SUPREME COURT *Chronicle*

Issue XXX | April 2026



Highlights of the Issue

- Engagements on the Official Visit to Bhutan
- Engagements on the Official Visit to Leh, Ladakh
- SCBA's 1st National Conference - 2026

Chief Justice's Corner



Dear Readers,

The April edition of the *Supreme Court Chronicle* offers a comprehensive look at the initiatives taken throughout March to bridge the gap between complex legal processes and the common man. It reflects a month dedicated to structural reform, inclusive outreach, and the modernisation of our judicial landscape.

This edition details our bilateral engagements with the Kingdom of Bhutan, centering on the evolution of a justice delivery system that is both technologically advanced and socially inclusive. By leveraging initiatives such as the *National Judicial Data Grid* and *Tele-Law Services*, we aim to simplify legal complexity and bring the 'people-centred court' closer to every citizen.

This edition also features the Supreme Court Bar Association's (SCBA) 1st National Conference held in Bengaluru. Under the theme *"Reimagining Judicial Governance: Strengthening Institutions for Democratic Justice",* the conference provided a vital platform for the Bench and the Bar to deliberate on transformative judicial reforms, the role of technology and AI, and the necessity of building more inclusive legal institutions.

Furthermore, the Chronicle documents the visit to Leh and Kargil for the inauguration of new District Court Complexes and the Ladakh Legal Services Authority. These facilities ensure that modern judicial infrastructure reaches the nation's most remote regions, fulfilling the constitutional promise of access to justice even in the most challenging terrains.

These initiatives represent a concerted move toward reimagining judicial governance, ensuring that our institutions are equipped with the technological and physical infrastructure necessary to uphold the principles of democratic justice in an ever-evolving world.

Happy reading!

Justice Surya Kant
Chief Justice of India

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Contents

1.	Global Engagements	4
2.	Visits of Delegations to the Supreme Court of India	7
3.	National Engagements	11
4.	Continuity of Constitutional Wisdom: Interaction with Justice M N Venkatachaliah, Former Chief Justice of India	29
5.	Bar News Bulletin	31
6.	Legal Aid	37
7.	Fresh from the Bench	39
8.	Training Hub	67
9.	Bid Adieu	68
10	Beyond the Court: Creativity Abound	70

Global Engagements

Engagements on the Official Visit to Bhutan



03-06 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, with Justice Norbu Tshering, Chief Justice of Bhutan, during his visit to the Supreme Court of Bhutan, Thimphu

03-06 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, undertook an official visit to the Kingdom of Bhutan marking a significant step in further strengthening judicial cooperation and bilateral ties between the two nations. The three-day official visit focused on strengthening the long-standing institutional cooperation, exchanging legal knowledge, and enhancing capacity-building. A primary objective of the engagements was to explore avenues for providing comprehensive technical assistance to support the Judiciary of Bhutan in digitalising the delivery of justice. Throughout the visit, both sides reaffirmed the deep cultural, spiritual, and intellectual bonds shared by the two countries.

During his stay in Thimphu, Justice Surya Kant engaged in several high-level meetings. He received an audience with His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, where the two leaders exchanged views on further enhancing bilateral ties. Justice Surya Kant also met with Justice Norbu Tshering, Chief Justice of Bhutan, to cement institutional partnerships. Additionally, he held extensive deliberations with Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan, addressing shared priorities such as judicial cooperation, legal education, and the ongoing technological challenges facing modern legal frameworks.

A major focus of the discussions with both the King and the Prime Minister was the emergent proliferation of cybercrimes and transnational criminal activities. Both sides acknowledged that rapid technological advancements have enabled digital fraud, which often targets vulnerable



03-06 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan during his visit to Bhutan

populations such as the elderly and economically disadvantaged. Recognising that conventional law-making struggles to keep pace with these rapid developments, the leaders emphasised the need for judicial systems to continuously evolve. Strengthening cross-border cooperation, expanding judicial awareness, and building technological capacity were identified as key priorities for preventing and prosecuting such offenses.

In his keynote address, Justice Surya Kant explored the shared philosophical foundations of justice in India and Bhutan, underscoring the idea that law must reflect the voice, values, and lived realities of the people it serves. He situated this understanding



03-06 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with his spouse Smt Savita Vashisht and Mr Sandeep Arya, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Bhutan met with, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, during his visit to Bhutan



03-06 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, planting a sapling during his visit to the Supreme Court of Bhutan, Thimphu

within the broader constitutional and civilisational traditions of *Dharma* and *Nyaya*, while drawing parallels with Bhutanese legal thought, to emphasise that justice is both a moral responsibility and a societal commitment.

Building on India's experience, the address proposed practical and scalable reforms for Bhutan, including the establishment of community-based digital justice kiosks, simplified bilingual procedural systems, and tele-law services to strengthen early legal assistance. It concluded with a call for coordinated institutional effort among the judiciary, executive, legal academia, and the Bar to ensure that technological advancement deepens, rather than dilutes, the foundational ideals of equity, accessibility, and human dignity in the justice system.

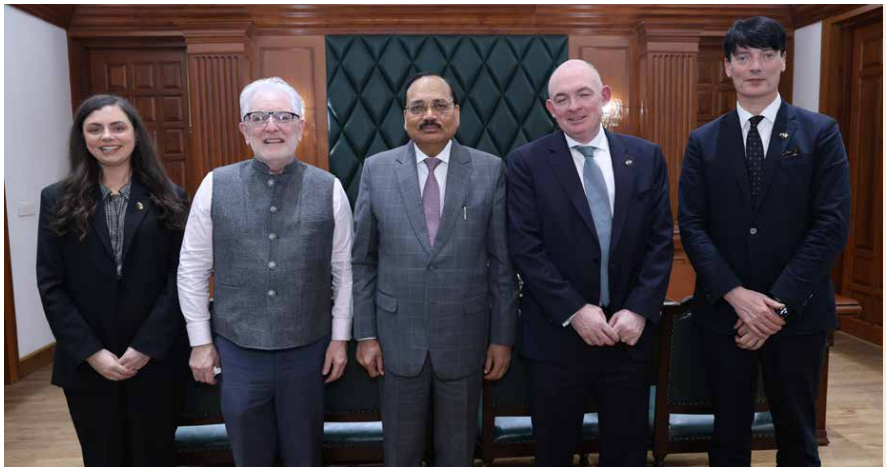
Programme at Yale Law School, U S A



25-26 March 2026: Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the Programme organised by the Yale Law School, as part of the Ludwig Program in Public Sector Leadership, part of the Tsai Leadership Program, and interacted with law students regarding career, judicial system and path to leadership at Yale Law School, New Haven, Connecticut, U S A

Visits of Delegations
to the Supreme Court of India

Visit of the Irish Delegation



16 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; along with Mr Rossa Fanning, Attorney General of Ireland; Mr Kevin Kelly, Ambassador of Ireland to India; Ms Jessica O'Neil, Chief Officer, Office of Attorney General of Ireland; Mr Raymond Mullen, Deputy Ambassador, Embassy of Ireland, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

16 March 2026: The Supreme Court of India hosted a 4-member delegation from Ireland. The delegation was led by Mr Rossa Fanning, Attorney General of Ireland.

During their visit, the delegation toured key institutional facilities within the Supreme Court premises, including the National Judicial Museum and Archive and the War Room located in the Main Building. The delegates were also accorded the opportunity to observe live court proceedings in the Chief Justice's Court, offering them valuable insight into the functioning of the Indian judiciary.

The other members of the delegation included Jessica O'Neil, Chief Officer, Office of the Attorney General of Ireland; Raymond Mullen, Deputy Ambassador, Embassy of Ireland, New Delhi; and Shriya Singh, Senior Policy Officer, Embassy of Ireland, New Delhi.

Subsequently, the delegation, along with Kevin Kelly, Ambassador of Ireland to India, held a meeting with the Chief Justice of India at his Residential Office. The interaction provided a platform for meaningful exchange on judicial processes, and strengthening bilateral legal ties between India and Ireland.

16 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, presented a token to Mr Rossa Fanning, Attorney General of Ireland and Mr Kevin Kelly, Ambassador of Ireland to India, as a gesture of mutual respect and cooperation at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



Visit of Delegation from the Bar Association of Sri Lanka



10 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, with Mr Rajeev Amarasuriya, President of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka and Raj Mohan Balendra, Chairman, Organising Committee, during the meeting with the 22-member delegation from the Bar Association of Sri Lanka

10 March 2026: The Supreme Court of India hosted a 22-member delegation from the Bar Association of Sri Lanka led by Mr Rajeev Amarasuriya, President of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka, emphasising the deep civilisational ties and shared commitment to justice and the rule of law between the two nations.

During the visit, the delegation was accorded a formal meeting with Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India at the Conference Hall of the Administrative Buildings Complex. The meeting was also attended by Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India, along with Mr Prashant Kumar, President, Bar Association of India; Mr Vipin Nair, President, Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association; Mr Rahul Kaushik, Senior Advocate and Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association; and office bearers of the Bar Association of India.

The visit offered the delegates a comprehensive immersion into the Indian judicial system, beginning with the observation of court proceedings in the Chief Justice's Court. This was followed by an extensive tour of the National Judicial Museum and Archive, the War Room, and the Judges Library. The delegation also visited the Main Building and the construction site of the new Supreme Court complex.



10 March 2026: A group photo of the 22-member delegation from the Bar Association of Sri Lanka

Delegation from International Trademark Association



11 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India with Ms Deborah Hampton, 2026 President of INTA during the visit



11 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India with Mr Etienne Sanz de Acedo, Chief Executive Officer of INTA during the visit

11 March 2026: The Supreme Court of India hosted a 5-member delegation from the International Trademark Association (INTA), New York, USA. Led by Mr Etienne Sanz de Acedo, Chief Executive Officer of INTA, the visit highlighted the growing importance of intellectual property rights and international legal standards in the globalised era.

The delegation, which included Ms Heather Steinmeyer, Chief Policy Officer; Ms Deborah Hampton, 2026 President of INTA; Ms Shwetasree Majumder, Managing Partner of Fidus Law Chambers; and Ms Gauri Kumar, India and South Asia Representative, INTA had a meeting with Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India.

In addition to the formal meeting, the delegates were given an insightful tour of the National Judicial Museum and Archive. A guided tour of the Main Building of the Supreme Court was also organised, familiarising the visitors with the architectural heritage and the institutional framework of the apex court.



11 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, Justice Manmohan and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judges, Supreme Court of India interacted with the 5-member delegation from INTA

Visit of the International Legal Delegation



12 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with the members of the International Legal Delegation at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

12 March 2026: The Supreme Court of India hosted a 30-member International Legal Delegation. The delegation comprised eminent lawyers and members of the judiciary from the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

During their visit, the delegation was accorded a meeting with Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, wherein discussions were held on various aspects of judicial functioning, comparative legal systems, and avenues for strengthening international legal cooperation.

The delegation also visited the National Judicial Museum and Archive and the War Room, gaining valuable insights into the rich constitutional and judicial history of India. A guided tour of the Main Building of the Supreme Court of India was also organised, familiarising the delegates with the institutional framework and heritage of the apex court. The visit served as a significant platform for fostering dialogue, exchange of ideas, and strengthening ties between the legal fraternities of India, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.



12 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, interacted with the members of the International Legal Delegation at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

National Engagements

Engagements at Andhra Pradesh

State Level Symposium on Mediation at Vijayawada



01 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice S V N Bhatti, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judges, Supreme Court of India at the State Level Symposium on Mediation at Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

01 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India graced the State Level Symposium on Mediation at Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. The Symposium was also attended by Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice S V N Bhatti, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judges, Supreme Court of India.

Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, in his address emphasised the need to fundamentally reorient the justice system from adversarial outcomes to dialogue-driven resolution, positioning mediation as the "first language of justice". Drawing from India's civilisational traditions, he observed that conciliation is not a modern import but an inherited strength, deeply embedded in community practices, religious texts, and historical modes of dispute resolution.

Concluding, he urged the Bench and Bar to move beyond viewing mediation as a secondary mechanism, and instead embed it as a central pillar in the architecture of justice delivery.

01 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India addressed the gathering at the State Level Symposium on Mediation "From Judgement to Conversation: Making Dialogue the First Language of Justice" organised by Andhra Pradesh State Legal Services Authority, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh



Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of Andhra Pradesh Judicial Academy at Amaravati



01 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice S V N Bhatti, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur, Chief Justice, High Court of Andhra Pradesh and Justice Ravi Nath Tilhari, Judge, High Court of Andhra Pradesh at the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of Andhra Pradesh Judicial Academy at Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh

Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of Court Complex at Tirupati



01 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice S V N Bhatti, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur, Chief Justice, High Court of Andhra Pradesh; Justice Donadi Ramesh, Justice Ninala Jayasurya, Justice Maheswara Rao Kuncheam, Judges, Justice T C D Sekhar, Judges, High Court of Andhra Pradesh; Justice Aruna Sarika, Principal District Judge, Chittoor District; President of the Tirupati Bar Association, Senior Advocate Shri Gotti Gajendra at the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of Court Complex at Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

India International Disputes Week 2026



07 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice Rajesh Bindal, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice, High Court of Punjab & Haryana, Justice Lisa Gill, Judge, High Court of Andhra Pradesh; Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India, during the Indian International Disputes Week Day 1"India's Cross-Border Disputes Services: 2026-2030 Outlook for Arbitration, Litigation and Mediation" at Chandigarh, Punjab

07 March 2026: The first edition of the India International Disputes Week (IIDW) 2026 was held from 7th to 11th March 2026 in Chandigarh, bringing together members of the Bench, Bar, policymakers, international practitioners, academicians, and young lawyers on a common platform dedicated to advancing India's dispute resolution ecosystem.

Conceived as a national–international non-profit initiative, IIDW seeks to strengthen India's position as a credible and future-ready hub for litigation, arbitration, and mediation, aligning global best practices with the practical realities of Indian law and procedure.

The inaugural ceremony was graced by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with other distinguished dignitaries including Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice, High Court of the Punjab & Haryana; Mr R Venkataramani, the Attorney General for India; and Mr Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India.

Justice Surya Kant delivered the keynote address wherein he reflected on India's expanding role in global commerce and the corresponding need for robust, credible dispute resolution systems capable of sustaining international confidence. He emphasised that while legislative reform and judicial discipline have strengthened India's arbitration framework, credibility is ultimately measured not by statutory design but by consistent institutional performance. Investors, he noted, seek assurance that disputes will be resolved efficiently, fairly, and predictably, making trust the true currency of cross-border dispute resolution.

He highlighted the complementary roles of arbitration and mediation within a modern dispute resolution ecosystem, observing that while arbitration delivers finality, mediation preserves relationships and enables flexible, interest-based outcomes. Institutions such as the Chandigarh



07 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice Rajesh Bindal, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice, High Court of Punjab & Haryana, Justice Lisa Gill, Judge, High Court of Andhra Pradesh; Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India, at the Inauguration Ceremony of Chandigarh International Arbitration Centre at Chandigarh, Punjab

International Arbitration Centre, he stressed, must embody neutrality, efficiency, and procedural integrity in practice, rather than remain symbolic constructs. Concluding, he underscored that India's ambition to become a global dispute resolution hub depends not on isolated reforms but on sustained institutional discipline, coherence, and performance, ensuring that the country is seen not only as a participant in global commerce, but as a trusted guardian of its disputes.

A key highlight of the event was the formal launch of the Chandigarh International Arbitration Centre (CIAC) under the aegis of the High Court of Punjab and Haryana. The Centre has been envisioned as a structured, technology-enabled institutional mechanism aimed at administering both domestic and international arbitrations with efficiency, transparency, and procedural discipline.

The five-day programme was organised around distinct thematic areas, including global dispute leadership, cross-border family and criminal law issues, civil litigation and constitutional rights, and commercial disputes such as infrastructure, energy, and trade. The sessions comprised keynote addresses, panel discussions, debates, and workshops, enabling in-depth engagement with contemporary challenges in dispute resolution.

Prominent discussions during the week addressed issues such as cross-border enforcement, international child custody, financial crime, evolving roles of courts in maintaining social trust, and emerging domains including commercial AI liability and ESG-related disputes.

In addition to academic and professional deliberations, IIDW 2026 also featured the IIDW Sports League, fostering camaraderie and engagement among members of the legal fraternity through sporting events including cricket, badminton, golf, and tennis.

The event marked a significant step in reinforcing India's institutional capacity in dispute resolution and highlighted the growing importance of collaborative dialogue between domestic and international stakeholders in shaping a robust and responsive legal framework.

First National Conference of Indian Women in Law



08 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, during the First National Conference of Indian Women in Law "Half the Nation, Half the Bench: Bridge the Gap – Balance the Bench" held at the Auditorium, Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

08 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the First National Conference of Indian Women In Law, "Half the Nation, Half the Bench: Bridge the Gap – Balance the Bench" as the Chief Guest which was organised by Ms Mahalakshmi Pavani and Ms Shobha Gupta, Senior Advocates, Supreme Court of India at the Auditorium, 3rd Floor, Block-C, Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi.

While addressing the gathering, Justice Surya Kant addressed the persistent gender imbalance within the judiciary, framing representation not as a matter of symbolic inclusion but as a question of institutional legitimacy and fairness. He observed that while the Constitution guarantees equality, structural barriers within the legal profession continue to restrict women's progression to positions of leadership, particularly on the Bench. Representation, he noted, is essential not because women apply a different standard of law, but because their lived experiences deepen the judiciary's engagement with social realities.

He highlighted the progress made in recent years, including increased representation at the district judiciary level and policy interventions such as reservations in Bar Councils. However, he cautioned against complacency, emphasising that these developments represent momentum, not completion.



08 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the First National Conference of Indian Women in Law "Half the Nation, Half the Bench: Bridge the Gap – Balance the Bench" held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



08 March 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Justice N V Ramana, Former Chief Justice of India; Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India; Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Ms Mahalakshmi Pavani, Ms Shobha Gupta, Ms Meenakshi Arora, Ms Menaka Guruswamy, Senior Advocates, during the First National Conference of Indian Women in Law "Half the Nation, Half the Bench: Bridge the Gap – Balance the Bench" held at the Auditorium, Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Strengthening the pipeline from the Bar to the Bench, he argued, requires sustained institutional effort, including proactive consideration by collegiums and a more inclusive professional environment.

The valedictory address was delivered by Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, wherein he noted that while women constitute nearly half the nation and are entering the legal profession in increasing numbers, their representation on the Bench remains limited, reflecting a continuing gap between merit and opportunity. He observed that talent is abundant, but systemic barriers often inhibit equal advancement, and underscored that a diverse judiciary strengthens public confidence and inspires future generations. He concluded by emphasising the need for fair and transparent processes, mentorship, and inclusive institutional conditions to bridge this gap in a meaningful manner.



08 March 2026: Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Vijay Bishnoi, Judges, Supreme Court of India, during the First National Conference of Indian Women in Law "Half the Nation, Half the Bench: Bridge the Gap – Balance the Bench" held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Keynote Address at NXT 2026



12 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered the Keynote Address on "Law and Justice in the Era of AI and Beyond" during the NXT 2026 Plenary Session held at New Delhi

Convocation Ceremony of Central University of Haryana



14 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the 12th Convocation Ceremony of Central University of Haryana, Mahendragarh, Haryana along with Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice, High Court of Punjab and Haryana; Justice Sanjay Vashisth, Judge, High Court of Punjab and Haryana; Prof Rajeev Ahuja, Director, Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar

"Fundamental Rights and Duties: The Present Scenario" by Himachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority



15 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India being presented with a token of gratitude by Shri Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, and Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia, Chief Justice, High Court of Himachal Pradesh at the event "Fundamental Rights and Duties: The Present Scenario" organised by Himachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority at Himachal Pradesh

15 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India graced the event "Fundamental Rights and Duties: The Present Scenario" organised by Himachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority at Himachal Pradesh. Shri Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh and Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia, Chief Justice, High Court of Himachal Pradesh also attended the event.

Justice Surya Kant, while delivering opening remarks at a legal services gathering in Himachal Pradesh, emphasised that the Constitution envisions Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Duties not as opposing principles but as part of a continuous and interdependent relationship.

He observed that rights are meaningful only when corresponding obligations are fulfilled by others, and that the Supreme Court has consistently interpreted Part III and Part IVA together to arrive at a richer understanding of constitutional guarantees, as seen in cases such as *M C Mehta v Union of India*. He highlighted that duties under Article 51A are not merely moral exhortations but form the underlying basis that enables the realisation of rights.

Referring specifically to Himachal Pradesh, he pointed out that environmental protection illustrates this relationship most vividly, where the right to life under Article 21 and the duty to protect the environment under Article 51A(g) operate together in both law and reality, with implications extending beyond the State. Addressing the evolving role of Fundamental Duties, the Chief Justice noted that while they are non-justiciable, courts increasingly employ them as interpretive tools in constitutional adjudication.

He concluded by affirming that the republic envisioned by the Constitution rests on citizens being both rights-holders and duty-bearers, and that institutions like legal services authorities play a crucial role in translating this constitutional vision into everyday reality.

Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of Family Court Complex, Rohini



16 March 2026:
Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; along with Ms Rekha Gupta, Chief Minister of Delhi; Justice Manmohan, Judge, Supreme Court of India; and Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya, Chief Justice, High Court of Delhi; Justice J V Kameswar Rao, Justice Sanjeev Narula, Justice Jyoti Singh, Judges, High Court of Delhi, attended the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony for the Construction of Family Court Complex in Rohini, New Delhi

Award Distribution Ceremony - Sports Meet, 2025



18 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; along with Justice M M Sundresh, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice P B Varale, Judges, Supreme Court of India, attended the Award Distribution Ceremony of the Sports Meet, 2025 for the officers/officials of the Registry at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

International Seminar by Union Internationale des Avocats, Paris



21 March 2026:
Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the UIA Seminar on Artificial Intelligence "Prevention and Resolution of Disputes" at Karnataka Judicial Academy, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Ramaiah International Moot and Arbitration Conference



21 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, in conversation with Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the event

21 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India graced the Ramaiah International Moot and Arbitration Conference (RIMAC), 2026 organised by Ramaiah College of Law, Bengaluru along with Justice B V Nagarathna and Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Judges, Supreme Court of India. The conference forms part of the inaugural edition of RIMAC and is organised around the theme "ADR for All: Strengthening Arbitration and Mediation Across India's Justice Landscape".

Structured through five thematic panel discussions, the conference explored contemporary developments and challenges in arbitration and mediation. Deliberations focused on the need to democratise ADR by expanding its reach beyond urban commercial hubs and strengthening grassroots dispute resolution frameworks. Particular emphasis was laid on the early implementation of the Mediation Act, 2023, with discussions examining both the opportunities it presents and the practical challenges encountered in its enforcement.

Adopting a moderated panel format, each session facilitated in-depth expert discussions followed by interactive question-and-answer segments, fostering meaningful engagement between participants and leading voices in the ADR domain. The conference marked an important step towards strengthening the accessibility, efficiency, and inclusivity of dispute resolution mechanisms in India.



21 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice B V Nagarathna, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice, High Court of Karnataka; Justice Mohan Peiris, Former Chief Justice of Sri Lanka, during the Ramaiah International Moot and Arbitration Conference (RIMAC), 2026 organised by Ramaiah College of Law, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Advancing Access to Justice: Visit to Leh, Ladakh



27-29 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, was greeted with a ceremonial Guard of Honour and a vibrant display of local culture upon arriving in Leh, Ladakh

27-29 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, embarked on an official visit to the Union Territory of Ladakh to inaugurate key judicial infrastructure and strengthen institutional access to justice in the region. Upon his arrival in Leh, he was given a ceremonial Guard of Honour and a traditional welcome highlighting Ladakh's rich cultural heritage. He was received by Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, and Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, alongside companion judges, military dignitaries, and senior civil and police officials.

The main objective of the visit was the inauguration of vital judicial complexes designed to provide state-of-the-art facilities for litigants and legal professionals. Justice Surya Kant inaugurated the newly constructed District Court Complex in Kargil, an event that was conducted virtually from Leh due to inclement weather conditions. The event marked the opening of a modern judicial facility designed to serve a region situated more than 2,600 metres above sea level. Justice Surya Kant acknowledged the extraordinary endurance of the people of Kargil, who thrive in an unforgiving terrain. He emphasised that the Constitution's promise of equal access to justice is not a privilege for city-dwellers. While the previous court was established in 2001, Justice Surya Kant pointed out that population growth and increased legal awareness necessitated new infrastructure. He argued that modern facilities are a functional prerequisite, not a luxury, for a growing volume of litigation. Justice Surya Kant paid tribute to the unique hardships faced by litigants and judicial officers in Kargil, who must contend with extreme weather and months of snow-induced isolation. He stressed that the courthouse must remain dignified and humane to honour the effort litigants make to reach it. He concluded by stating that the true foundation of a nation's justice system is built in its district courts. He expressed hope that the new complex would

27-29 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, inaugurated District Court Complex, Kargil, in the presence of Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, and Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh



reflect the State's faith in the local community and congratulated the judiciary, the Bar, and the administration on this achievement.

The visit also marked the inauguration of the new District Court Complex at Leh and the office of the Ladakh Legal Services Authority. Addressing the gathering, Justice Surya Kant underscored the critical need for modern judicial infrastructure in remote regions, emphasising that such upgrades ensure justice remains barrier-free and accessible, even when harsh winters and difficult terrain pose severe connectivity challenges.

Beyond infrastructure, the visit placed a strong emphasis on legal awareness and community outreach. A Mega Legal Services Camp and Awareness Programme was organised to enhance legal literacy among the local population. Furthermore, the visit served as a direct sequel to the North Zone Conference held in July 2025, which focused on reaffirming the constitutional vision of justice for defence personnel and tribal communities. In alignment with this vision, he interacted with Army personnel deployed in the strategically important region to address their legal concerns and further bridge the gap between the



27-29 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, inaugurated the premises of Ladakh Legal Services Authority in the presence of Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, and Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and Justice Sindhu Sharma, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh



27-29 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, at the Mega Camp and Awareness Programme on "Empowering Tribals through Legal Services and Defence Civil Action" organised by High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and Ladakh Legal Services Authority at Leh, Ladakh

judiciary and the armed forces.He paid tribute to the dedication, discipline, and sacrifice of the armed forces, acknowledging their role in safeguarding the conditions necessary for justice, liberty, and constitutional governance. He observed that while soldiers ensure national security under demanding conditions, they often face significant challenges in accessing legal remedies due to their postings in remote and operationally sensitive areas.

He emphasised that the State must not place soldiers in the position of having to pursue legal claims while fulfilling their duties, stressing that justice must travel to them rather than requiring them to seek it. Highlighting initiatives such as the Veer Parivar Sahayata Yojana, he noted that structured legal aid systems can bridge this gap by providing accessible support to defence personnel and their families.

Concluding, he reaffirmed that access to justice is a constitutional obligation, not an act of charity, and that the judiciary remains committed to ensuring that those who protect the nation are themselves protected by its institutions.



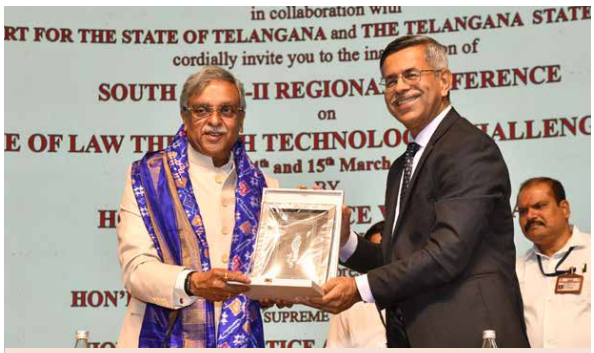
27 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, interacted with the Army personnel deployed in Leh, Ladakh

South Zone-II Regional Conference



14-15 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh, Chief Justice, High Court of Telangana and Justice Aniruddha Bose, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India and Director, National Judicial Academy during the South Zone-II Regional Conference "Advancing Rule of Law Through Technology: Challenges & Opportunities" at Hyderabad, Telangana

14-15 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, graced the South Zone-II Regional Conference on "Advancing Rule of Law Through Technology: Challenges & Opportunities" and delivered the Inaugural Address, held at Hyderabad, Telangana. The Conference was organised by the National Judicial Academy in collaboration with the High Court of Telangana and the Telangana State Judicial Academy. The Inaugural Session was preceded by the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, and featured an introductory address by Justice Aniruddha Bose, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India and Director, National Judicial Academy. The Session was also addressed by Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice S V N Bhatti, Judges, Supreme Court of India, and thereafter by Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh, Chief Justice, High Court of Telangana. The Session concluded with a vote of thanks by Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya, Judge, High Court of Telangana and President of the Board of Governors, Telangana State Judicial Academy.



