Polity & Governance · GS - II

Discuss the role of Lok Adalats in improving access to justice in India. What are the legal implications of the finality of their awards?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Alternative Dispute Resolution, Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, Section 21, finality of awards, consent, judicial pendency, access to justice.

Model Answer

Introduction:

Lok Adalats are an important alternative dispute resolution mechanism established under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. They promote amicable settlements and accessible justice.

Main Body:

Role in Access to Justice

1. Affordable resolution: They provide an accessible mechanism for settling eligible disputes without lengthy litigation.
2. Reduced pendency: Settlements help decrease the workload of regular courts.
3. Mutual agreement: They encourage parties to resolve disputes through compromise.

Legal Implications of Finality

Under Section 21 of the Act, a Lok Adalat award is deemed to be a civil court decree and is final and binding on the parties. No regular appeal lies against it. Accepting the benefits of a settlement and subsequently challenging it may undermine its finality, particularly where the challenge is inconsistent with the party's conduct.

However, allegations of fraud, coercion or absence of genuine consent must be assessed according to law; the principle of finality does not eliminate all scope for judicial scrutiny.

Conclusion:

Lok Adalats strengthen access to justice by combining speedy settlement with legal certainty. Their credibility depends on voluntary consent, fair procedures and appropriate judicial oversight.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP