

**THE WB NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES, KOLKATA**

**Presents**

## **International Seminar on ADR and Legal Aid**

(A Dissemination Seminar under the Department of Justice Project)

24 June 2017

### **Background:**

Strength of the justice delivery system lies in providing quick and inexpensive relief to the people having disputes. Most of the states in the world have responded to this need of the people by setting up strong forum of ADR. However, the issue doesn't seem to be addressed satisfactorily in India, which still primarily banks on the judicial settlement of disputes. This has paved way for congestion in courts, ultimately leading to the unwanted delay in the dispensation of justice. There is a huge backlog of cases pending before various High Courts as well as lower judiciary in India. However, at no point of time the inflow of cases can be stopped nor should it be, since the doors of justice can never be closed. Therefore, there is a need to increase the outflow, which requires some additional outlets like ADR.

Dispensation of justice in India has also got setback due to the inability of poor to have access to the justice delivery system. Today, seeking justice has been an expensive affair in spite of the sincere urge and efforts to make it cost effective. Various other factors like lengthy procedures, complex issues involved, unreasonable adjournments granted and many more have made us to be skeptical towards the Judiciary. But like in life, even in law we have some silver lining- a ray of hope, a helping hand towards the needy. Legal aid is one such scheme which guarantees to all that in case of need for legal assistance, a person can ask for it not as a charity but as a right.

The efforts to popularize the ADR mechanisms and to provide necessary legal aid are made through the Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 and Legal Services Authorities Act 1987. The legal aid and Lok Adalats under the Legal Services Authorities Act 1987 are increasingly dealing with civil cases, matrimonial cases, criminal cases excluding non-compoundable offenses, labour matters as well as matters pertaining to motor accident claims. Legal aid societies have emerged in many parts of India to assist the needy in seeking justice or even to provide free legal aid in suitable circumstances. Emergence of national law universities in many states has also helped in promoting access to justice through the institutional legal aid societies.

Despite the above efforts, the situation is still worrisome. Large numbers of people in India are still not having access to justice and many amongst the remaining are not satisfied

with the kind of justice delivered to them. The state of West Bengal is not an exception to this norm. The West Bengal Judiciary has time and again stressed on the importance of ADR and legal aid in the settlement of the disputes. However, the masses have not yet embraced the ADR whole-heartedly due to their scepticism about the effectiveness of ADR coupled with the over-reliance on the traditional court system. Moreover, the lawyers, being trained only in hardcore litigation, are finding difficulty in adapting to ADR mechanisms. Added to this, quality legal aid has always remained expensive and illusive for poor mass.

In light of the above factors, The WB National University of Juridical Sciences has undertaken a major research project to study the position of ADR and legal aid in West Bengal with an objective to improve them. The research team of the project has conducted a study of current position and has come out with its findings. Finalising the research report is now being done with a dissemination seminar to receive inputs from different scholars in the field.

### **Objectives:**

One of the major objectives of this seminar is to discuss the project findings before the panel of experts and to get their valuable feedbacks. Since the research team is suggesting on the improvement of situation relating to ADR and legal aid in West Bengal, search for a better working model is on. Hence, all the papers to be deliberated in the Seminar would carry the objective of outlining such a model.

### **Call for Papers:**

Those who are interested in presenting a paper on any area of ADR or legal aid must send an abstract of 600 words along with a brief biographical note (not more than 200 words) on or before 25 April 2017. Submission should only be on any good model of ADR or legal aid, which is practically working in any part of India or in other jurisdictions. Preference would be given to those papers that incorporate empirical method of research. The acceptance of paper for presentation would be informed by 30 April 2017. A full length paper of 4,000 - 6,000 words must be sent by 10 June 2017. If the full length paper is not submitted before the last date, authors will not be allowed to present the paper in the Seminar. Submission of the full length paper would be presumed as unconditional consent of the author/s for its possible use in the preparation of research report by the organisers. Submission of abstracts and full length papers must be made through e-mail to Dr. Shyamala D. at [shala\\_llm@yahoo.co.in](mailto:shala_llm@yahoo.co.in). All submissions must be made in Microsoft word.

### **Participants' Registration:**

There is no registration fee for the Seminar. However, the participation to the Seminar is limited to 50 participants (excluding the paper presenters). All interested participants must register by sending a mail to Ms. Amrisha Tripathi at [amrishat@nujs.edu](mailto:amrishat@nujs.edu). Registration would be done on first-come first-served basis until the seats are filled.

## **Financial Support:**

Limited financial support is available on competitive basis to meet the transportation and accommodation expenses of outstation participants presenting their papers. Financial support to the extent of Rs. 30,000 (Indian Rupees thirty thousand only) would be available to selected four international participants. Financial support to the extent of Rs. 10,000 (Indian Rupees ten thousand only) would be available to selected four national level participants. Decision on financial support would be made on the basis of quality of the paper and its relevance to the project work. Those who would like to avail the financial support must submit their full length paper by 15 May 2017 along with a request for financial support highlighting their expected expenditure to enable the organising committee to take an early decision. Decision of the organising committee on all aspects shall be final and binding.

Financial support, if granted, shall be collected by the recipient during the time of seminar by providing adequate proof of identity.

<u>Last date for submission of Abstract:</u>	25 April 2017
<u>Last date for submission of Full Paper:</u>	10 June 2017
<u>Last date for submission of Full Paper for Seeking Financial Support:</u>	15 May 2017
<u>E-mail id for Submissions:</u>	shala_ilm@yahoo.co.in
<u>E-mail id for Registration by Participants:</u>	amrishat@nujs.edu
<u>Contact Number:</u>	+9133-23357379 / 0765 (extn 1180) +91 8617705282
<u>Conference Date:</u>	24 June 2017
<u>Conference Venue:</u>	The WB National University of Juridical Sciences 12, LB Block, Sec III, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700098

\* Note: Certificate would be issued to only those participants who attend all sessions.

## **Seminar Coordinator**

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