14-15 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, being felicitated with a memento during the South Zone-II Regional Conference at Hyderabad, Telangana



14-15 March 2026: Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judge, Supreme Court of India, being felicitated with a memento during the South Zone-II Regional Conference at Hyderabad, Telangana

International Seminar by Union Internationale des Avocats, Paris



21 March 2026:
Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, graced the International Seminar on "Artificial Intelligence: Prevention and Resolution of Disputes", organised by the Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA), Paris, held at Karnataka Judicial Academy, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Justice T S Krishnamoorthy Iyer Memorial Oration



03 March 2026:
Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered "Justice T S Krishnamoorthy Iyer Memorial Oration" on the topic "Transformative Constitutionalism and Basic Structure doctrine" organised by the Family & Well-wishers of Justice T S Krishnamoorthy Iyer And Kerala High Court Advocates' Association at Kochi, Kerala. She also inaugurated the "Continuing Legal Education Programme", organised by the Kerala High Court Advocates' Association

Symposium – Women in Arbitration: Where Women Lead, Justice Follows



07 March 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, along with Justice Mini Pushkarna, Judge, High Court of Delhi; Ms Poonam Sharma, National President, FICCI FLO; Ms Geeta Luthra, Senior Advocate and Mr Arun Chawla, Director General, ICA at the Symposium on the theme "Women in Arbitration: Where Women Lead, Justice Follows" organised by the Indian Council of Arbitration (ICA) at Federation House, New Delhi

07 March 2026: The Indian Council of Arbitration (ICA), with the support of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry Ladies Organisation (FICCI FLO), organised a symposium titled "Where Women Lead, Justice Follows" at Federation House, New Delhi. The event brought together distinguished voices from the legal, arbitration, and public service sectors to deliberate on enhancing gender diversity within the legal profession.

Mr Arun Chawla, Director General, ICA, inaugurated the session by drawing attention to the challenges posed by unpaid care work and the resulting "time poverty", which continues to hinder women's participation in the workforce.

Ms Poonam Sharma, National President, FICCI FLO, delivered the welcome address, highlighting the pivotal role of women's leadership in shaping inclusive and responsive institutions.

The keynote address was delivered by Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, who advocated for structural inclusivity in arbitration and called for enhanced representation of women alongside robust retention policies. Justice Mini Pushkarna, Judge, High Court of Delhi, further stressed the importance of sustained institutional support to advance women's participation and leadership.

The symposium concluded with a strong reaffirmation of the need to promote women's leadership as a cornerstone for building equitable, inclusive, and future-ready institutions.

07 March 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered the keynote address at the Symposium



Justice S B Sinha 4th Endowment Memorial Lecture at NUSRL, Ranchi



28 March 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered "Justice S B Sinha 4th Endowment Memorial Lecture" on the topic "Environmental Justice and Climate Change: How Courts can Lead the Way Forward" at the National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi, Jharkhand

Book Launch: "A Historical Introduction to Indian Contract Law"



13 March 2026:
Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the launch of the book "A Historical Introduction to Indian Contract Law" as the Guest of Honour at New Delhi. The book has been authored by Prof (Dr) Shiv Swaminathan, Dean, Shiv Nadar School of Law

Inaugural Ceremony: Parul International Mediation Competition, 2026



21 March 2026:
Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the Inaugural Ceremony of Parul International Mediation Competition, 2026, as the Chief Guest, at Parul University, Vadodara, Gujarat

Conclave: PRERNA 2.0 – Rising Stronger



06 March 2026:
Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, Supreme Court of India, chaired the Conclave "PRERNA 2.0 – Rising Stronger", organised by CGC University to commemorate International Women's Day, 2026, at CGC University, Mohali, Punjab

Convocation Ceremony - Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai



28 March 2026:
Justice Alok Aradhe, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the 4th Convocation Ceremony at Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai, Maharashtra

Continuity of Constitutional Wisdom
Interaction with Justice M N Venkatachaliah, Former CJI

Justice M N Venkatachaliah: Life and Legacy

Justice M N Venkatachaliah, the 25th Chief Justice of India, is a distinguished jurist known for his significant contribution to Indian jurisprudence. His judicial career, followed by an active phase of public service, left a lasting mark on constitutional governance, judicial thought, and institutional reform in India.



Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, met with Justice M N Venkatachaliah, Former Chief Justice of India at Bengaluru, Karnataka

Early Life and Career

Justice M N Venkatachaliah was born on 25 October 1929. He received his education in the erstwhile State of Mysore and earned a Bachelor's degree in Science and a Bachelor of Law from the University of Mysore. He thereafter commenced general legal practice in 1951 and, over the next two decades, built a respected career at the Bar.

Judicial Career

- **Judge of the Karnataka High Court**

Following over two decades of legal practice at the Bar, Justice M N Venkatachaliah was appointed as a Permanent Judge of the High Court of Karnataka with effect from 6 November 1975, during the period of the Emergency.

During this period, he dealt with matters across a broad range of legal fields, including administrative law, statutory interpretation, and public law. In *Theatre Sanjaya v. State of Karnataka* (ILR 1984 Kar 539), a case concerning administrative action under the Industrial Disputes Act, Justice Venkatachaliah emphasised the centrality of natural justice, describing it as "fairness in action" and "a great humanising principle intended to invest law with fairness to secure justice".

- **Judge of the Supreme Court and Chief Justice of India**

Justice M N Venkatachaliah was appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court of India with effect

from 5 October 1987. He was later appointed as the Chief Justice of India with effect from 12 February 1993, and demitted office on 24 October 1994.

During his tenure on the Supreme Court, he was associated with several important decisions concerning constitutional governance, individual liberty, and procedural fairness. One such notable decision was *Joginder Kumar v. State of U.P.* ((1994) 4 SCC 260), where the Court drew a distinction between the existence of the power to arrest and the justification for its exercise. The Court held that a person cannot be arrested merely on suspicion and laid down safeguards to protect the rights of arrested persons under Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution.

During his approximately seven-year tenure at the Supreme Court, Justice Venkatachaliah is stated to have authored around 90 judgments and was a part of 482 benches. He is also credited with efforts to reduce the pendency of cases, bringing it down to approximately 19,000 during his tenure as Chief Justice.

Post- Retirement

- **National Human Rights Commission**

Justice M N Venkatachaliah served as the second Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) from 26 November 1996 to 24 October 1999. During this period, the NHRC received a large number of complaints annually—approximately 60,000—and, as Chairman, Justice M N Venkatachaliah worked towards strengthening the institutional protection of human rights.

- **National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC)**

Justice Venkatachaliah also chaired the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC), constituted by a Government Resolution dated 22 February 2000. The Commission was tasked with examining, in light of the experience of the previous fifty years, how the Constitution could better respond to the changing needs of governance and socio-economic development, while preserving its basic structure.

The Commission submitted its report in two volumes to the Government on 31 March 2002. It made 58 recommendations involving constitutional amendments, 86 recommendations relating to legislative measures, and several others concerning executive action. Its recommendations broadly addressed fundamental rights, directive principles, fundamental duties, electoral reform, Parliament and State Legislatures, the judiciary, Union–State relations, decentralisation, and socio-economic development.

Honours and Recognition

- 2000: Rotary India Award on Human Rights
- 2004: Padma Vibhushan
- 2012: Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) – Pondicherry University
- 2012: Doctor of Laws (LLD) (honoris causa) – Manipal University
- 2013: Honorary Doctorate from Rani Channamma University, Belagavi

Justice M N Venkatachaliah's career reflects a significant engagement with the development of Indian constitutional and institutional life. Through his work on the Bench and in publicoffice, he contributed to important questions of law, governance, and institutional reform.

Advocacy Training Course



13 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; along with Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association, Mr Rahul Kaushik, Senior Advocate and Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association, Ms Pragya Baghel, Secretary, Supreme Court Bar Association and Shri Nitin G Thakker, President, Bombay Bar Association, at the "Advocacy Training Course" organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association in association with Bombay Bar Association at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

13 March 2026: The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in collaboration with the Bombay Bar Association (BBA), organised an Advocacy Training Programme for the young members of the SCBA, with the objective of enhancing their professional skills particularly in Trial Advocacy under the guidance of Senior Members of the Bar. This programme was designed to assist young advocates with 0 to 5 years practicing in developing practical courtroom skills.

The training programme was graced by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, and Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India. While addressing the gathering during the training programme, Justice Surya Kant expressed concern over the declining emphasis on trial court practice among young lawyers, describing it as the foundational "spine" upon which the entire judicial system rests. He observed that while aspirations toward corporate or appellate practice are understandable, the strength of the justice system ultimately depends on the quality of advocacy at the trial level, where facts are established and cases are built.

He emphasised that advocacy is not an inherent talent but a craft developed through discipline, repetition, and experience under pressure. Elaborating on core skills, he noted that examination-in-chief requires clarity and structure, cross-examination demands precision and restraint, and oral argument is grounded in judgment rather than rhetoric.

Concluding, he underscored that reputation in the legal profession is built incrementally through trust, integrity, and reliability. Rather than seeking visibility, young advocates must focus on mastering the fundamentals of the craft, as it is these quiet, consistent efforts that ultimately define professional success.

SCBA's 1st National Conference



21-22 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice P B Varale and Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice B R Gavai, Former Chief Justice of India; Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Mr Rahul Kaushik, Senior Advocate and Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Ms Pragya Baghel, Secretary, Supreme Court Bar Association, at the 1st National Conference 2026 organised by Supreme Court Bar Association at Bengaluru, Karnataka

21–22 March 2026: The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) hosted its first-ever National Conference at Bengaluru, Karnataka. Held under the theme "Reimagining Judicial Governance: Strengthening Institutions for Democratic Justice", the conference brought together approximately 400 registered members of the Bar, along with sitting and former judges of the Supreme Court and various High Courts, and distinguished legal scholars.

Day I: 21 March 2026

The meeting commenced with an Inaugural Ceremony featuring the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, accompanied by Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and Mr Rahul Kaushik, Senior Advocate and Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA). In his welcome address, Mr Rahul Kaushik expressed gratitude to the judiciary and participants, noting that the conference served as a vital platform for the Bench and Bar to exchange ideas on the heart of the judicial system.

Session I focused on "Making Justice Real: The Transformative Role of Mediation". Moderated by Mr Rahul Kaushik, the panel featured Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Mr Mukul Rohatgi, Senior Advocate



21–22 March 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka



21–22 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka



21–22 March 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka

and Former Attorney General for India; and Mr Sriram Panchu, Senior Advocate and Mediator. Mr Mukul Rohatgi proposed a hybrid "expert-decision" model to prevent hardened litigation positions, while Mr Sriram Panchu advocated for mediation to become a professional, career-oriented discipline to effectively reduce the judicial backlog.

Session II addressed "From Pendency to Prompt Justice: Rethinking Justice Delivery in Indian Courts". The session featured Justice B V Nagarathna, Justice M M Sundresh, Justice Dipankar Datta, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, and Justice Manmohan, Judges, Supreme Court of India alongside Mr Sanjeev Sanyal, Member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister. Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India proposed the creation of a 'Judicial Reforms Commission' to provide institutional interventions rather than mere procedural tweaks to combat systemic delay.

Session III took up "Inclusive Institutions for Democratic Justice: The Women in the Legal Profession". Graced by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General of India, Justice Vibhu Bakhru , Chief Justice, High Court of Karnataka, Justice Anu Sivaraman, Judge, High Court of Karnataka, Ms Aishwarya Bhati, Additional Solicitor General of India and Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association, the session marked the release of the "National Survey Report on the Welfare of Lady Advocates". Justice Surya Kant, while addressing the gathering, emphasised that constitutional equality must be reflected not only in formal guarantees but in the lived realities of



21–22 March 2026: Justice M M Sundresh, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka



21–22 March 2026: Justice Dipankar Datta, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka



21–22 March 2026: Justice Augustine George Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka

institutional functioning. He observed that while the entry of women into the legal profession has significantly expanded, their progression into positions of leadership remains uneven, pointing to structural and institutional barriers rather than individual choices. He highlighted that access to mentorship, professional visibility, and informal networks continues to shape career trajectories in ways that are not always equitable.

Underscoring the need for reform, the Chief Justice called for a shift from intent to institutional design, advocating structured mentorship, equitable distribution of opportunities, and stronger support systems within the profession. He also stressed the importance of data, transparency, and accountability in identifying and addressing gaps. He concluded by urging that the profession must now move towards ensuring that women's presence



21–22 March 2026: Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka



21–22 March 2026: Justice Sandeep Mehta, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka



21–22 March 2026: Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka



21–22 March 2026: Justice Manmohan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka

translates into equal participation in leadership and decision-making.

The report, which distilled 2,604 voices from 23 state bar councils, revealed that 83.1% of women respondents are first-generation lawyers. The Chief Justice of India reaffirmed his commitment to gender equality, noting the recent one-third reservation for women in bar association seats.



21–22 March 2026: Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka

Session IV, which concluded the first day, addressed "First-Generation Lawyers and Access to Justice: Addressing Institutional Barriers in Indian Courts". Moderated by Mr Vikas Singh, the panel included Justice B R Gavai, Former Chief Justice of India; Justice Aravind Kumar and Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Judges, Supreme Court of India and Justice Harish Tandon, Chief Justice, High Court of Odisha. The speakers shared their personal journeys, emphasising that while first-generation lawyers face significant hurdles in accessing mentorship and established chambers, their independent struggle often breeds the resilience and innovation necessary for legal excellence.

Day 2: 22 March 2026

Session V opened the second day with a focus on "A global perspective on the challenges and innovations within judicial governance and the role of AI". The panel explored the rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence in legal research, case management, and judicial administration. Delivering key insights from the bench were Justice Vikram Nath, Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Augustine Masih, Judges, Supreme Court of India and Justice D K Upadhyaya, Chief Justice, High Court of Delhi. Adding



21–22 March 2026: Justice B R Gavai, Former Chief Justice of India, during the 1st National Conference organised by SCBA held at Bengaluru, Karnataka

practitioner perspective, Mr Sajan Poovayya, Senior Advocate also addressed the gathering, emphasising the need to balance technological efficiency with the foundational democratic principles of fairness and judicial independence.

Session VI subsequently addressed the "Role of the Judiciary in Viksit Bharat". The session fostered a forward-looking dialogue on the judiciary's essential contribution to India's trajectory toward becoming a fully developed nation. The panel was graced by Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Justice Ashutosh Kumar, Judge, High Court of Delhi alongside leading experts including Mr Rajiv Gauba, Member NITI Aayog, Dr Shamika Ravi, Member, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM). The speakers collectively highlighted that a robust, accessible, and prompt justice delivery system is foundational to economic growth, investor confidence, and the holistic strengthening of democratic institutions in a modernising India.

