TELANGANA STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY, HYDERABAD
PERMANENT LOK ADALAT

1. What is a Permanent Lok Adalat?

Permanent Lok Adalat (PLA) is a permanent forum established under Section 22-B of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, for the settlement of disputes relating to Public Utility Services through conciliation and, where necessary, through the process of adjudication.

2. What are the Public Utility Services?

The following are some of the services covered:

- Transport services from the carriage of passengers or goods by air, road or water; or
- Postal, telegraph or telephone service, or
- Supply of power, light or water to the public by any establishment; or
- System of public conservancy or sanitation; or
- Services in hospital or dispensary; or
- Insurance services; or
- Banking and other financial institutions; or
- NREG scheme; or
- Education or educational institutions; or
- Housing and Real Estate service.
- Any other service notified by the Central or State Government as a Public Utility Service.

3. Composition.

A Permanent Lok Adalat consists of:

- A Chairman who is or has been a District Judge, Additional District Judge or has held a higher judicial office.
- Two other persons having adequate experience in public utility services.

4. Jurisdiction.

- It deals with disputes relating to Public Utility Services.
- The value of the subject matter of the dispute must not exceed ₹1 crore, as prescribed under the Act.
- An application can be made before approaching a regular court.
- After an application is made to the Permanent Lok-Adalat for public utility services, no party to that application shall invoke jurisdiction of any court int he same dispute.
- It does not have jurisdiction over offences that are not compoundable under law.

5. Procedure

- The parties may approach the Permanent Lok Adalat before the dispute is brought before a court.
- No fee is required to be paid for settlement of cases before Permanent Lok Adalat.
- The Permanent Lok-Adalat first attempts to bring about a settlement through conciliation.
- If the parties fail to arrive at a settlement, the Permanent Lok-Adalat decides the dispute on merits, subject to the provisions of the Act.
- The proceedings are guided by the principles of natural justice, objectivity, fairness and equity.

6. Nature of Award

- The award of the Permanent Lok Adalat is final and binding on all parties.
- It is deemed to be a decree of a civil court.
- No appeal lies against such an award.

7. Benefits

- Speedy and inexpensive justice.
- Avoidance of lengthy court proceedings.
- Settlement through mutual understanding.
- Simple and flexible procedure.
- Access to justice for ordinary citizens.

Objective:

To provide speedy, affordable and effective justice in disputes relating to Public Utility Services.

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"Access to Justice is a Right – Legal Aid Makes it a Reality."