



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Swachhta Saarthi fellowship

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Why is in news? National Lok Adalat to be held across country on Nov 12 to dispose pending cases

National Lok Adalat will be held across the country on **12th November, 2022** to dispose of pending cases through settlement.

The Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution Ministry said, there are **about six lakh eight thousand consumer cases pending in the country**.

It said, considering the benefits of the Lok Adalat system and mutual settlement between parties a large number of consumer cases are expected to be disposed of.

The mission of the Department is to strengthen consumer protection and safety through progressive legislation and provide access to fair and efficient grievance redressal mechanisms.

National Lok Adalats are held at regular intervals where on a **single day Lok Adalats are held throughout the country**, in all the courts right **from the Supreme Court to the District level** wherein cases are disposed of in huge numbers.

The term 'Lok Adalat' means '**People's Court**' and is **based on Gandhian principles**.

The Lok Adalat is a platform where the cases (or disputes) which are **pending before a court or which are at the pre-litigation stage** (not yet brought before a court) are compromised or settled in an agreeable manner.

The 'Lok Adalat' is one of the **components of the ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) system**.

Indian courts **are overburdened with a backlog of cases** and the regular courts are to decide the cases involving a lengthy, expensive and tedious procedure.

Lok Adalat is an **alternate mode of dispute settlement** that has come to be accepted as a viable, economic, efficient and informal one.

The first Lok Adalat camp was organised in Gujarat in 1982. This initiative proved very successful in the settlement of disputes.

The institution of Lok Adalat started spreading to other parts of the country. At that time, this institution was functioning as a voluntary and conciliatory agency without any statutory backing for its decisions.

NALSA was constituted under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987** which came into force on 9th November 1995 to establish a nationwide uniform network for providing free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society.

The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 was **amended in 2002** to provide for the **establishment of the Permanent Lok Adalats** to deal with cases pertaining to the public utility services.

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The **State/District Legal Services Authority or the Supreme Court/High Court/Taluk Legal Services Committee** may organize Lok Adalats at such intervals and places and for exercising such jurisdiction and for such areas as it thinks fit.

Every Lok Adalat organized for an area shall consist of such number of serving or retired judicial officers and other persons of the area as may be specified by the agency organizing.

The Lok Adalat shall have the **same powers as are vested in a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure (1908)**.

Benefits: no court fee and if court fee is already paid the amount will be refunded if the dispute is settled , There is procedural flexibility and speedy trial of the disputes, directly interact with the judge, the award is binding on the parties and it has the status of a decree of a civil court and it is non-appealable.