The historic two-day conference culminated in a Formal Valedictory Session. Graced by Justice B R Gavai, Former Chief Justice of India, Justice Vikram Nath, Justice Pankaj Mithal, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice Prasanna B Varale, Judges, Supreme Court of India, Justice Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice, High Court of Karnataka, Justice P Sam Koshy, Chief Justice, High Court of Telangana and Justice Sibo Sankar Mishra, Judge, Orissa High Court. Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), delivered the Valedictory Address, reflecting on the success of the Association's first full-scale national conference and summarising the comprehensive reform proposals discussed across the technical sessions.



21-22 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Justice Pankaj Mithal, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Justice P B Varale, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice B R Gavai, Former Chief Justice of India; Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Mr Rahul Kaushik, Senior Advocate and Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Ms Pragya Baghel, Secretary, Supreme Court Bar Association at the Valedictory Ceremony of the 1st SCBA's National Conference, 2026 at Bengaluru, Karnataka

Legal Aid

Mobile Lok Adalat Vans of Telangana State Legal Services Authority



14 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), flagged off two Mobile Lok Adalat Vans at Hyderabad, Telangana which are aimed at expanding legal services and legal awareness to remote areas across the State of Telangana

14 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), inaugurated two Mobile Lok Adalat Vans procured by the Telangana State Legal Services Authority, at Hyderabad, Telangana with the objective of expanding legal services outreach to the remote corners of districts across Telangana. At present, TSLSA has only four mobile vans for 34 District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs), which are utilised on a monthly rotation basis. The inauguration was also attended by Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judge, Supreme Court of India, and thereafter by Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh, Chief Justice, High Court of Telangana, among other dignitaries.

The vans are equipped to conduct legal awareness programmes and provide free legal aid and guidance, facilitate mobile Lok Adalats for expeditious dispute resolution, and enable video-conferencing facilities for legal consultations from



14 March 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), along with Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judge, Supreme Court of India; inaugurated two Mobile Lok Adalat Vans procured by the Telangana State Legal Services Authority at Hyderabad, Telangana

1st National Lok Adalat of 2026



14 March 2026: Glimpses of the 1st National Lok Adalat, 2026, across all Taluks, Districts, and High Courts in all States and Union Territories

14 March 2026: The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) successfully organised the 1st National Lok Adalat of 2026 across all Taluks, Districts, and High Courts in all States and Union Territories. The National Lok Adalat was organised in Delhi on 22 March 2026 and in Telangana on 28 March 2026 though, the date of 1st National Lok Adalat of 2026 in West Bengal has not been finalised by SLSA yet.

The 1st National Lok Adalat of 2026 reaffirmed the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution by disposing of 3,94,65,137 cases. Thus, this significantly prevented 3,45,67,714 pre-litigation matters from entering the judicial system while concurrently easing the judicial burden by disposing of 48,97,423 pending cases (excluding Telangana, the same has yet to be compiled). The total settlement amount for these cases approximates to ₹23,347.79 crores.

The outcomes of this Lok Adalat reaffirm the public's growing trust in collaborative dispute resolution mechanisms that offer swifter and more harmonious alternatives to conventional litigation.

NALSA continues to uphold its constitutional mandate by facilitating inclusive access to justice for all, particularly for vulnerable and underrepresented communities, and by promoting a culture of peaceful settlement through sustained ADR efforts.

This significant achievement highlights the scalability of the Lok Adalat model as a cornerstone of the Indian judicial landscape. By transforming the nature of dispute resolution from an adversarial process into a participatory one, NALSA is effectively fostering social cohesion and reducing the long-term strain on state resources. Moving forward, the continued integration of digital platforms and community outreach will further ensure that the doors of justice remain open, efficient, and accessible to every citizen across the nation.

Fresh from the Bench

Yogendra Kumar Singh v. Union of India and Others (2026 INSC 282)

"Requiring the officers to participate in the process for the grant of PC [Permanent Commission] without disclosing the material particulars of the selection procedure was akin to asking them to navigate uncharted waters without a compass"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice Nongmeikapam Kotiswar Singh

In a judgment dated **24 March 2026**, a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed appeals filed by approximately 25 Short Service Commission Officers (SSCOs) of the Indian Navy, the majority of whom are women, holding that the process by which they were assessed for Permanent Commission (PC) was structurally compromised, and granting them PC directly as a one-time measure instead of directing yet another Special Board.

Background

The appellants, comprising both male and female officers, were inducted into various branches of the Navy between 1999 and 2011. Short Service Commission Women Officers (SSCWOs) were excluded from PC consideration as a matter of policy for most of this period; even when eligibility was partially opened in 2008, it was confined to only three branches. Following the Supreme Court's direction in Annie Nagaraja v. Union of India (2015 SCC OnLine Del 11804), the Navy convened Selection Boards in December 2020 and September 2022, but the appellants were not selected in either round. The Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT), by its judgment dated 27.09.2024 and subsequent orders, directed the Navy to hold a fresh Special Board after publicly disclosing the evaluation criteria and vacancy computation methodology to the affected officers. The appellants approached the Supreme Court contending that this direction merely consigned them to a fourth round of proceedings after more than fifteen years of fruitless effort.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Casual ACR grading:** The Court found that officers who were ineligible for PC as a matter of policy had their Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) graded under the institutional assumption that they had no future in the Navy. In the Navy's bell-curve appraisal system, higher grades are reserved for those perceived to have long-term potential. Officers who were policy-ineligible were routinely awarded middling grades, not on account of inferior performance, but because higher grading served no institutional purpose. The PC endorsement column was mechanically marked "Not Recommended for PC" for these officers, reflecting prevailing policy rather than professional appraisal. When these endorsements were later applied as disqualifications at the decisive stage of PC consideration, past ineligibility was belatedly transformed into "deemed unsuitability" for career progression. The Court held that this circularity has resulted in a materially distorted assessment of inter se merit for the appellants.

- **Dynamic Vacancy Model upheld:** The Court found no infirmity in the Navy's Dynamic Vacancy Model used for the December 2020 Selection Board. Treating 2020 as the "material time" for vacancy assessment was justified because it was only in 2020 that the Selection Board was actually convened and vacancies could realistically be filled. The division of the cadre deficiency by 15 was held to be rationally anchored in service realities, corresponding to the approximate years of service that accompany a PC grant and ensuring a balanced age and experience profile within the officer cadre. Following Shankarsan Dash v. Union of India ((1991) 3 SCC 47), the Court also held that no candidate has a right to selection merely on account of the existence of vacancies.

- **Non-disclosure violated fairness norms:** The Court agreed with the AFT that the Navy's failure to place evaluation criteria, vacancy computation methodology, and allied policy considerations in the public domain before the 2020 and 2022 Selection Boards violated basic norms of fairness and transparency. Unlike the Army and Air Force, which formally promulgated selection criteria to affected officers, the Navy confined such material to internal approval processes. This asymmetry in disclosure undermined the legitimacy of the selection exercise.

- **Why a fresh Board was not ordered:** While the non-disclosure finding would ordinarily have warranted directing a fresh Special Board, the Court declined to do so for three reasons: the present proceedings constitute the third round of litigation before this Court and the ordeal ought not to be prolonged to a fourth; the appellants cannot realistically obtain a fair assessment in a renewed Board because their ACRs are inherently compromised by years of policy-based ineligibility; and continued protracted litigation is not in the overall interest of the Navy or its officers.

Outcome and Directions

The Court allowed the appeals and modified the AFT's directions. PC already granted by the 2020 and 2022 Selection Boards was left undisturbed. As a one-time measure, the Court granted PC directly to three categories of officers still in service: SSCWOs inducted before January 2009; SSCWOs inducted after January 2009 in branches other than Law, Education, and Naval Architecture; and male SSCOs who were barred from PC consideration under their initial terms of entry, all subject to prescribed medical criteria and disciplinary and vigilance clearance. Officers falling within these categories who had already been released from service during the pendency of proceedings shall be deemed to have completed 20 years of qualifying service and shall be entitled to pension and all consequential benefits, with arrears payable from 01.01.2025.

For all future Selection Boards, the Navy was directed to issue General Instructions in advance disclosing available vacancies in each branch and cadre for each batch, detailed evaluation criteria, and marks apportionment for each criterion. The Navy was also directed to undertake forthwith the policy examination directed by the AFT in its judgment dated 27.09.2024.

Wg. Cdr. Sucheta EDN v. Union of India and Others (2026 INSC 280)

"Notwithstanding the arbitrariness in certain aspects of the assessment process, it would not be prudent or in the interest of the operational effectiveness of the Air Force to direct reinstatement and/or reconsideration of the Appellants for the grant of PC [Permanent Commission]. However, that alone cannot be a sufficient reason to deny any benefits to such deserving officers"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice Nongmeikapam Kotiswar Singh

In a judgment delivered on **24 March 2026**, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the judgments and orders of the Armed Forces Tribunal and the Delhi High Court. The appeals were preferred by Short Service Commission Women Officers (SSCWOs) in the Indian Air Force who were denied the grant of Permanent Commission (PC). The Supreme Court held that utilising Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) authored during a period when the officers were ineligible for PC—and thus assessed without a long-term career horizon—to determine their suitability for PC is inherently unfair and arbitrary.

Background

The appellants were commissioned as Short Service Commission (SSC) officers in the Air Force in 2007. For the majority of their tenure, a policy embargo (HRP 21/2006) suspended the grant of PC to all SSCOs commissioned after May 25, 2006. This position shifted in 2019 with the issuance of HRP 01/2019, which suddenly allowed these officers to compete for PC during their final years of service. However, the appellants were denied PC in successive Selection Boards (2019, 2020, 2021) based on failure to meet newly introduced "Minimum Performance Criteria" or low comparative merit. They challenged the implementation of HRP 01/2019, arguing that the accelerated timeline for the first Board and the retrospective use of casual appraisals prejudiced their career prospects.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Structural distortion of appraisals:** The Court observed that the appraisal process is conditioned by the assessing officers' understanding of an officer's career trajectory. Since the appellants were ineligible for PC when their ACRs were written, the reports were "necessarily casual and not oriented towards evaluating suitability for career progression". Transplanting these assessments into a competitive PC selection process was a "methodological mismatch" that failed to account for the diverging objectives of the initial assessments.
- **Abrupt implementation of new criteria:** HRP 01/2019 introduced mandatory technical requirements, such as "Categorisation" levels and minimum CGPA in Mandatory In-Service Courses (MISCs). The Court found the policy was implemented with "undue haste", convening the first Board in March 2019, barely one and a half months after the policy came into force. This deprived officers of a "reasonable gestation period" to meet these new professional benchmarks.
- **Arbitrariness regarding maternity and pregnancy:** The Court noted that the hurried implementation failed to provide for officers who missed selection rounds or

received lower scores due to maternity leave or pregnancy-related medical downgrades. It held that the choice to become a parent cannot be equated with an unwillingness to seek professional advancement, and the failure to accommodate such officers amounted to arbitrariness.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the impugned judgments. Accordingly the Court issued following directions:

1. The grant of PC to the SSCOs who have already been granted PC by the Boards convened in 2019, 2020, and 2021 shall not be disturbed.
2. As a one-time measure, the Court directed that all SSCOs considered for PC in the 2019, 2020, and 2021 Boards, including those declared "ineligible", shall be deemed to have completed 20 years of substantive qualifying service.
3. Consequently, they are entitled to pension and all consequential benefits (excluding arrears of pay) on the basis of this deemed service. The Court ordered that pension arrears be paid with effect from January 1, 2025.
4. Additionally, for all future Selection Boards, the Air Force must issue General Instructions beforehand, detailing available vacancies and the specific criteria for evaluation.

Lt. Col. Pooja Pal and Others v. Union of India and Others (2026 INSC 281)

"….denial of PC [Permanent Commission] to SSCWOs [Short Service Commission Women Officers] was not merely the outcome of individual assessments, but the consequence of a systemic framework rooted in assumptions that entrenched disadvantages in career progression"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice Nongmeikapam Kotiswar Singh

In a judgment delivered on **24 March 2026**, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeals preferred by Short Service Commission Women Officers (SSCWOs) of the Indian Army. The appeals were preferred against judgments of the Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) which had upheld the denial of Permanent Commission (PC) to Women officers based on lower comparative merit. The Supreme Court held that the evaluative framework used to deny PC was systemically flawed because it relied on service records authored when women were presumed ineligible for career progression, thereby violating constitutional mandates of equality.

Background

The Appellants are roughly 73 SSCOs, primarily women from batches commissioned between 2010 and 2012. Historically, women in most cadres were ineligible for PC and served a maximum of 14 years. Following the landmark Ministry of Defence v. Babita Puniya ((2020) 7 SCC 469), the women officers were finally permitted to compete for PC alongside their male counterparts. However, many were denied PC by the No. 5 Selection Board due to failing to meet the "comparative merit" cut-offs within a 250-vacancy annual cap. They challenged this at the AFT, arguing that their service records (ACRs) were graded "casually" during years they were ineligible for PC and that they were

denied career-enhancing opportunities. The AFT dismissed their claims, leading to this appeal.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Systemic distortion in ACR grading:** The Court observed Appellants were commissioned between September 2010 and March 2012, i.e., prior to the pronouncement of Babita Puniya judgment. This indicates that all their ACRs were graded during the period when women, as a whole, were considered ineligible for PC as a matter of policy. Owing to this entrenched idea that there was limited career progression for women officers, their Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs)—which account for 75% of the PC evaluation—were written "casually", with higher grades reserved for male officers for whom such grades mattered for career progression.

- **Inequality in career opportunities:** The Court found a "systemic disparity" in access to criteria appointments and career-enhancing courses. Because women were not viewed as future PC officers, they were excluded from sensitive roles and training (like the Junior Command Course) available to men, which ultimately depressed their "value judgement" scores in the PC selection process.

- **Non-sacrosanct nature of vacancy cap:** The Respondents argued the 250-vacancy cap is critical and ought not to be breached. However, the Court noted this cap had been repeatedly breached historically (e.g., during the Kargil War or policy transitions) and held it cannot be used as a "shield" to perpetuate constitutional inequality.

- **Rejection of male officers' "legitimate expectation":** Male SSCOs argued they expected to compete only against other men for the 250 slots. The Court rejected this, stating that the inclusion of women is a constitutional obligation, not a matter of discretion, and any expectation to the contrary is "inherently illegitimate".

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the SSCWOs' appeals and issued the following directions under Article 142 to ensure complete justice:

1. SSCWOs released from service during the proceedings are deemed to have completed 20 years of qualifying service, making them entitled to pension and consequential benefits (excluding pay arrears) effective from January 1, 2025. This direction does not apply to the Appellant-SSCWOs and Intervenor-SSCWOs who form part of the JAG and AEC cadres, as they have been eligible for consideration for PC since 2010.

2. Officers still in service who met the 60% minimum cut-off in the 2020 and 2021 Selection Boards are entitled to the grant of Permanent Commission, subject to medical and disciplinary clearance. This direction does not apply to the Appellant-SSCWOs and Intervenor-SSCWOs who form part of the JAG and AEC cadres.

3. The Army must review the method of evaluation and cut-offs for future batches to address the disproportionate impact on women who became eligible for PC late in their careers.

The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority v. Dharmalingam & Ors. etc. (2026 INSC 269)

"The scheme of Section 48-B of the LA Act [Land Acquisition Act, 1894], in our considered opinion, does not envisage any enforceable right in favour of the expropriated landowner to seek transfer of the acquired land"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi

In a judgment dated **10 March 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed the appeals and set aside the First Impugned Judgment and the Second Impugned Order passed by the Division Bench of the High Court, which had directed the re-conveyance of acquired land. The Supreme Court observed that Section 48-B of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 (hereinafter, the LA Act) does not clothe an expropriated owner with any right to seek re-conveyance of the land and that the High Court misdirected itself in directing the re-conveyance despite the mandatory prerequisite.

Background

The land of the respondent-landowners was sought to be acquired for the public purpose of developing an inter-city bus and truck terminal by the Appellant-Authority in Chennai City. Different notifications under Section 4 of the LA Act were issued in 1982-1985, covering a total land area of 82.86 acres. Thereafter, declarations were issued under section 6 of the LA Act, formally acquiring an area of 80.92 acres. After the land stood vested free from all encumbrances in the State, the Appellant-Authority utilised only 64.80 acres of the 80.92 acres of acquired land. Consequently, an area of 16.12 acres remained to be developed, out of which the land in dispute comprises 5.06 acres. While this unutilised land was initially earmarked for the shifting and relocation of the Gunny Bag merchants, the State later decided to utilise the land for a truck parking yard. This action, as a consequence of a series of litigation, complemented the original plan for the acquisition. The respondent-landowners sought re-conveyance of the unutilised land in accordance with Section 48-B of the LA Act, leading to a High Court direction to release the land which the Appellant-Authority challenged in this appeal.

Court's Reasoning and Observations:

- **Mandatory satisfaction of the State:** On a plain reading of Section 48-B, the State Government must be satisfied that the land vested in it "is not required for the purpose for which it was acquired, or for any other public purpose", and this satisfaction is a sine qua non for any action under this provision.
- **Strict construction of exceptions:** Relying on T.N. Housing Board v. Keeravani Ammal (2007) 9 SCC 255, the Court observed that Section 48-B is an exception to the rule that once land is duly acquired, it becomes the property of the State; such a provision has to be strictly construed.
- **No time limit for utilisation:** Relying on Nandkishor Babulal Agrawal v. The State of Maharashtra (Supreme Court of India, Civil Appeal No. 7634 of 2023, judgment dated 10.11.2023), the Court observed that there cannot be a time limit within which the authorities are expected to utilise the acquired land. Once the land vests in the State, the 'public purpose' of its acquisition can be changed at a later stage so long as it is utilised for public purposes.

- **Limited scope of judicial review:** What the Court ought to examine while undertaking judicial review is whether the exercise of discretion is founded upon mala fide or arbitrary reasons or if the decision-making is tainted by a colourable exercise of power.

- **Mandatory condition of Section 48-B:** The Court found that there was nothing on record to suggest that the Government was of the opinion that the land in question was not suitable or usable for any public purpose. Therefore, the mandatory condition of Section 48-B was never satisfied because the State never formed an opinion that the land was not suitable for public purpose.

Outcome and Directions

The decision of the State Government and the Appellant-Authority to not re-convey the land in question to the original landowners under Section 48-B of the LA Act is upheld. The Respondent-landowners shall be entitled to receive the due compensation, which is lying deposited with the Competent Authority, along with interest, if any, accrued thereupon.

National Highways Authority of India v. Tarsem Singh and Others (2026 INSC 291)

"There is no gainsaying that the constitutional guarantee of just compensation cannot be rendered contingent upon the magnitude of the financial burden. Consequently, a mere escalation in the projected liability, howsoever significant, does not constitute, per se, a valid ground for review or modification of the judgement"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

In a judgment delivered on March 25, 2026, a bench of the Supreme Court disposed of a Review Petition filed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) seeking to recall a previous order Tarsem Singh-II (2025 SCC OnLine SC 235) that had denied prospective application of the Tarsem Singh-I (2019) 9 SCC 304) judgment. The NHAI sought review on the grounds that the actual financial liability for paying solatium and interest was approximately ₹29,000 crores, rather than the ₹100 crores previously estimated. The Supreme Court held that while the constitutional right to just compensation cannot be overridden by fiscal implications, it was necessary to provide clarifications to prevent the reopening of stale claims that had already attained finality.

Background

In 1997, Section 3-J was inserted into the National Highways Act, 1956, which stipulated that the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, would not apply to highway acquisitions, thereby denying land-losers 'solatium' and 'interest'. This provision was challenged before various High Courts and eventually struck down or read down to ensure parity for landowners. In the landmark judgment Tarsem Singh-I (2019), the Supreme Court declared Section 3-J unconstitutional to the extent it denied these benefits. NHAI subsequently sought a clarification in Tarsem Singh-II that this ruling should only operate prospectively to avoid a heavy financial burden on the exchequer, a plea which the Court initially declined based on an estimated liability of ₹100 crores. The present Review Petition was filed after NHAI discovered the actual projected liability

was vastly higher, amounting to approximately ₹29,000 crores.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Fiscal implications versus constitutional rights:** The Court observed that "the constitutional guarantee of just compensation cannot be rendered contingent upon the magnitude of the financial burden". It reaffirmed that an increase in projected liability does not justify revisiting the merits of a decision rooted in substantive entitlement.
- **Finality of litigation (Quietus):** The Court emphasised the legal necessity of giving quietus to decide matters. In many cases, decades after the cases regarding the quantum of land acquisition compensation for their lands stood closed, the landowners chose to approach different authorities, such as the Competent Authority, the Arbitrators, or the Courts, for the grant of 'solatium' and 'interest'. It held that while landowners are entitled to solatium and interest as a matter of principle, they cannot be permitted to reopen "old, stale claims" that were conclusively decided by a court of law before the relevant judicial interpretation changed.
- **Balancing equity in delayed claims:** For cases where statutory appeals were filed after inordinate delay to claim these benefits, the Court adopted a balancing exercise. It ruled that in such instances, interest payable on the components shall be denied for the period of delay to ensure equity.
- **The 28.03.2008 cut-off date:** The Court utilised 28 March 2008 (the date of the Golden Iron and Steel Forging judgment) as the threshold for determining "alive" claims. This ensures consistency with previous orders that sought to prevent the reopening of concluded cases.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court dismissed the review, but issued the following specific directions to balance the equities:

1. Landowners whose claims were "alive" (pending) on or after 28.03.2008 are entitled to seek interest, solatium, and interest on solatium.
2. If such claims were raised after 28.03.2008 following an inordinate delay, interest on those components will only be payable from the date the claim was actually raised, with no interest granted for the period of delay.
3. Claims that attained finality prior to 28.03.2008 with no further appeals pending cannot be reopened.
4. The NHAI and Union of India are not entitled to seek refund or recovery of any solatium or interest already paid to landowners.

Rachana Gangu and Anr. v. Union of India and Ors. (2026 INSC 218)

"The Constitution does not conceive of the State as a distant spectator to human suffering, but as an active guardian of welfare and dignity"

Coram: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta

In a judgment dated 10 March 2026, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court disposed of a batch of writ petitions filed by families of individuals who died or suffered serious adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination, directing the Union of India to expeditiously formulate a no-fault compensation framework for serious adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) arising in the context of COVID-19 vaccination.

Background

The lead petition was filed under Article 32 by parents of two young women who died shortly after receiving COVID-19 vaccines, seeking constitution of an independent expert medical board, formulation of protocols for AEFI detection and treatment, and compensation. Connected writ petitions raising similar grievances, including deaths and serious injuries allegedly linked to administration of the vaccine, were pending before the Kerala High Court. The Kerala High Court, by an interim order, directed the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the National Disaster Management Authority to formulate a policy for identification of AEFI cases and compensation to affected families. This interim order was challenged before the Supreme Court, and all connected matters were transferred and heard together.

The petitioners alleged that the Government had failed to ensure transparency, informed consent, and adequate post-vaccination surveillance, and that despite scientific evidence linking the AstraZeneca vaccine to blood clotting disorders (VITT/TTS), causality assessments were not publicly disclosed. The Union of India, in response, submitted that vaccine approvals were conducted in accordance with law, that the AEFI surveillance system is robust and transparent, and that aggrieved individuals have civil and consumer court remedies available to them.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Limits of judicial inquiry into vaccine safety:** The Court reiterated that it was not adjudicating vaccine efficacy or sitting in scientific review over the regulatory approval process, which had already been examined and upheld in Jacob Puliyel v. Union of India 2022 SCC OnLine SC 533. Studies by ICMR and NCDC affirming no direct link between the vaccines and sudden deaths were accorded due weight. The Court also declined to constitute a separate court-appointed expert body, finding the existing National and State AEFI Committees adequate for scientific assessment.
- **Article 21 and the State's positive obligation:** The Court held that Article 21 does not view the right to life solely through the lens of fault. Where grave harm is alleged to have occurred in the course of a State-led public health intervention, affected families cannot be left without any accessible mechanism of redress. The absence of such an institutional framework raises constitutional concerns warranting a calibrated response.

- **Civil remedies are inadequate in this context:** While civil and consumer court remedies exist, the Court found them ill-suited as the only pathway of redress in the context of mass immunisation. Scientific attribution is complex, insisting upon proof of negligence imposes an onerous burden on affected families, and a multiplicity of individual proceedings risks inconsistent outcomes and unequal access to relief, undermining the guarantee of equality under Article 14.
- **No-fault compensation as a constitutional imperative:** The Court observed that the principle of no-fault liability is not alien to Indian law, citing Section 164 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. Internationally, many jurisdictions have recognised no-fault vaccine injury compensation as a feature of a welfare state response. In contrast, India lacks any uniform or structured policy mechanism to provide redress to individuals who suffer adverse effects following vaccination. The State's responsibility in monitoring AEFI, as underscored in Jacob Puliyel, cannot end at surveillance alone but must extend to providing fair compensation.

Outcome and Directions

The writ petition and connected matters were disposed of with the following directions:

- The Union of India, through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, shall expeditiously frame a no-fault compensation policy for serious adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination and place it in the public domain.
- The existing AEFI monitoring mechanisms shall continue and relevant data shall be placed periodically in the public domain consistent with the observations in Jacob Puliyel.
- The judgment shall not preclude any person from pursuing other remedies available in law, and the formulation of the no-fault framework shall not be construed as an admission of liability or fault on the part of the Union of India or any authority.

Anurag Krishna Sinha v. State of Bihar & Anr. (2026 INSC 219)

"Arbitrariness, in whatever form it manifests, whether in the conferral of uncanalised power, the adoption of excessive means, the absence of rational nexus, or the imposition of consequences wholly disproportionate to the stated object, is antithetical to the constitutional guarantee of equality and invites the intervention of this Court"

Coram: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta

In a judgment delivered on **10 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeal and set aside the judgment and order of the Patna High Court. The appeal was preferred against the High Court's decision to uphold the validity of the Srimati Radhika Sinha Institute and Sachchidanand Sinha Library (Requisition & Management) Act, 2015. The Supreme Court held that the Act was manifestly arbitrary and violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India, as it resulted in the complete displacement of a century-old institutional framework without demonstrated necessity or adherence to the principles of proportionality.

Background

The Institute & Library were established in 1924 by Shri Sachchidanand Sinha, a prominent public figure and first interim President of the Constituent Assembly, in memory of his wife. The institution was governed by a formal Deed of Trust (1926), which stipulated that management would remain with the family and specifically provided that Trust Property would revert to them in the event the Trust failed. Following an agreement in 1955, the institution was accorded the status of a State Central Library while maintaining Trust-based management. After previous legislative attempts to acquire the library failed in the 1980s, the Bihar State Legislature enacted the impugned Act of 2015 to take over the entire institution and dissolve the Trust. The appellant, the great-grandson of the founder and current Trustee, challenged the Act. The Patna High Court dismissed the challenge, characterising the Trust as a Public Trust and upheld the validity of the Act, while observing that the State Government was obliged to carry on the objects of the Trust.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Legal character of the Trust:** The Court observed that an institution serving a public purpose does not automatically become a "Public Trust" in law. The legal character of a Trust depends on several factors, including the manner in which the dedication is made, the structure of the Trust, the nature of control and management, and the rights reserved by the Settlor and his successors under the Trust deed. A public facing object, standing alone, is not determinative.

- **Manifest arbitrariness and Article 14:** The Court reaffirmed that manifest arbitrariness is a valid substantive ground to invalidate legislation. It held that the Act was arbitrary because its means—total displacement and dissolution—bore no rational or proportionate nexus to the stated object of "better management and development", especially since the library had functioned for nearly a century.

- **Absence of due process/inquiry:** Upon examining original records, the Court found no evidence of prior communication from the State to the Trust alleging mismanagement, financial irregularity, or neglect. It held that a measure of such sweeping consequence cannot rest on assumptions never put to the parties being displaced.

- **Inconsistency regarding management:** The Court noted that the State Librarian already functioned as the ex-officio Chief Librarian with supervisory responsibility. Therefore, the State could not rely on alleged mismanagement as a justification when it had failed to take any action against its own appointee, who was charged with the general administration of the very institution whose management it now seeks to impugn.

- **Proportionality and less drastic means:** The Court held that the State's objectives could have been achieved through less invasive alternatives, such as grant-in-aid, conditional funding, or statutory audits, rather than outright acquisition.

- **Illusory compensation:** The Court found Section 7 of the Act manifestly arbitrary, as it authorised a maximum compensation of only one rupee without prescribing any principles or procedural safeguards, rendering the scheme confiscatory.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal and

declared the Srimati Radhika Sinha Institute and Sachchidanand Sinha Library (Requisition & Management) Act, 2015 unconstitutional and void. The Court ordered that the Trust, along with its rights of management and administration, be restored to its pre-existing legal position prior to the enactment. It clarified that the State Government remains permitted to provide financial assistance and regulatory oversight in accordance with the law.

Registrar Cane Cooperative Societies and Ors. v. Gurdeep Singh Narval (Dead) Through LRs. and Ors. (2026 INSC 216)

"...residence of the members or the geographical spread of activity cannot substitute the statutory requirement that principal objects must themselves be Multi States in character"

Coram: Justice Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhe

In a judgment dated 10 March 2026, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed appeals filed by the Registrar, Cane Cooperative Societies and members of the Sugarcane Growers Cooperative Societies, holding that the societies of Bajpur and Gadarpur, Uttarakhand, are not Multi-State Cooperative Societies under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002, and setting aside the contrary judgment of Uttarakhand High Court delivered in 2007.

