SUPREME COURT *Chronicle*

Issue XXIX | March 2026



Highlights of the Issue:

- 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute (CJEI)
- Conference for Chief Justices of High Courts
- 9th Cairo High-Level Meeting

Chief Justice's Corner



Dear Readers,

I am pleased to present the March edition of the *Supreme Court Chronicle*, which captures a range of notable engagements reflecting the Court's continued commitment to constructive collaboration and sustained progress.

This edition highlights the **11th Biennial Meeting of the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute (CJEI)**, hosted at the Supreme Court of India under the theme *"Educating for Judicial Leadership"*. The meeting brought together judicial educators, sitting and former judges, and legal scholars from across the Commonwealth to deliberate on the role of judicial education in fostering effective judicial leadership.

The issue also features the **Conference for Chief Justices of High Courts**, organised by the National Judicial Academy, India, under the theme *"Conference for Chief Justices of the High Courts on a Unified, Efficient and People-Centric Judiciary"*. The conference featured discussions on key aspects of judicial administration, including judicial leadership, data-driven judicial governance, effective use of technology, an accessible justice system, and judicial infrastructure.

Additionally, the Chronicle covers the **Ninth Cairo High-Level Meeting**, organised by the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt under the theme *"Challenges Facing Constitutional Judiciary in Africa"*. The meeting provided an opportunity for the exchange of perspectives on contemporary issues in constitutional adjudication and stimulated dialogue among judicial institutions across jurisdictions.

The engagements set out above reflect a range of institutional interactions and discussions, indicating the wide spectrum of subjects addressed during the period.

Happy reading!

Justice Surya Kant
[Chief Justice of India]

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National Engagements

11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators



13–15 February 2026: Group photograph of Judges and participants during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

13 - 15 February 2026: The Supreme Court of India, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute (CJEI), hosted the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators at the Supreme Court premises, New Delhi. Held under the theme *"Educating for Judicial Leadership"*, the three-day meeting brought together judicial educators, sitting and former judges, and legal scholars from across the Commonwealth for sustained deliberations on the evolving role of judicial education in shaping effective judicial leadership.

Inaugural Session, 13 February 2026

The meeting commenced with an Inaugural Ceremony on 13 February, 2026. The gathering was welcomed by Justice Peter Jamadar, Judge, Caribbean Court of Justice, and Vice President, Programming, CJEI. Welcome addresses were also delivered by Ms Sandra E Oxner, Founding President of the CJEI, who holds the distinction of being Nova Scotia's first woman judge, and by the Right Honourable Sir Dennis Byron, Chair of the CJEI, who has guided the Institute since the year 2000.

Justice Kashim Zannah, Chief Judge, High Court of Justice of Borno State, Nigeria, and President of the CJEI, delivered Remarks at the ceremony, enriching the occasion with his perspective on judicial education.



13–15 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered Special Remarks at the Inaugural Ceremony. Welcoming judicial educators from across Commonwealth jurisdictions, Justice Surya Kant underscored humility as the foundation of judicial leadership, drawing from the Upanishadic insight that true learning breeds restraint. He observed that judges must not be treated as finished products, but as evolving custodians capable of growth and correction.

He highlighted the importance of structured judicial dialogue, noting that courts—by design—rarely pause to reflect on themselves. Such gatherings, though not producing instant reform, reshape institutional perspective over time.

Addressing the theme, he emphasised that judicial education is inseparable from judicial leadership. He proposed deeper institutional integration across Commonwealth legal bodies, suggesting the exploration of a coordinated apex framework to align doctrine, education, and practice.

The inaugural evening also featured a cultural programme presented by the Indian Revival Group, which performed folk dances celebrating India's diverse cultural heritage.





13–15 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India, along with his spouse, Smt Savita Vashisht, during a cultural programme organised as part of the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Day I of Working Sessions, 14 February 2026

The first day of working sessions commenced with a Featured Presentation and moderated discussion on the theme *"Judicial Leadership in Our Times: Who, What, Why and How?"*. The session was delivered by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, as the Featured Speaker, and was moderated by Justice Rizine Robert Mzikamanda, Chief Justice of Malawi.

Session I of the day focused on *"Artificial Intelligence: Leadership Imperatives and Challenges"*. Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered Special Remarks for the session. The session was moderated by Justice Kashim Zannah and featured Justice Subodh Shah, former Judge, High Court of Gujarat, as faculty, alongside Professor Richard Susskind, Special Envoy for Justice and Artificial Intelligence to the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. The session examined the relevance of artificial intelligence to judiciaries, the risks and opportunities associated with its adoption, and the leadership imperatives for effective governance of AI in judicial systems.



14 February 2026: Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Session II addressed *"Judicial Leadership: Programme Design and Development Part I"*, with Justice Alice Yorke-Soo Hon, President of the Court of Appeal of the Turks and Caicos Islands, as moderator, and Justice Adrian Saunders and Justice Kashim Zannah as faculty. The session engaged participants on the principal areas of judicial governance confronting new Chief Justices and Chief Judges and on the design of orientation programmes for judicial leadership.



14 February 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Session III took up *"Environmental Justice: How Judiciaries are Leading the Ways Forward"*. Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered Special Remarks. The session was moderated by Justice Shiranee Tilakawardane, former Acting Chief Justice & Judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka, and featured Dr Samir Sinha, a senior retired officer of the Indian Forest Service and wildlife conservationist, as faculty. The session examined how judges are developing and applying environmental law principles in the areas of the rights of nature and climate justice.

Session IV, which concluded the working day, addressed *"Judicial Wellbeing: Why Leadership Matters"*. The session was moderated by Her

Honour Ms Michele Salmon, Senior Judge of the Parish Court of Jamaica, with Justice Peter Jamadar serving as faculty. The session drew attention to the United Nations declaration of 25th July, 2025 as the International Day for Judicial Wellbeing, and examined how judicial leadership is essential for ensuring wellbeing across justice systems.

Day II of Working Sessions, 15 February 2026

The final day of the meeting opened with a brief Practical Yoga Wellbeing Session before the substantive sessions commenced. Session V presented an innovative approach to judicial education through *"The Use of Great Literature: Panch Parmeshwar, a short story by Premchand"*. The session was moderated by Justice Simone Morris, High Court Judge from Guyana, and facilitated by Justice Madan B Lokur, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, and Former President of the CJEI, alongside Justice Peter Jamadar. The session featured a live re-enactment of the story by attorneys from Delhi, using literary themes to stimulate reflection on contemporary judicial concerns.



15 February 2026: Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Session VI examined *"Navigating Judicial Integrity and Independence in Changing Times"*. Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered Special Remarks. The session was moderated by Justice Kashim Zannah and brought together an international panel of faculty including Justice Andromache Karakatsanis, Judge, Supreme Court of Canada; Sir Dennis Byron, Former President of the Caribbean Court of Justice; and Justice Madan B Lokur.



15 February 2026: Justice Manoj Misra, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Session VII addressed *"Leading Through Judgment Writing: Strengthening Individual Voices and Institutional Trust"*. Special Remarks were delivered by Justice Manoj Misra, Judge, Supreme Court of India. The session was moderated by Dr Cheselden George Carmona, Professor at the Philippines Judicial Academy, with Justice Tom Crabtree, Chief Judicial Officer of the National Judicial Institute, Canada, as faculty.



15 February 2026: Justice K V Viswanathan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Session VIII concluded the thematic deliberations with *"Judicial Leadership: Programme Design and Development Part II"*. Justice K V Viswanathan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered Special Remarks. The session was moderated by Justice Vazeer Alam Mydin Meera, Judge of the Federal Court of Malaysia, with Justice Adrian Saunders and Justice Kashim Zannah as faculty.

Formal Closing

The meeting concluded with a Formal Closing Ceremony chaired by Justice Nicola Pierre, Judge, High Court of Guyana. Closing Remarks were delivered by Justice Kashim Zannah, President of the CJEI. Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, Supreme Court of India, also addressed the gathering. Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered the concluding address. The Vote of Thanks was extended by Justice Madan B Lokur, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, and Former President of the CJEI.



13–15 February 2026: Justice Madan B Lokur, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, and Former President of the CJEI, along with Ms Aarti Singh, Registrar (J), Supreme Court of India, during the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



15 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Justice Kashim Zannah, Chief Judge, High Court of Justice of Borno State, Nigeria, and President of the CJEI; Justice Peter Jamadar, Judge, Caribbean Court of Justice, and Vice President, Programming, CJEI; Justice Nicola Pierre, Judge, High Court of Guyana; Justice Madan B Lokur, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, and Former President of the CJEI and Ms Aarti Singh, Registrar (J), Supreme Court of India, during the closing ceremony of the 11th Biennial Meeting of Commonwealth Judicial Educators held at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Conference for Chief Justices of the High Courts



07-08 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice B V Nagarathna, Justice M M Sundresh, Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Dipankar Datta, Justice K V Viswanathan, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Aniruddha Bose, Director, National Judicial Academy and former Judge, Supreme Court of India; along with the Chief Justices of the various High Courts attended the two-day Conference for the Chief Justices of the High Courts on Unified, Efficient and People-Centric Judiciary, organised by the National Judicial Academy, at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

07-08 February 2026: The National Judicial Academy, India, organised a conference titled *"Conference for Chief Justices of the High Courts on a Unified, Efficient and People-Centric Judiciary"*. Over two days, the conference facilitated in-depth deliberations on institutional reform, technological integration, the role and functioning of the judiciary.

Judges of the Supreme Court of India participated as Resource Persons in various different sessions, including, Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice B V Nagarathna, Justice M M Sundresh, Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Dipankar Datta, Justice K V



07-08 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, planting a sapling during the Conference at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Viswanathan, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India.

Day 1

The conference commenced with a session titled *"Judicial Leadership and the Vision of a National Judicial Policy"*, which examined the role of the Chief Justice as an institutional leader. The discussion focused on the need for a National Judicial Policy, the implementation of judicial performance evaluation systems, and the conception of the judiciary as an integrated national institution.

The second session, titled *"Strategic and Data-Driven Judicial Governance"*, addressed issues relating to systemic management. Discussions included strengthening the enforceability of rights, analysing pendency patterns, strategic disposal of long-pending cases, and improving case flow and adjournment control.

The first day concluded with a third session on *"Effective Use of Technology in Alternatives to Traditional Judging"*. The session explored the mainstreaming of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms and strengthening access to justice through legal aid. It also included discussions on the future trajectory of the Mediation Act, 2023, and the use of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platforms.



07-08 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice Dipankar Datta, Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Aniruddha Bose, Director, National Judicial Academy and Former Judge, Supreme Court of India at the Conference



07-08 February 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the Conference at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



07-08 February 2026: Justice K V Viswanathan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the Conference at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Day 2

The second day commenced with the fourth session titled *"Building an Accessible, Modern, Uniform and Inclusive Justice System"*. Discussions focused on addressing financial, linguistic, geographical and procedural barriers through targeted technological and administrative interventions. The session also examined the expansion of judicial infrastructure and the integration of technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in case management.

The conference concluded with the fifth session titled *"Judicial Infrastructure as a Justice Imperative"*. The discussions centred on improving working conditions for judicial personnel, addressing infrastructural challenges in virtual hearings and remote access, and strengthening cybersecurity, training and inclusive design within the justice system.

The conference served as a platform for meaningful deliberation and exchange of perspectives. It reflected a continued commitment towards strengthening the justice system through dialogue, collaboration and the sharing of best practices. The discussions also underscored the importance of collective efforts in addressing emerging challenges and enhancing the effectiveness of judicial processes.



07-08 February 2026: Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the Conference at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



07-08 February 2026: Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the Conference at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Interaction with Delegation from Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA)



03 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with Mr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and members of the SCBA, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



03 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, interacted with members of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Interaction with Delegation from Indonesia



10 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, presented a commemorative coin marking 75 years of the Supreme Court of India, to Mr Mochamad Basoeki Hadimoeljono, Head of the Nusantara Capital City Authority, Nusantara, Borneo, Indonesia, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

10 February 2026: A 22-member Indonesian delegation, headed by Mr Mochamad Basoeki Hadimoeljono, Head of the Nusantara Capital City Authority, Nusantara, Borneo, Indonesia, visited the Supreme Court of India. The delegation met Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India.

During the visit, the delegation was welcomed by Mr Rakesh Kumar, Registrar (International Relations), upon their arrival at the Administrative Buildings Complex of the Supreme Court of India. The delegation was briefed about the complex by Mr Purnesh Kumar, Project Director, CPWD. They also visited the Multipurpose Hall, Auditorium and Judges' Dining Lounge. The delegation further visited the Main Building of the Supreme Court of India and the construction site of the new building.



