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**U.T of JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY**  
JDA Complex Janipur, Jammu

The Chairman

District Legal Services Authority (ALL).

No: SLSA/LS/NLA/2020/09.

Dated: 31.07.2020

Subject: First E-Lok Adalat or VC Lok Adalat in UT's of J&K & Ladakh  
on Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2020.

Sir

As the entire world is passing through an unprecedented health situation due to ill effects of COVID-19 Pandemic, poor litigants in our country are also suffering due to suspension of regular functioning of subordinate Courts. Litigants, mainly claimants of Motor Accident Claim cases, Cheque Bounce cases, matrimonial disputes, etc. are suffering a lot. Moreover, the entire citizenry including the above class of litigants are in deep financial trouble. Therefore, moving forward to achieve the goal of Access to Justice for all and to help the poor litigants tide over their financial problems and untold mental stress, the J&K State Legal Services Authority, under the able guidance of its Patron-in-Chief, Hon'ble Ms. Justice Gita Mittal, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and under instructions of Hon'ble Shri Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, High Court of J&K & Executive Chairman of the J&K State Legal Services Authority, has decided to organise E-Lok Adalat/Video Conferencing Lok Adalat to be conducted exclusively through different digital platform modes.

The J&K State Legal Services Authority propose to organise and conduct this E-Lok Adalat/Video Conferencing Lok Adalat in the following manner:

**Step 1:** Identify cases wherein compromise can take place. This task is to be accomplished under the direction and supervision of District Judges/Chairman of DLSAs of each district. The Principal District Judges shall hold meeting with judicial officers & DLSA Secretaries of the district to scrutinize the cases, where chances of Compromise are high. Like-wise, meetings with advocates who deal with MACT cases, NI Cases, Matrimonial disputes, etc. may also be contacted to inform about this initiative and they may be requested to inform their parties so that sincere participation of all needy litigants can be ensured. Norms of Social Distancing shall strictly be followed in all the meetings and at all different

stages of preparation of E-Lok Adalat. Secretary, DLSA's shall do all the needful in this regard.

**Step 2:** Thereafter, on the basis of number of identified cases, District Judges/Chairman of DLSAs will constitute the necessary benches capable of dealing with the identified cases through Video Conferencing or other like modes of digital platform. Looking to the number of identified cases, benches may be constituted. In this regard, rationale as to the required number of benches is to be applied by District Judges/ Chairman of DLSAs. One bench shall be allotted maximum 30 cases. To smoothly managing the e-links of all the benches across the UT's of J&K & Ladakh, it is also requested to keep check on constitution of unnecessary extra benches.

**Step 3:** Once cases are identified, Secretary, DLSA shall ensure that application form of compromise be filled up to 10.08.2020. Format of Application forms are being duly enclosed. In enclosed format, we have created boxes in the upper part, wherein, on rotation basis the appropriate bench shall be tick marked by the Secretary, DLSA at the time of getting the application form filled up and, at the same time, the concerned parties and their advocates shall necessarily be communicated about the bench allotted to them so that they may have ready information as to which bench they will need to get themselves connected on the day of Lok Adalat. In this regard, Help desk may also be constituted. One or two helpline numbers can also be created in each district and information about the same may be given wide publicity.

**Step 4: a) Total Users less than or equal to seven:**

As there is a connectivity issue in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and also the fact that in J&K & Ladakh's rural and remotest areas, people are not literate enough to download and use Video Conferencing apps and people frequently use Whats-App and are very well aware about the manner of using it, hence the mode of video conferencing through Whats-app Video calling or group calling shall be used to achieve the object of this E-Lok Adalat during the on-going Corona Pandemic.

**b) Total Users more than seven:**

In cases, where number of parties are more than 7, the Lok Adalat can be held through VC using **Google Meet application**. In that case,

technical staff shall generate link case-wise, and shall send the same to the parties through their whatsapp number.

