



National Legal Services Day

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The National Legal Services Day is celebrated on 9th November to spread awareness for ensuring reasonable fair and justice procedure for all citizens.

- National Legal Services Day (NLSD) was first started by **Supreme Court of India in 1995** to provide help and support to poor and weaker sections of the society.
- Free legal services are provided in matters before Civil, Criminal and Revenue Courts, Tribunals or any other authority exercising judicial or quasi judicial functions.
- **Objectives of Legal Services Authorities are:**
 - Provide free legal aid and advice.
 - Spread legal awareness.
 - Organise lok adalats.
 - Promote settlements of disputes through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Mechanisms. Various kinds of ADR mechanisms are **Arbitration, Conciliation, Judicial settlement including settlement through Lok Adalat, or Mediation.**
 - Provide compensation to victims of crime.
- **Persons Eligible for Free Legal Services:**
 - Women and Children
 - Persons with disability
 - Member of Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes
 - Industrial Workmen
 - Persons in custody
 - Victims of natural disasters, ethnic/caste violence, industrial disaster
 - Victims of Human Trafficking or Begar
 - Persons with an annual income of less than Rs. 1,00,000/- or as notified by the Central/State Governments.

- **Legal Services Institutions for providing Free Legal Services:**
 - National Level : National Legal Services Authority
 - State Level : State Legal Services Authority. It is **headed by the Chief Justice of the State High Court** who is its **Patron-in-Chief**. A **servicing or retired Judge of the High Court** is nominated as its **Executive Chairman**.
 - District Level : District Legal Services Authority. The **District Judge of the District** is its **ex-officio Chairman**.
 - Taluka/ Sub-Division Level : Taluka/ Sub-Divisional Legal Services Committee. It is headed by a **senior Civil Judge**.
 - High Court : High Court Legal Services Committee
 - Supreme Court: Supreme Court Legal Services Committee
- In carrying out all these responsibilities, NALSA works in close coordination with the various State Legal Services Authorities, District Legal Services Authorities and other agencies for a regular exchange of relevant information, monitoring and updating on the implementation and progress of the various schemes in vogue and fostering a strategic and coordinated approach to ensure smooth and streamlined functioning of the various agencies and stakeholders.

National Legal Services Authority

- The National Legal Services Authority (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 **Chief Justice of India is the Patron-in-Chief** and the **second senior most Judge of Supreme Court** of India is the **Executive Chairman** of the Authority.
- **Article 39 A** of the Constitution provides for free legal aid to the poor and weaker sections of the society, to promote justice on the basis of equal opportunity. **Article 14** and **Article 22 (1)**, obligates State to ensure equality before law.
- It can be noted that the role played by NALSA and its networks is very much relevant to achieving the **Sustainable Development Goal-16** , which seeks to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels".