

Report on Strengthening Family Justice through ADR and Effective Adjudication Eastern Zone Regional Conference on Family Courts

“ADR Versus Adjudication in Family Disputes: Challenges and Way Forward”

Date: 26th and 27th September, 2026

Venue: Hotel Radisson Blu, Guwahati

Introduction

The Committee for Family Court Matters, Supreme Court of India, in association with the Gauhati High Court, organised the Eastern Zone Regional Conference on Family Courts on 26th and 27th September, 2026, at Hotel Radisson Blu, Guwahati.

The Conference provided an important platform for deliberation on contemporary issues relating to family disputes, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), adjudication and the



effective functioning of Family Courts. It brought together members of the judiciary, legal professionals, mediators and others to exchange experiences and identify practical approaches for strengthening family justice.

Participation of SLSA, West Bengal

The **State Legal Services Authority, West Bengal** was represented by **Smt. Moon Chakraborty, Ld. Member Secretary, SLSA, West Bengal.**

The participation provided an opportunity to interact with judicial and legal services authorities



from different parts of the Eastern Zone and to gain insights into evolving practices relating to mediation, conciliation, family dispute resolution and access to justice. The participation was particularly significant in view of the role of Legal Services Authorities in promoting ADR, legal aid, mediation and accessible justice. The Conference facilitated the exchange of practical experiences regarding challenges in resolving family disputes and the need for coordinated efforts among Family Courts, Legal Services Authorities, mediators and other stakeholders.

Key Deliberations

The Conference focused on the central theme of **“ADR Versus Adjudication in Family Disputes: Challenges and Way Forward”**, with discussions on the appropriate balance between consensual dispute resolution and judicial adjudication.

The deliberations covered important areas including domestic violence, welfare of senior citizens, marriage and divorce, restitution of conjugal rights, child custody, shared parenting and visitation, maintenance and alimony, division and partition of property, as well as issues relating to the human resources and infrastructure of Family Courts.

The discussions emphasised that family disputes require an approach that is not only legally sound but also sensitive to the emotional, social and personal circumstances of the parties. Mediation and other ADR mechanisms were recognised as valuable tools for facilitating communication, reducing hostility and encouraging mutually acceptable solutions wherever appropriate.

Strengthening Family Courts and ADR Mechanisms

The Conference highlighted the need for strengthening the institutional framework of Family Courts through adequate infrastructure, trained human resources, effective support systems and accessible mediation facilities. The deliberations also underscored the importance of improving coordination between Family Courts, Legal Services Authorities, mediation centres and other stakeholders, so that parties to family disputes can receive timely assistance and appropriate opportunities for amicable settlement.

Exchange of Experiences and Best Practices

A significant feature of the Conference was the opportunity for participants from different jurisdictions to share experiences, challenges and best practices in dealing with family disputes.

The interaction enabled the representatives to gain a broader understanding of emerging approaches in family dispute resolution and the effective use of ADR mechanisms. Such exchange of knowledge is valuable in strengthening existing legal services initiatives and improving the delivery of family justice.

Concluding Deliberations

The Conference concluded with an emphasis on the need for continued institutional collaboration and sharing of best practices for improving the functioning of Family Courts.

The concluding discussions reaffirmed that ADR and adjudication should be viewed as complementary mechanisms, with mediation and other



consensual processes being encouraged wherever suitable, while adjudication remains essential in matters requiring judicial determination.

Conclusion

The Eastern Zone Regional Conference on Family Courts served as a meaningful platform for examining the challenges and opportunities in the field of family justice. It highlighted the



importance of combining effective adjudication with appropriate ADR mechanisms to ensure that family disputes are resolved in a timely, fair and sensitive manner.

The participation of the Ld. Member Secretary, SLISA, West Bengal along with the Ld. Family Court Judges

from District Judiciary and other Ld. Judicial Officers contributed to the exchange of practical experiences and perspectives on strengthening mediation, legal services and access to justice. The Conference reinforced the need for continued collaboration among the judiciary, Family Courts, Legal Services Authorities, mediators and other stakeholders towards building a more responsive, accessible and effective system of family justice.