Background

The Sugarcane Growers Cooperative Societies of Bajpur and Gadarpur were registered under the UP Cooperative Societies Act, 1965, with areas of operation spanning villages across what are now Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. When UP was bifurcated in 2000 to create Uttaranchal (now Uttarakhand), the areas of operation of both societies got split between the two successor States. Acting under Section 87 of the UP Reorganisation Act, 2000, both States took steps to reorganise the Societies, deleting the UP villages from their areas of operation and confining them to Uttarakhand alone. A dispute later arose whether, by virtue of Section 103(1) of the 2002 Act, these Societies were nonetheless deemed to have become Multi-State Cooperative Societies on the date of bifurcation. The High Court held in 2007 that they were, and directed elections under the 2002 Act framework. The present appeals challenged that finding.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Reorganisation Act prevails:** The UP Reorganisation Act, 2000 contains a non-obstante clause under Section 93, and Section 87 embodies the doctrine of legislative continuity. Completed actions taken to reorganise the Societies under this framework are legally valid and cannot be disturbed by the deeming fiction in the 2002 Act.
- **Legal fiction strictly confined:** A legal fiction must be confined to the purpose for which it is created and cannot be extended beyond its legitimate field. Since the reorganisation of both Societies was completed before the 2002 Act came into force, Section 103 cannot be invoked retrospectively to unsettle those actions.
- **Objects, not area of operation, are determinative:** For Section 103 of the 2002

Act to apply, the principal objects of the Society must themselves be multi-state in character. The bye-laws of these Societies showed that their objectives were confined to promoting the interests of local canegrowers, with no intention to serve members across State boundaries. The statutory precondition for invoking Section 103 was therefore absent.

Outcome and Directions

Civil Appeal Nos. 8743, 8744, and 8745 of 2013 were allowed and the High Court's judgment of 2007 was quashed and set aside. Civil Appeal No. 8746 of 2013 was dismissed. The authorities under the State Cooperative law were directed to conduct elections of the Societies expeditiously.

Union of India and Others v. Rohith Nathan and Another, Etc. (2026 INSC 230)

"...a clarificatory instruction cannot introduce a substantive condition that does not exist in the parent policy. If it travels beyond explanation and alters rights or liabilities, it ceases to be clarificatory and assumes the character of an amendment"

Coram: Justice Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha and Justice R Mahadevan

In a judgment delivered on 11 March 2026, a two-judge bench dismissed a batch of civil appeals filed by the Union of India and upheld concurrent findings of the Central Administrative Tribunal and the High Courts of Madras, Delhi and Kerala. The Court considered two issues: first, whether a clarificatory letter issued by the Department of Personnel and Training in 2004 could override or alter the substantive framework of the Office Memorandum dated 8 September 1993 governing creamy layer exclusion from OBC reservation benefits; and second, whether treating the wards of Public Sector Undertaking employees differently from the wards of similarly placed Government employees, for the purpose of creamy layer determination, would amount to hostile discrimination in violation of Articles 14, 15 and 16 of the Constitution.

Background

The cases arose from disputes concerning the eligibility of candidates who appeared in the Civil Services Examinations of 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2017 under the OBC (Non-Creamy Layer) category. The parents of these candidates were employed in Public Sector Undertakings, banks or similar organisations. Since the equivalence of their parents' posts with corresponding Government service posts had not been formally determined, the Department of Personnel and Training applied the Income/Wealth Test under Category VI of the Office Memorandum dated 8 September 1993 (the "1993 OM") read with a clarificatory letter dated 14 October 2004 (the "2004 Letter"). By treating parental salary income as independently determinative under this test, the DoPT classified the candidates as falling within the creamy layer and denied them OBC reservation benefits.

The candidates challenged these decisions before the Central Administrative Tribunal, which ruled in their favour. The High Courts of Madras, Delhi and Kerala upheld the Tribunal's orders, with the Delhi High Court also setting aside the 2004 Letter. The Union of India filed the present civil appeals against these judgments.

The 1993 OM was issued pursuant to directions of the nine-judge Constitution Bench in Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (1992 Supp (3) SCC 217) , which had upheld 27% OBC reservation but mandated exclusion of the "creamy layer" as a constitutional necessity. The OM was framed on the recommendations of an Expert Committee, whose report was laid before both Houses of Parliament. The Schedule to the 1993 OM set out exclusion criteria that are primarily status-based, covering officers directly recruited to Group A or Group B posts in Government services, and extending the same criteria to employees of PSUs, banks and similar organisations where equivalence of posts has been formally determined. Where equivalence has not been determined, the Income/Wealth Test under Category VI applies as a residual filter. Explanation (i) to Category VI expressly provides that income from salary and income from agricultural land shall not be clubbed with income from other sources for computing gross annual income.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **On the 2004 Letter's inability to override the 1993 OM:** The Court held that a mere government letter cannot override or supersede an Office Memorandum issued in exercise of executive power under Article 162 of the Constitution. A clarification can only explain or supplement the foundational guidelines of the parent policy; it cannot introduce a substantive condition that does not exist therein. Paragraph 9 of the 2004 Letter provided that where equivalence of posts had not been determined, salary income and income from other sources were to be assessed separately and that if either exceeded the prescribed limit for three consecutive years, the candidate would be treated as creamy layer. The Court held that to the extent paragraph 9 made salary income independently determinative of creamy layer status, it exceeded the permissible scope of a clarification and amounted to an impermissible alteration of the 1993 OM's framework. The Court also noted that the 21st Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes (2018-19) recorded that the 2004 Letter had done more to confuse the position than to clarify it, and that its origin in terms of the initial file notings could not be traced. The entire architecture of the 1993 OM reflects the constitutional understanding from Indra Sawhney that exclusion of the creamy layer must be status-based first and economically filtered second; salary income cannot be mechanically aggregated in a manner that defeats this structure.
- **On hostile discrimination between Government and PSU employees:** The Court held that Group C and Group D Government employees who earn salaries beyond the general income threshold are not excluded from OBC reservation benefits on that account alone, because the 1993 OM's exclusion in their case is status-based and applies only to direct recruits to Group A or Group B posts. Applying a different and harsher standard to the children of similarly placed PSU or private sector employees solely on the basis of parental salary income, without reference to the grade or class of post held, would amount to treating equals unequally. This attracts the rigour of the equality doctrine under Articles 14, 15 and 16, of which reservation is a facet. The Court observed that the object of excluding the creamy layer is to ensure that socially advanced sections within the OBCs do not appropriate benefits meant for the genuinely backward, and is not to create artificial distinctions between equally placed members of the same social class.

- **On supernumerary posts:** The Court noted that supernumerary posts had already been assured by the DoPT, as recorded in the 21st Report of the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Other Backward Classes. It accordingly directed the appellants to create such supernumerary posts as required to accommodate candidates who satisfy the non-creamy layer criteria as clarified in the judgment, subject to their fulfilling other eligibility conditions.

Outcome and Directions

All the civil appeals are dismissed. The Union of India and the DoPT are directed to consider the claims of all respondent candidates and intervenors in accordance with the principles laid down in the judgment and to implement the same within six months from the date of the judgment. Supernumerary posts are to be created as needed to accommodate eligible candidates. All pending intervention applications stand disposed of accordingly.

V. Ganesan v. State Rep by the Sub Inspector of Police & Anr. (2026 INSC 265)

"Thus, the nature of the transaction between the parties was a crucial factor in determining whether the investor party should be allowed to bring in a criminal action or pursue civil remedies"

Coram: Justice Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha and Justice Manoj Misra

In a judgment delivered on **19 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeal and set aside the judgment of the Madras High Court to the extent it had refused to quash a charge of cheating. The Supreme Court held that in high-risk commercial ventures like movie production, the mere failure to fulfill a promise of profit sharing or the dishonour of post-dated cheques given to discharge existing liability does not constitute cheating under Section 420 IPC unless dishonest intention is proven to have existed at the very inception of the transaction.

Background

The appellant, a movie producer, borrowed funds from the second respondent (de-facto complainant) for a film project, initially promising a 30% share in profits, which was later increased to 47%. The movie was successfully completed and released. However, when the complainant objected to the movie's release, the appellant issued two post-dated cheques of ₹24 lakhs each to return the principal amount. These cheques were subsequently returned unpaid due to insufficient funds. Consequently, it was alleged that the appellant had cheated the complainant and had also committed an offence of criminal breach of trust. While the High Court quashed the indictment for criminal breach of trust (Section 406 IPC), it allowed the proceedings for cheating (Section 420 IPC) to continue, reasoning that the complainant had been induced to part with money based on a promise of returns that remained unfulfilled.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Necessity of initial dishonest intention:** The Court emphasised that for an offence of cheating under Section 415 IPC, deception is

a vital ingredient. It held that a person must have a fraudulent or dishonest intention at the time of making the promise; a mere failure to keep that promise later cannot be the sole basis to presume such intention existed from the beginning.

- **Breach of contract versus criminal offence:** Relying on the principle that every breach of contract is not cheating, the Court observed that criminal proceedings should be quashed when a dispute is purely civil in nature. It noted that for cheating to be made out, the complaint must show deception was played at the very inception.
- **Inherent risks in business:** The Court observed that in transactions like movie making, where fulfillment of a promise is not entirely in the promisor's control and carries inherent risks, the courts must determine if the conduct reflects a failed commercial risk rather than a dishonest intention. It found that since the movie was actually made and released, the promise to produce the film was not false.
- **Status of post-dated cheques:** The Court clarified that the dishonour of post-dated cheques, issued to discharge an existing liability rather than as an inducement to obtain delivery of money, does not ipso facto amount to cheating. Such dishonour may warrant proceedings under the Negotiable Instruments Act but does not necessarily prove a dishonest intention from inception.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal, set aside the High Court's order, and quashed the criminal proceedings under Section 420 IPC. The Court concluded that the allegations disclosed only a civil cause of action.

Chaya & Ors. v. The State of Maharashtra & Anr. (2026 INSC 277)

"The relaxation in qualifying criteria only affects eligibility and not merit, and migration is permissible in the absence of any prohibition"

Coram: Justice Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhe

In a judgment dated **23 March 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed civil appeals filed by reserved category candidates, ruling that candidates who avail a relaxation in a qualifying examination to become eligible for the main selection process are legally entitled to migrate to the open/unreserved category based on their superior merit in the main examination.

Background

The appellants, who belong to reserved categories, challenged a merit list dated 25 February 2024 prepared pursuant to the Teachers Aptitude and Intelligence Test, 2022 (TAIT), for the recruitment of teachers in Maharashtra. Despite securing higher marks in the TAIT than the last selected general category candidate, the appellants were excluded from the open category merit list. Their exclusion was based on the fact that they had availed a 5% relaxation in the qualifying marks

for the preliminary Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) (requiring 55% instead of the standard 60%). The Bombay High Court dismissed their writ petitions, relying on the Supreme Court's prior decision in Government of NCT of Delhi & Ors. v Pradeep Kumar (2019) 10 SCC 120, holding that candidates availing relaxation in TET could not migrate to the general category as it would confer an unfair advantage.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Relaxation in Qualifying Exams Enables Entry, does not Affect Merit:** The Court held that a concession or relaxation in a qualifying examination (like the TET) merely creates a level playing field, enabling the candidate's entry into the zone of consideration. It does not impact the *inter se merit*, which is determined solely on the basis of performance in the main examination (TAIT). Since no concessions were granted to reserved category candidates in the TAIT, their merit was evaluated strictly at par with general category candidates.

- **Primacy of Rules and Absence of Express Prohibition:** Applying precedents such as Jitendra Kumar Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh (2010) 3 SCC 119 and Vikas Sankhala v. Vikas Kumar Agarwal (2017) 1 SCC 350, the Court established that migration of a reserved category candidate who has availed a concession in a qualifying exam is permissible if the Recruitment Rules or employment notifications allow it, are silent, or do not expressly prohibit it. The Court found that the Maharashtra State Government had not prescribed any prohibition against the migration of such higher-scoring reserved candidates to the open category.

- **Distinguishing Pradeep Kumar:** The Court clarified that the High Court and the State authorities erred in applying the Pradeep Kumar judgment. In Pradeep Kumar, candidates failed to fulfill an essential eligibility condition, whereas in the present case, securing 60% in TET was not an absolute essential condition for reserved candidates, as the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) guidelines expressly empowered State Governments to grant such qualifying mark concessions.

- **Erroneous Executive Directives:** The Court noted that the Commissioner (Education) wrongly relied on Pradeep Kumar and a Central Government Office Memorandum to issue last-minute directives on the day the merit list was published, improperly barring the migration of the appellants.

Outcome and Directions

The appeals were allowed, and the impugned judgment of the Bombay High Court dated 14 February 2025 was quashed and set aside. The Supreme Court directed the respondents to include the appellants who secured marks higher than the last selected candidate in the general category in the merit list. Additionally, the Court allowed several impleadment applications filed by similarly situated petitioners, implementing them as appellants in the matter.

Hamsaanandini Nanduri v. Union of India & Ors.
(2026 INSC 246)

"Not flesh of my flesh, nor bone of my bone, but still miraculously my own. Never forget for a single minute, you didn't grow under my heart, but in it"

Coram: Justice J B Pardiwala and Justice R Mahadevan

In a judgment dated **17 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed a writ petition filed by an adoptive mother, striking down the three-month age limit prescribed for an adopted child to entitle the mother to maternity benefits. The Court held that the distinction between women adopting infants and those adopting older children lacks a rational nexus with the legislation's object of dignifying motherhood and ensuring child welfare. The Supreme Court of India, in this case, held Section 60(4) of the Code on Social Security, 2020, as unconstitutional and violative of Article 14 and Article 21 of the Constitution of India, insofar as it restricts maternity benefit to an adoptive mother who adopts a child below the age of three months.

Background

The petitioner, an adoptive mother of two, challenged the constitutional validity of Section 60(4) of the Code on Social Security, 2020 (which consolidated Section 5(4) of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961). The provision entitled only those mothers who adopted a child below the age of three months to twelve weeks of maternity benefit. The petitioner argued that this age cap was discriminatory and arbitrary, violating Articles 14, 19(1)(g), and 21 of the Constitution, as it deprived mothers of older children of the necessary time for emotional bonding and family integration. She further highlighted that the legal procedure to declare a child "legally free for adoption" typically exceeds two to three months, making the benefit practically unattainable.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Motherhood v. Childbirth:** The Court emphasised that maternity benefits are associated with the process of motherhood rather than the biological process of childbirth. It noted that the bond formed outside the womb is as crucial as that formed inside, and the need for nurturing remains constant regardless of the child's age.