In this case, main proceedings of the case can be recorded through any of the available desktop recording software by the technical team of the Court at the Court end only. The parties desirous of appearing in Lok Adalat through this mode have to ensure that their connectivity is robust, VC app is downloaded and they have some technological knowhow in connecting through VC. VC in the present case, shall also be initiated, controlled and terminated at the Bench end only.

**Step 5:** For ensuring smooth functioning of E-Lok Adalat, it is imperative to maintain a robust communication mechanism between the benches, respective DLSAs, parties/litigants, Advocates and Court staff at the district level.

Broadly, the respective DLSAs of the district shall ensure the publicity, availability and circulation of the template application form of compromise amongst the advocates and interested parties. This can be achieved by establishing synergy with the respective Bar Associations as well as ensuring its uploading on the District Court website. The District Judges/Chairman DLSAs shall nominate a Nodal Officer/Official for the purpose of smoothly managing the receipt and processing of the application form of compromise and for preparing the cause list.

The application form of compromise duly completed in all respects and containing all details with mobile numbers and email ids of parties/litigants etc. shall be received by the Nodal Officer/Official on the email id/whatsapp maintained exclusively for the said purpose.

Bench wise cause list of the cases in respect of which the application forms of compromise have been received, shall then be prepared under the supervision of Nodal Officers/Officials who shall thereafter, place the same before the District Judges/Chairman of DLSA for consideration and for appropriate assignment to the respective Bench.

Once the benches are constituted and cases assigned to the benches, Whats-App groups, case wise, consisting of Presiding officer/Members of the bench, parties & advocates of the cases fixed in the concerned bench can be created to smoothen with all sort of necessary communication pertaining to E-Lok Adalat.

Mobile numbers, on which whatsapp is enabled, of all the stake holders shall be collected well in advance before the Lok Adalat by the concerned Staff for creation of whatsapp group.

On the Whats-App groups thus created, all the information about the cases, including the cause list of the Lok Adalat, can be shared.

Parties can also contact the office of DLSAs or technical staff of District Courts for any information with respect to the Lok Adalat as well as for registering their mobile numbers enabled with whatsapp. Contact details of DLSA officials as well as the technical staff of District Courts shall be uploaded on official website of the District Court concerned for information of all the stakeholders.

Complete database of the names of the parties, advocates, their mobile numbers, case details with which the parties and advocates are associated shall be maintained by the staff.

**Step 6:** Video Conferencing for the Lok Adalat shall be initiated from the Court/Bench side only and the parties along with their advocates from any place convenient to them shall be able to participate in the Lok Adalat.

Parties can contact Help desks as well as DLSA staff in case of difficulty in joining in Lok Adalat through virtual mode.

The bench shall satisfy itself that parties have duly understood the terms of settlement and they have entered into the settlement voluntarily and, thereafter, pass the appropriate award.

Recording of main part of the conversation with the parties with the help of screen recording software/application may also be captured with the help of technical staff posted in the Courts. The recording can be thereafter saved on a CD which can be attached with the main case file for future use/reference.

To avoid any kind of interruption in the working of the bench due to electricity issues or other like issues, every bench may also be provided with add on 10 GB or 12 GB data plan of the best network prevailing in the area. Help desk may also be provided with 10 GB or 12 GB add on data plan. (Cost of 10 GB or 12 GB data plan is reported to between RS. 98/= to RS. 125/=)

**Step 7:** For the information of the parties concerned, scanned Copy of the award shall be sent to the concerned advocates/parties on their Email I'd or on their whatsapp number. Original hard copy of order may subsequently be collected from DLSA office.

**Note:**

1. As the normal functioning of subordinate courts has been suspended vide orders & circulars issued by the Hon'ble High Court of J&K from time to time, and as per Government Guidelines, all norms of social distancing need to be strictly complied with, therefore, Advocates and their parties shall be allowed to make their

appearance only through virtual mode. Physical appearance in the court room shall be barred.

2. Assistance of PLVs residing in the remote areas may also be taken in establishing the link of the parties with the concerned bench.
3. Recording of the proceedings at the party or at Advocate end is not permissible.

Sd/-  
**(M. K. Sharma)**  
Member Secretary