10 February 2026: A group photograph of the Indonesian delegation, along with officers of the Registry, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Mega Health Check-Up Camp



10 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; and Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the Mega Health Check-Up Camp, organised at the Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

10 February 2026: The Supreme Court of India, in association with Max Super Speciality Hospital, Shalimar Bagh, organised a Mega Health Check-Up Camp, at the Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India.

The initiative reflects the importance of promoting preventive healthcare and well-being among members of the institution. Such camps support early detection of health conditions. They also encourage health awareness and timely medical care.



10 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, and Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, lighting the ceremonial lamp during the Mega Health Check-Up Camp, organised at the Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Interaction with Delegation from Google and Alphabet



18 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India and Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, along with Mr Sundar Pichai, CEO, Google and Alphabet, who headed a delegation from Google and Alphabet, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

18 February 2026: A 6-member delegation from Google and Alphabet, headed by Mr Sundar Pichai, CEO, Google and Alphabet, visited the Supreme Court of India. The delegation met Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India and Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India.

During the meeting, the Chief Justice of India had discussion with the delegation from Google regarding the role of Artificial Intelligence in the Judicial System.



18 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, presented a commemorative coin marking 75 years of the Supreme Court of India, to Mr Sundar Pichai, CEO, Google and Alphabet, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

National Conference on Cyber Safety



20 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Shri Bhajanlal Sharma, Chief Minister of Rajasthan; Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Justice Rajesh Bindal, Justice P B Varale, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Sanjeev Prakash Sharma, Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Rajasthan; Smt Diya Kumari and Dr Prem Chand Bairwa, Deputy Chief Ministers of Rajasthan; and Shri Jogaram Patel, Cabinet Minister, Government of Rajasthan, during the Conference at Jaipur, Rajasthan

20-22 February 2026: A three day National conference on *"Cyber Safety: Awareness, Protection and Inclusive Access to Justice"* was organised by Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority (RSLSA). It revolved around cyber safety and digital justice.

In his keynote address, the Chief Justice positioned cyber safety as integral to access to justice in the digital age. Citing NCRB data reflecting significant increases in cybercrime cases and financial losses, he underscored that cyber fraud is no longer marginal but systemic.

He framed technological vulnerability as a modern barrier to justice, observing that citizens unable to navigate digital systems are effectively excluded from legal remedies. Cyber safety, he noted, protects not only financial security but institutional trust and democratic predictability.

Addressing Artificial Intelligence, he described technology as magnifying human intention—capable of assisting justice or enabling harm. Regulation, vigilance, and ethical restraint must therefore accompany innovation.

Welcoming RSLSA's initiatives—including cyber awareness handbooks, protection schemes, redressal units, and school outreach programmes—he commended the shift from advisory messaging to institutional architecture. Concluding, he emphasised that technological advancement must remain subordinate to constitutional values and collective responsibility.



20 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, presenting the mementos for the event 'Sports for Awareness: Udaan 2.0' to the students

The conference, spread over three days, served as a significant platform for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders from the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, academia, and civil society. Through a series of deliberations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, it sought to deepen awareness of emerging cyber threats while simultaneously exploring mechanisms to strengthen digital resilience and accessibility within the justice delivery system. The initiative reflected a growing institutional commitment to ensuring that advancements in technology are harnessed in a manner that is inclusive, secure, and aligned with the broader objective of equitable access to justice for all.



20 February 2026:
Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered his keynote address to the august gathering at the event

Convocation Ceremony – National Law University, Jodhpur



21 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice Sandeep Mehta and Justice Vijay Bishnoi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Sanjeev Prakash Sharma, Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Rajasthan & Chancellor, National Law University, Jodhpur; Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati and Justice Vinit Kumar Mathur, Judges, High Court of Rajasthan; Justice Dinesh Mehta, Judge, High Court of Delhi; Justice S Ravindra Bhat, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India; and Prof (Dr) Harpreet Kaur, Vice-Chancellor, National Law University, Jodhpur, at the 18th Convocation Ceremony of National Law University, Jodhpur (Rajasthan)

21 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, graced the 18th Convocation Ceremony of National Law University, Jodhpur, as the Chief Guest. The Convocation was also attended by Justice Sandeep Mehta, Judge, Supreme Court of India as the Guest of Honor; Justice Vijay Bishnoi, Judge, Supreme Court of India, as a Special Invitee; and was presided by Justice Sanjeev Prakash Sharma, Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Rajasthan & Chancellor, National Law University, Jodhpur.