- **Article 14 (Equality):** The three-month cap was found to be under-inclusive and discriminatory. The Court ruled that adoptive mothers are similarly situated regardless of the child's age, and an arbitrary threshold violates the mandate of equality.

- **Article 21 (Reproductive Autonomy):** Adoption was recognised as an expression of reproductive and decisional autonomy. Denying benefits based on an age limit was held to violate the mother's right to a dignified life and the child's right to holistic care.

- **Practical Unworkability:** The Court observed that statutory timelines for adoption—such as the two-month reconsideration period for surrendered children—often ensure a child is older than three months before

legal placement. Consequently, the age limit rendered the benefit illusory and otiose in practice.

- **Paternity Leave:** The Court urged the Union of India to recognise paternity leave as a social security benefit, noting that shared parenting is essential for child development and for dismantling gendered roles.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the petition, declaring the age limit in Section 60(4) unconstitutional. To remedy this, the Court directed that the provision be meaningfully read to provide that any woman who legally adopts a child (or a commissioning mother) shall be entitled to maternity benefit for twelve weeks from the date the child is handed over, removing the restrictive age threshold.

Harish Rana v. Union of India & Ors. (2026 INSC 222)

"...the correct inquiry is not whether it is in the best interests of the patient that he should die, but rather whether it is in the best interests of the patient that his life should be prolonged by the continuance of such forms of medical treatment"

Coram: Justice J B Pardiwala and Justice K V Viswanathan

In a judgment delivered on **11 March 2026**, a two-judge bench authorised the withdrawal of Clinically Assisted Nutrition and Hydration from a patient who has been in a permanent vegetative state for over 13 years. The Court also undertook an extensive restatement and streamlining of the procedural framework for passive euthanasia laid down by the Constitution Bench in Common Cause v. Union of India (2018) 5 SCC 1. The Court considered two broad issues: first, whether Clinically Assisted Nutrition and Hydration administered through a surgically placed tube constitutes "medical treatment" amenable to withdrawal; and second, the meaning, scope and contours of the "best interest of the patient" principle in determining whether medical treatment should be withdrawn or withheld from an incompetent patient.

Background

The applicant, Harish Rana, was a 20-year-old BTech student at Punjab University when he fell from the fourth floor of his paying guest accommodation on 20 August 2013 and sustained a severe diffuse axonal injury. He was treated at PGI, Chandigarh, and subsequently at AIIMS, New Delhi, for head injury, seizures, pneumonia and bedsores. He has been in a permanent vegetative state (PVS) ever since. He is maintained on a tracheostomy tube, urinary catheter and Clinically Assisted Nutrition and Hydration (CANH) administered through a surgically placed Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) tube. He shows no evidence of awareness of his environment, does not respond to any stimulus, and his neurological condition has remained static for over 13 years despite all treatments, including hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

His parents had previously approached the Delhi

High Court seeking withdrawal of treatment. The High Court dismissed the petition in July 2024 on the ground that the applicant was not being kept alive mechanically and that no judicial intervention was warranted. While disposing of the SLP in November 2024, the Supreme Court ensured provision of home care at the expense of the State respondents and granted the parents liberty to return to court if necessary. The parents accordingly filed the present Miscellaneous Application, seeking constitution of medical boards and withdrawal of CANH in accordance with the guidelines laid down in Common Cause 2018 as modified by Common Cause v. Union of India (2023) 14 SCC 131 (the "Common Cause Guidelines"). The Court constituted a primary medical board and subsequently a secondary medical board, both of which unanimously concluded that the applicant is in a non-progressive, irreversible PVS with no prospect of recovery and that withdrawal of CANH is in his best interest.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **On CANH as medical treatment:** The Court held that CANH administered through a PEG tube constitutes "technologically mediated medical intervention" and not mere basic sustenance. Its administration involves clinical assessment of the patient's nutritional requirements, underlying condition, gastrointestinal tolerance and metabolic stability. The PEG tube itself is surgically placed and requires periodic medical review, and the risks of administration include aspiration pneumonia, peritonitis and wound site infection. The Court held that the fact that CANH can be administered at home does not reduce its medical character, since its administration must be performed under regular medical and nursing supervision involving skills and protocols drawn from medical knowledge. When comparing CANH with normal feeding, the Court said, attention must not be directed exclusively to the provision of nourishment but must take into account the entire regime of artificial feeding, which involves the use of catheters and the constant combating of potentially deadly infections. CANH is a technologically mediated medical intervention prescribed, supervised and reviewed by trained healthcare professionals.
- **On active versus passive euthanasia:** Building upon Common Cause 2018, the Court clarified that the distinction between the two does not rest solely on the binary of acts and omissions. The more meaningful distinction lies in the source of harm. Active euthanasia introduces a new external agency that disrupts the natural trajectory of life, effectively causing death. Passive euthanasia involves the withdrawal or withholding of life-sustaining treatment, which merely allows the underlying fatal condition to follow its natural course. Even when a physical act is required to remove a device, its legal and substantive effect is that of an omission to treat. Passive euthanasia is constitutionally permissible under Article 21, while active euthanasia remains a penal offence in the absence of legislative sanction.
- **On the best interest principle:** The Court undertook an exhaustive examination of decisions across the United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Australia, New Zealand and India, as well as the 196th and 241st Law Commission Reports, to delineate the contours of this principle. The correct formulation, the Court held, is not whether it is in the best interest of the patient to die, but whether it is in his best interest that his life be prolonged by continuation of medical treatment. The principle applies

when withdrawal is contemplated for an incompetent patient who cannot make an informed decision for himself, and must be applied by all decision-makers including the medical boards, the next of kin and the courts. A strong presumption in favour of preserving life anchors the inquiry, but this presumption is not absolute and may be displaced where both medical and non-medical considerations warrant discontinuation. Medical considerations include whether the treatment has become futile, merely prolongs suffering without hope of recovery, or causes indignity. Non-medical considerations require decision-makers to apply the substituted judgment standard, asking what the patient himself would have wanted had he possessed the capacity to decide. This standard is not the same as the caregiver's standard, which asks what a reasonable person would do; it is centred on what that specific patient would have chosen. After considering both sets of factors, decision-makers must draw up a balance sheet weighing the potential benefits of continued treatment against its burdens. In the present case, both medical boards and the applicant's parents, after considering all medical and non-medical considerations, unanimously concluded that continuation of CANH is no longer in the applicant's best interest.

- On streamlining the Common Cause Guidelines: Noting the practical hesitation and uncertainty faced by doctors, hospitals and families in implementing the Common Cause Guidelines, the Court set out six clarifications:
    - The written consent of the patient's next of kin is integral to the process, embodying as far as possible what the patient himself would have wanted.
    - Where medical care is provided at home, the family may either admit the patient to a hospital or approach a hospital solely for the purpose of designating a primary treating physician who will initiate the process.
    - To prevent administrative delay, Chief Medical Officers of all districts are to maintain panels of qualified registered medical practitioners and to nominate one to the Secondary Medical Board preferably within 48 hours of a hospital's request.
    - Where the treating physician fails to commence the process despite satisfaction of the threshold conditions, the next of kin may seek directions from the High Court under Article 226.
    - Once both Medical Boards concur in their decision, implementation must await a reconsideration period of 30 days, during which an aggrieved person may approach the court to challenge the Boards' opinion.
    - Courts must exercise restraint and due caution in unsettling the process once it has been duly completed.
- On palliative care and the need for legislation: The Court disapproved of the practice of "discharge against medical advice" as a substitute for a structured end-of-life care plan, holding that resorting to it in place of a proper plan risks amounting to an abdication of medical responsibility. The withdrawal of treatment must be followed by a carefully supervised palliative and end-of-life care plan that minimises suffering and preserves the patient's dignity. The Court also urged Parliament to enact comprehensive legislation

on end-of-life care, noting that the Common Cause Guidelines, while an important safeguard, were never intended to serve as a permanent substitute for legislation.

- On the "terminally ill" threshold (Concurring Opinion): Justice Viswanathan observed that the constitution of a Medical Board does not require the patient to be terminally ill. A patient in a permanent vegetative state who is undergoing prolonged treatment for an incurable condition satisfies the threshold under the Common Cause Guidelines. It was held that the Delhi High Court had erred in dismissing the petition on this ground, and that a PVS patient clearly falls within the four corners of Common Cause 2018.

Outcome and Directions

The Court disposed of the Miscellaneous Application with the following directions:

- The medical treatment including CANH being administered to the applicant shall be withdrawn and/or withheld.
- The 30-day reconsideration period stands waived, given the unanimous consensus of all stakeholders.
- AIIMS is directed to admit the applicant to its Palliative Care department and to provide all facilities for shifting him from his residence, and to ensure that withdrawal is carried out through a palliative and end-of-life care plan tailored to manage symptoms and preserve dignity.
- The High Courts of all States are directed to issue appropriate directions to Judicial Magistrates of First Class within their jurisdiction to receive intimation from hospitals in accordance with the Common Cause Guidelines.
- The Union of India, in coordination with State and UT Health Secretaries, is directed to ensure that CMOs of all districts across the country forthwith prepare and maintain panels of registered medical practitioners for the Secondary Medical Board, to be reviewed and updated at intervals not exceeding twelve months.
- The Registry was directed to list the matter for compliance of the directions relating to the applicant's treatment after one month, and for compliance of the CMO panel direction in August 2026.

Bhola Mahto v. The State of Jharkhand (2026 INSC 257)

"It is a matter of common knowledge that once a convict obtains an order from the appellate court suspending the sentence of imprisonment and is, consequently, released on bail, more often than not, he neglects and/or fails to cooperate with the court and impedes an expeditious decision on his appeal by staying away from the proceedings with a view to ensure that his liberty is not curtailed, if the appeal were to fail. Drawing from experience, we can record that on many an occasion, such convicts become untraceable. These convicts, enjoying the concession of bail and misusing it, need to be dealt with firm and strong hands by the courts"

Coram: Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma

In a judgment delivered on **16 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court partly allowed the appeal and set aside the judgment and order of the High Court of Jharkhand. The appeal was preferred against a decision where the High Court, acting in the absence of the appellant's engaged counsel, appointed an amicus curiae and converted a murder conviction to culpable homicide. The Supreme Court held that while the High Court's intention to expedite a decades-old appeal was genuine, justice is better served when a convict is informed of their counsel's absence before an amicus is appointed to represent them.

Background

The appellant was convicted of murder (Section 302 IPC) by a sessions court in 2002 for an incident occurring in 2000. He filed an appeal in the High Court in 2003 and was released on bail in March 2003. For twenty years, the appeal remained pending without being listed for hearing. When it finally appeared on the cause list in 2024, the appellant's counsel failed to appear. The High Court appointed an amicus curiae of 15 years' standing to assist. On 2 December 2024, the High Court altered the conviction to Section 304 Part-II IPC, sentencing the appellant to five years of rigorous imprisonment and directing him to surrender. The appellant challenged this, claiming he was unaware of his counsel's absence and the subsequent appointment of the amicus, thereby depriving him of the opportunity to argue for a full acquittal.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Real and meaningful legal aid:** The Court emphasised that legal assistance, particularly through legal aid or an amicus, must be "real and meaningful and not by way of a token gesture". It observed that although the High Court wanted to deliver justice without delay, it failed to inform the appellant that his appeal was being heard via an amicus after twenty years of dormancy.
- **Balance between expediency and fairness:** Relying on Anokhi Lal v. State of Madhya Pradesh (2019 20 SCC 196), the Court noted that while expeditious disposal is a part of the guarantee of a fair trial, it must not be at the expense of basic elements of fairness. Fast-tracking should never result in "burying the cause of justice".
- **Conduct of the appellant:** The Court noted that the appellant was also partially to blame for neglecting his appeal for two decades while enjoying the concession of bail. It remarked that convicts who stay away from proceedings to ensure their liberty is not curtailed should be dealt with "firm and strong hands".
- **Procedural safeguards for Amicus appointment:** To prevent future technical pleas of unfairness, the Court suggested that when appointing an amicus in the absence of counsel, Registries should issue a notice to the convict's address through the jurisdictional police station to ensure the convict can provide necessary instructions so that his case is argued before the court effectively and meaningfully.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court set aside the High Court's order and remanded the appeal for a de novo (fresh) hearing. The Court directed that the appellant be released on bail forthwith to restore the status quo ante until the High Court disposes of the appeal on its own merits. It further requested the High Court to decide the matter as early as possible, given the crime dates back to the year 2000.

Subramani v. State of Karnataka
(2026 INSC 249)

"The deceased may have been momentarily in an unconscious state due to the effect of sedatives, however, by and large, as the burn injuries were superficial, though to great extent, she was conscious most of the time and was in a fit state of mind to get her dying declaration recorded"

Coram: Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice SVN Bhatti

In a judgment delivered on **17 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court dismissed the appeal and upheld the judgment and order of the Karnataka High Court. The appeal was preferred against the High Court's decision to reverse a Trial Court acquittal and convict the appellant for the murder of his wife. The Supreme Court held that the consistent eyewitness testimony of the couple's daughter and the corroborated dying declaration provided clinching evidence of the appellant's guilt under Sections 302 and 498A of the Indian Penal Code.

Background

The appellant and the deceased were married for seventeen years and had four children. While they lived happily initially, relations became strained due to the appellant's repeated demands for money and cruelty. On July 20, 2000, following a quarrel, the appellant fetched kerosene, poured it on his wife in their bathroom, and set her on fire using a candle. She was taken to the hospital by neighbors and died three days later due to septicaemia resulting from 80-90% burn injuries. The Trial Court acquitted the appellant, doubting the dying declaration due to the extent of the burns and citing inconsistencies in witness statements. However, the High Court reversed this, sentencing him to life imprisonment.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Reliability of eyewitness testimony:** The Court placed heavy reliance on the testimony of Prosecution Witness (PW)-3 (the couple's 16-year-old daughter), who witnessed her father bring the kerosene, pour it, and light the fire. The Court noted there was no reason for a child to falsely depose against her father and found her account to be consistent and clinching.
- **Admissibility of the dying declaration:** The Court rejected the argument that the deceased was too injured to speak. It observed that the attending doctors (PW-10 and PW-11) had certified her as conscious and fit to make a statement. The Court held that medical certification of a fit mental state overrides oral claims of unconsciousness by non-expert witnesses.
- **Corroboration by physical evidence:** The prosecution's case was strengthened by the recovery of a matchbox, kerosene tin, and burnt cloth pieces from the scene of the incident. This physical evidence, combined with the medical reports, unequivocally pointed to the appellant's responsibility.
- **Motive and conduct:** Evidence showed the appellant had a history of beating and treating the deceased with cruelty over financial demands. His conduct of fleeing the house after setting her on fire further supported the motive to kill.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal, finding it devoid of merit. It affirmed the appellant's conviction and life sentence. As the appellant was on bail during the proceedings, the Court directed him to surrender forthwith to undergo the remainder of his sentence.

