions and measures adopted by Department of Health. His Lordship further stressed that the Sikkim SLSA is conducting Legal Literacy Classes in all the Schools and Colleges under “Catch Them Young Project” and the need for counseling and propagation of subject matter was felt necessary.

In this regard, Dr. Bhandari, Director General-cum-Secretary, Health Care, HS & Family Welfare Department gave to understand that there were fewer number of

Psychiatrists and awareness programmes are being conducted by Department of Health under the “Catch” programme in association with NGOs however, the results were not desirable since the programme “Catch” was mainly confined to medical health check-up, and suggested that for spreading awareness, the medical officers attached to the Primary Health Centres should first be sensitized and trained.

His Lordship informed that Sikkim SLSA would extend all possible help in the matter of awareness programmes and suggested that a module be prepared by Dr. C.S. Sharma at the earliest as a material for publicity purpose.

His Lordship further desired that the teachers be trained in the Psychiatric field so that the inadequacy of psychiatrists to be deputed to Schools during the awareness programme may be minimized.

The Hon’ble Executive Chairman requested the Department of Psychiatric to take out a module in order to have the said module be implemented by the teachers who would be trained by Sikkim SLSA. Not only would the training programme be confined to teachers but also to the NGOs and Panchayats.

Thereafter, the Department of Health Care, Human Service and Family Welfare, Government of Sikkim has appointed Dr. C.S. Sharma the Head of Department of Psychiatrist of STNM Hospital as Nodal Officer and also to prepare guidelines for Medical Officers and protocol of IEC materials to conduct interactive session for prevention of Mental Illness and early diagnosis/treatment. To also draw a schedule for training of Medical Offices at District Hospital by the respective Psychiatrist posted at Singtam, Namchi and Gyalshing and for the M.O’s of North District at STNM Hospital. The office has requested the Nodal Officer to speed up the matter. Further, Shri Tashi Raptan Barfungpa, Panel Advocate has been appointed to look into the matter and speed up the process.

- The Sikkim State Legal Services Authority have been conducting numerous legal awareness programmes for workers in the unorganized sector and have also been providing free legal aid to workers to approach appropriate forums whenever necessary.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

- The District Legal Services Authorities during the Labour Day organized numbers of awareness programmes for disseminating information about Labour Law during 1st May 2014 (International Labour Day).
- As per the NALSA's Plan of Action and State Plan of Action, the International Women's Day was observed on March 8th, 2014 and the week thereafter as National Legal Aid Week for Women by the District Legal Services Authorities and Taluk Legal Services Committees in coordination with Sikkim SLSA.

Cases taken up by Sikkim State Legal Services Authority through publication in local dailies.

- Based on the information provided in the local dailies, the Sikkim SLSA has been trying to ensure that injustice is not meted outside to those deprived marginalized section of the society by taking up their cases and providing suitable legal aid.
- One of such case was with regard to an extract taken out from Sikkim Express dated 19.04.2014 and 22.04.2014 pertaining to a minor Radhika Gurung of Singtam who was swept away by an unexpected swollen river current while taking bath on the river banks with her sisters at Singtam River.
- The extract also indicates that the resident has blamed NHPC for not giving any signal of releasing the water, when normally a siren was given to alert the people on the release of the water but the siren was no more functional. On many occasions, the people had to leave the funeral halfway due to sudden rise in the water level in the river.
- The body of the deceased was recovered from the river banks below Advanced Technical Training Centre at Bardang.
- The news in the local dailies of 26th April, 2014 in NOW and Sikkim Express, informs that the

District Administration (East) has stated the process of enquiring into the matter on the NHPC's warning system.

- However, in view the affected family of the deceased minor who may not be legally aware of the grant of compensation or whom to approach for redressal of their grievances in such cases of negligence of the company. Hence, considering the situation of the negligence of the Power Project NHPC and extending help to the bereaved family, a suitable panel advocate was appointed to look into the matter and extend all possible legal help and file an appropriate procedure in the way of "Public Interest Litigation" in the Hon'ble High Court of Sikkim for taking necessary steps.

In another matter as per the news clipping of 1st May, 2014 "Parents making Public Appeal seeking justice for their daughter" legal aid has being provided to the parents of the deceased Sabina Chettri of Debrung, Namchi, South Sikkim who was allegedly burned to the death by her husband/in-laws at Kalimpong for taking up necessary steps.