

ABSTRACT

In every society, presence of conflict or disputes is very obvious. The sooner these disputes are resolved, the better it is for all the people living in the society. In India, the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary are the three main organs of the Government. Among these three organs the Judiciary is responsible for adjudicating the laws made for the smooth functioning of the Government. The Judiciary is responsible for settling disputes in accordance with the law. Today's judicial system in India is based on the British legal system which basically follows adversarial principles of common law system. However, the perceived limitation of the formal adjudication process have made the policy makers, judges, lawyers and academicians to think about alternatives means of resolution of disputes in a timely, inexpensive and humane manner. It has given rise to Lok Adalat with other alternative dispute resolution mechanisms like Arbitration, Mediation, Conciliation etc. The Preamble of the Constitution of India states about promoting equality and justice-social, economic and political. Justice can be served if those in need can afford to go to court and receive free legal assistance and speedy justice. Lok Adalat which was given statutory recognition under the Legal Services Authorities, 1987 provides a less expensive, speedy justice delivery system where disputes are resolved between parties through compromise or settlement between the parties. The role of Judiciary is also noteworthy in the implementation and functioning of Lok Adalat. This research work is based on both doctrinal and empirical study. In this research paper, the researcher makes an attempt to analyze the functioning of Lok Adalat in Sonitpur District of Assam and on the basis of the data collected through interview and questionnaire from various respondents, the researcher tries to give some recommendations regarding the Lok Adalat system in the District.

Keywords: Lok Adalat; Judiciary; alternative dispute resolution; speedy justice; compromise; settlement