

**EVALUATION OF THE SPECIAL WORK DONE BY THE  
JUDICIAL OFFICERS AND TO APPRECIATE THE  
PERFORMANCE IN THE NATIONAL LOK ADALATS HELD  
SO FAR IN THE YEAR 2023, DATED : 14.10.2023 .**

- My esteemed Sister and Brother Judges on and off the dias,
- Registrar General and Officers of the Registry,
- Judicial Officers from the District Judiciary,
- Persons from Print & Electronic Media, and all others who are participating in this programme virtually,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

A Very Good Morning to all.

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you all to this State level meet for evaluation of the special work done by the Judicial Officers and to appreciate the performance in the National Lok Adalats held so far in 2023. This is for the first time that we, at the High Court are organising such an event.

The introduction of Lok Adalats (people's courts) as one of the components of Alternative Dispute Resolution systems, has not only added a new chapter but provided a new dimension to the justice dispensation system of this country and succeeded in providing a supplementary forum to the victims for satisfactory settlement of their disputes.

This system is based on the Gandhian principles of Gram Swaraj and attempts to promote and fulfill the provision of Article 39A of the Constitution of India which aims at providing equal justice and free legal aid to everyone.

The usage of ADR to settle disputes has been a deeply rooted practice in Indian history. From ancient times, people have always had the mentality of settling the dispute among one another without having to approach the Court. In villages, disputes were always referred to Panchayats for them to adjudicate on disputes arising in the village. In the Panchayat system, the word Panch – Arbitrator and Panchayat – Arbitration are as old as Indian history. The members of the Panchayat (Panch) used to then put the principles of negotiation, mediation and arbitration to make the aggrieved parties come to common consensus and settlement. Hence, it can be said that the process of ADR has been practiced in India as an ancient practice even at the grass-root level. The benefit of ADR is reduction of costs apart from avoidance of delay in litigation.



As per the statistics made available to me, three National Lok Adalats have been organised in our State wherein, total cases taken up including pre-litigation cases are 15,14,014 (Fifteen Lakh Fourteen Thousand and fourteen) from which a total of 11,78,357 (Eleven Lakh Seventy Eight Thousand Three Hundred and Fifty Seven) cases are disposed off and the disposal rate is almost 78%. During this course, more than 10 lakhs of pre-litigation cases are also disposed off. I certainly find these figures impressive and I congratulate you all for making efforts for attaining these figures. I congratulate the Executive Chairman of SLSA, My Brother Justice Goutam Bhaduri and Brother Justice Sanjay Kumar Agrawal, Chairman, High Court Legal Services Committee for motivating you all and also to fulfill the very object of National Legal Services Authority.

If we look at the figures certainly, with the passage of time Lok Adalats have gained faith of the people by settling the disputes both effectively and amicably. However, for sustaining the faith in the system, it is obligatory for every presiding member of the Lok Adalat to make sincere efforts in bringing about a conciliated settlement based on the principles of justice, equity and fair-play.

The Legal Services Authorities must ensure that regulations set forth in the National Legal Services Authority (Lok Adalats) Regulations, 2009 be diligently followed while conducting Lok Adalats.

I appreciate the commitment and dedication of Presiding Judges of the Lok Adalats. As the head of this Institution, I congratulate you all on your achievements but at the same time I wish to awaken you that this is not the final destination but we have a long way to go. Dedicated and sincere efforts howsoever small are bound to produce desired results. Therefore, I take this opportunity to motivate you all with the expectation that in the upcoming National Lok Adalat on 09.12.2023 the above figures turns out to be much bigger and brighter.

Judges do not have the power of sword or purse. They only have the moral authority based upon the confidence of the public in them and so long as they maintain that authority their orders will be respected and complied. The true touchstone for measuring the success of a judicial institution is the degree of confidence reposed in it. Being the head of this Institution, I want each one of you to live up to the expectations of our judicial system.



While there are numerous expectations on the judiciary, some key areas deserve our attention. Firstly, it is crucial for judges to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the law to ensure accurate interpretation and application of legal principles.

Secondly, the judge must ensure that judicial proceedings are conducted in a prompt and timely manner. Adherence to the principles of natural justice, avoiding unnecessary adjournments and adopting technology-driven solutions can help in streamlining the process and expedite justice delivery.

Lastly, it is essential for judges to maintain a high level of integrity and ethical conduct abreast with, transparency and accountability.

I once again congratulate you all and convey my warmest wishes to SLISA for such an achievement. I will conclude with the words of Justice P.N. Bhagwati (**In S.P. Gupta Vs Union of India 1981 supp SCC 87**) -

"Judges should be of stern stuff and tough fibre, unbending before power, economic or political and they must uphold the core principle of the rule of law which says be you ever so high, the law is above you."

**Thank you all .....**