Ravi Khokhar & Ors v. UOI
(2026 INSC 233)

"Since the advent of the Constitution, the question of whether a particular body can or cannot be recognised as 'State' within the meaning of Article 12 has arisen time and again. Initially, this Court adopted a narrow and formalistic approach focusing on whether the body concerned which was created under a statute was part of the traditional Government structure. Over the time however, as functions of the Government expanded multi-fold there was a shift in this approach"

Coram: Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice Vipul M Pancholi

In a judgment dated **12 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed appeals filed by employees of the Air Force Group Insurance Society (AFGIS), holding that the society performs a public duty and the government has a deep and pervasive control over it.

Background

AFGIS was established under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 in the year 1976, with sanction of the Hon'ble President of India. The appellants, who are employees of AFGIS, challenged a decision by the Board of Trustees to revise pay scales in accordance with the Sixth Pay Commission of the Government of India, while subsequently resolving to do away with any linkage or pay parity with the Central Government Pay Commissions. The High Court of Delhi had dismissed their writ petitions as not maintainable, concluding that AFGIS was an autonomous, self-funded Society without deep or pervasive governmental control, and that historical parity did not create an enforceable legal right.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Decisive test:** The Court noted the shift from a narrow, formalistic approach to a functional and purposive analysis to determine if a body is "State" under Article 12. Relying on the case of Pradeep Kumar Biswas v. Indian Institute of Chemical Biology ((2002) 5 SCC 111) and Ajay Hasia v. Khalid Mujib Sehravardi, (1981) 1 SCC 722, the court observed that the decisive test is whether, in light of the cumulative facts, the body is financially, functionally, and administratively dominated by or under the control of the Government, and such control must be particular and pervasive.
- **Deep and pervasive control:** AFGIS was established with the sanction of the Hon'ble President of India, who also specifically approved the deputation Rules. The Board of Trustees and Managing Committee comprise entirely of serving senior IAF officials.
- **Compulsory nature and monopoly:** Membership is mandatory and compulsory for all Officers and Airmen, with premiums automatically deducted from salaries.

Consequently, AFGIS enjoys a State-conferred monopoly over insurance for IAF members.

- **Public duty:** AFGIS performs a public function as the protection and welfare of armed forces personnel is a core government function directly linked to the sovereignty and security of the nation.
- **Representations of the Society:** AFGIS previously represented itself to be 'Government' in official correspondence to claim exemptions from service tax. The Court held it cannot resile from its own statement.

Outcome and Directions

The Court allowed the appeal. It declared AFGIS to be 'State' under Article 12, rendering the writ petition before the High Court as maintainable. Accordingly, the writ petition was restored to the High Court of Delhi with a request to decide the same expeditiously, considering it has been pending since 2017.

M. Thanigivelu and Ors. v. Tamil Nadu Electricity Board and Ors. (2026 INSC 229)

"The issue to be considered in the present appeals is as to what is to be taken as the date of the appointment of the direct recruits. In our opinion, instead of going into the language used in various BPs [Board Proceedings] issued by the Board, which had merely resulted in creating confusion to some extent, the complete answer lies in the Regulations [Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (Service Regulations),1967]"

Coram: Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Vijay Bishnoi

In a judgment delivered on **11 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the judgment and order of the Division Bench of the Madras High Court. The appeal was preferred against the High Court's decision to re-draw a seniority list by excluding the training period of direct recruits, effectively treating them as having been appointed in the same year as internally selected candidates. The Supreme Court held that service regulations explicitly treat training as "duty", and seniority must be reckoned from the date of initial appointment/training, not merely from the commencement of probation.

Background

The dispute pertains to the inter-se seniority of Assistant Engineers (Electrical) in the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB) recruited from two sources: direct recruitment and internal selection. Direct recruits were selected and appointed between December 2000 and March 2001, initially joining as trainees. Internal candidates were selected and promoted later, in May 2002. The internal selectees challenged the Board's decision to reduce the training period for direct recruits (from two years to three months) and argued that seniority should only be counted from the date the direct recruits' probation started (post-training). While the Single Bench of the High Court dismissed their petitions, the Division Bench reversed it, ruling that both groups should be treated as 2002 appointees for seniority purposes.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Statutory Definition of "Duty":** The Court relied on Regulation 10(9) of the TNEB

Service Regulations, which defines "Duty" to include the period a person is performing the duties, undergoing probation, or training prescribed for a post. It held that the internal candidates' argument ran contrary to the plain language of the regulations.

- **Commencement of service:** Under Regulation 87(1), a person is "appointed to a class of service" the moment they discharge duties or commence prescribed training. Consequently, the training period is an integral part of the service and cannot be washed off for seniority purposes.
- **Seniority versus probation:** The Court clarified that Regulation 97 determines seniority based on the rank obtained in the list of approved candidates at the time of recruitment. Although probation begins upon joining duty, the date of probation does not override the merit-based seniority established during selection.
- **Inapplicability of the calendar year proviso:** The proviso to Regulation 97, which mandates a specific cyclic order for seniority when recruits from both sources join in the same calendar year, was found inapplicable. Since the direct recruits were appointed in 2000–2001 and the internal selectees in 2002, they did not belong to the same recruitment year.
- **Primacy of regulations over administrative orders:** The Court observed that administrative proceedings (BPs) or appointment letters cannot override the "plain language" of statutory regulations. It noted the High Court had "misdirected itself" by treating Board Proceedings to be relevant for the purpose of determination of seniority of the direct recruits.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the Division Bench's judgment. It restored the seniority of the direct recruits, affirming that their service must be counted from the first date of their joining for training. The Court held the view that seniority commences only from probation was totally erroneous and unsupported by the Regulations.

Chinthada Anand v. State of Andhra Pradesh (2026 INSC 283)

"The appellant ceased to be a member of the Scheduled Caste community upon his conversion to Christianity; he cannot subsequently invoke the provisions of the SC/ST Act. The said statute is a special legislation enacted with the avowed object of preventing atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and once the foundational requirement of caste status stands extinguished, the statutory protection thereunder is no longer available"

Coram: Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and Justice Manmohan

In a judgment delivered on **24 March 2026**, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court dismissed the appeal and upheld the judgment and order of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh. The appeal was preferred against a decision where the High Court quashed criminal proceedings initiated under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act (hereinafter

referred to as 'SC/SC Act') and the Indian Penal Code, concluding that the appellant, having openly professed and practiced Christianity as a Pastor for ten years, was legally disqualified from claiming Scheduled Caste status. The Supreme Court held that the religious criteria in the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, are absolute, and conversion to any religion not specified in the Order (such as Christianity) results in the immediate and complete loss of Scheduled Caste status and the associated statutory protections.

Background

The appellant, Chinthada Anand, was born into the Madiga community, which is a notified Scheduled Caste (hereinafter referred to as 'SC') in Andhra Pradesh. For approximately ten years before the legal proceedings, he had been serving as a Christian Pastor, conducting religious services and acting as a treasurer for a pastor's fellowship. Following alleged incidents of wrongful restraint, physical assault, and caste-based abuse by members of the Reddy community, he filed a complaint under the SC/ST Act, 1989. The High Court of Andhra Pradesh quashed the proceedings, ruling that the appellant's open profession of Christianity for a decade disqualified him from claiming Scheduled Caste status.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal, affirming that Scheduled Caste status is inextricably linked to specific religious professions under the 1950 Order.

- **Religious Limitation under Article 341:** The Court observed that the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, issued under Article 341(1), categorically limits SC status to those professing Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism.
- **Defining "Profess":** Relying on Panjabrao v. D P Meshram AIR 1965 SC 1179, the Court held that 'professing' a religion involves an outward manifestation and public practice of faith. The appellant's ten-year tenure as a Pastor constituted an open and public declaration of Christian faith.
- **Theological Foundation:** The judgment noted that Christianity, by its theological nature, does not recognise or incorporate the institution of caste, making it inconsistent with the legal status of 'Scheduled Castes', which was designed to address social disabilities like untouchability within the Hindu fold.
- **State Authority and Central Law:** The Court clarified that State Governments lack the authority to modify the SC list or override the Presidential Order via executive instructions. Benefits for 'SC converts' provided by states are often non-statutory and cannot grant the right to invoke central penal statutes like the SC/ST Act.
- **Insufficiency of Caste Certificates:** Possession of an SC certificate does not provide immunity from the religious requirement; if an individual ceases to profess a recognised religion, the certificate becomes invalid for claiming statutory benefits.
- **Failure of IPC Allegations:** Regarding the IPC charges, the Court found the allegations of restraint and assault to be uncorroborated by independent witnesses, concluding that continuing the trial would be an abuse of the process of law.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal, finding no substance in the challenge. It held that because the appellant's Scheduled Caste status was legally extinguished by his conversion, he could not be considered an 'aggrieved person' under the SC/ST Act. Accordingly, the Court upheld the High Court's decision to quash the criminal proceedings in their entirety, as continuing the trial would amount to an abuse of the process of law.

Training Session: E-Copying Module of ICMIS for the Copying Branch (Branch Specific Training)





25 March 2026: A training session on the e-copying module of ICMIS was held for staff members of the Copying Branch. The Resource Person, Mr Mohit Jain (Branch Officer, Computer Cell), provided a detailed explanation of the e-copying process for applications, elaborated on payment procedures, merging and preparation of e-copying request applications. The session also covered technical aspects and procedural details of the platform in a comprehensive manner.

Bid Adieu



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the retirement function held to felicitate the retiring employees at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Ms Anita Rani Ahuja, Additional Registrar at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Shri Gagan Soni, Deputy Registrar at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Ms Saroj Samuel, Assistant Registrar at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Shri Raman Kumar Sharma, Restorer (Library) Grade-I at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Shri Ved Singh, Restorer (Library) Grade-I at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Shri Satish Kumar, Restorer (Library) Grade-I at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



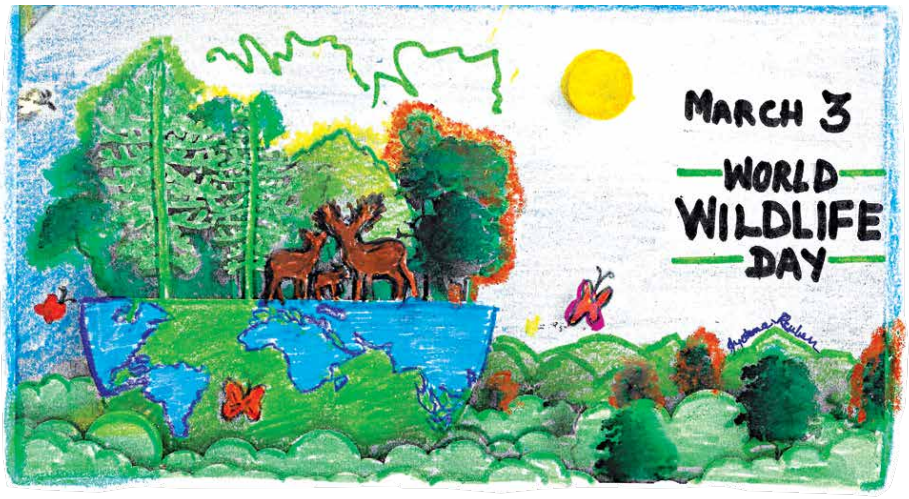
31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Ms Anita, Senior Court Attendant at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 March 2026: Justice A G Masih, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate Shri Shree Dutt, Supervisor (R) at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

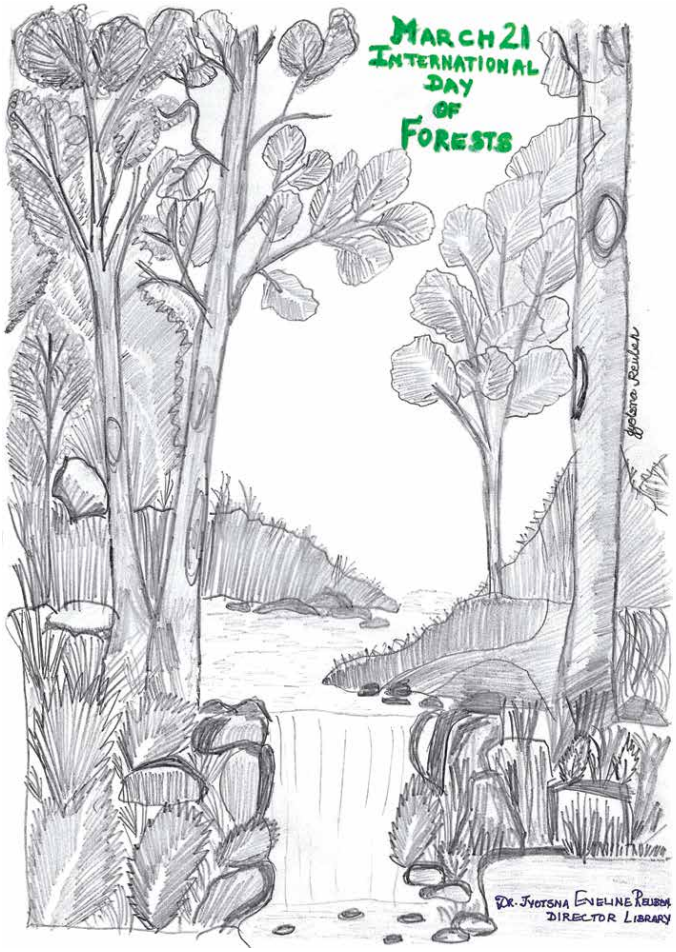
Beyond the Court: Creativity Abound

World Wildlife Day



Sketch by:
Dr Jyotsna Eveline Reuben
Director, Judges Library

International Day of Forests



Sketch by:
Dr Jyotsna Eveline Reuben
Director, Judges Library

International Women's Day



08 March 2026: Ms Nidhi Jain, Editor, SCR, Supreme Court of India, along with the officers/officials of the Supreme Court attended the National Level Programme to commemorate International Women's Day 2026 at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantonment, New Delhi



08 March 2026: The female officials of the Registry attended the Shakti Walk event at Kartavya Path, New Delhi



Supreme Court of India
Tilak Marg, New Delhi-110001

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