Addressing the graduating class, Justice Surya Kant cautioned against allowing law to become inaccessible through complexity or jargon. Excellence, he noted, must widen access rather than create exclusion. Reflecting on campus life, he described informal spaces of debate and camaraderie as formative "forums" that shape professional temperament. Concluding, he urged graduates to serve not as guardians of closed citadels but as architects of open forums that strengthen the Republic.



21 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered the Convocation Address at the 18th Convocation Ceremony of National Law University, Jodhpur (Rajasthan)

Engagements at Hidayatullah National Law University

Convocation Ceremony – Hidayatullah National Law University



22 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice P S Narasimha and Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice, High Court of Chhattisgarh and Chancellor, Hidayatullah National Law University; and Professor (Dr) V C Vivekanandan, Vice Chancellor, Hidayatullah National Law University, during the Ninth Convocation of the Hidayatullah National Law University at Raipur, Chhattisgarh

22 February 2026: The ninth convocation ceremony of Hidayatullah National Law University was held with Surya Kant, the Chief Justice of India, attending as the Chief Guest. The convocation was also attended by Justice P S Narasimha and Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Judges, Supreme Court of India.

Justice Surya Kant reflected on the transition from university life to professional responsibility and spoke on the theme of sustaining a long and meaningful legal career. He described convocation as a moment of pause between two chapters, urging graduates to cherish the shared experiences of campus life even as they step into an uncertain



22 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered the Convocation Address at the 9th Convocation of the Hidayatullah National Law University at Raipur, Chhattisgarh

but promising future. Emphasising collaboration, he encouraged young lawyers to treat peers not as rivals but as lifelong colleagues whose mutual respect and support strengthen the legal profession. Drawing from his own early experiences at the Bar, he highlighted the enduring value of generosity and professional courtesy. Justice Kant also reminded graduates that law is a profession shaped by patience, where growth and recognition emerge gradually through years of effort, reflection, and perseverance. Concluding, he urged them to move forward together, sustain community within the profession, and approach their careers with patience, humility, and commitment.

Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony – Hidayatullah National Law University New Auditorium Complex



22 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, laid the Foundation Stone of the Hidayatullah National Law University New Auditorium Complex in the presence of Justice Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice, High Court of Chhattisgarh & Chancellor, Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur; and Prof (Dr) V C Vivekanandan, Vice Chancellor, Hidayatullah National Law University at Raipur, Chhattisgarh

Interaction with Delegation from American Immigration Lawyers' Association



24 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with a 63-member delegation of the American Immigration Lawyers' Association, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

24 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, had an interactive session with a 63-member delegation of the American Immigration Lawyers' Association, on behalf of American Lawyers' Association, Asia Pacific Chapter. The Delegation also visited the National Judicial Museum and Archive of the Supreme Court of India.



24 February 2026:
Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, interacted with a 63-member delegation of the American Immigration Lawyers' Association, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



Interaction with Delegation from Punjab Bar Council



25 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice Vikram Nath and Justice A G Masih, Judges, Supreme Court of India, along with members of the Punjab Bar Council, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



25 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice Vikram Nath and Justice A G Masih, Judges, Supreme Court of India, in interaction with members of the Punjab Bar Council, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Gujarat: Official Engagements

Convocation Ceremony – National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar



27 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice Vipul M Pancholi and Justice N V Anjaria; Judges, Supreme Court of India; Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat; Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat; and Dr J M Vyas, Vice Chancellor of National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) at the 4th Convocation Ceremony of the National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat

27 February 2026: The 4th Convocation of the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) was graced by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, as the Chief Guest. The Convocation was also attended by Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice Vipul M Pancholi and Justice N V Anjaria, Judges, Supreme Court of India. Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat and Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat graced the function as the Guests of Honour. Padma Shri awardee Dr J M Vyas, Vice Chancellor of NFSU, conferred degrees to the students during the convocation ceremony.

Justice Surya Kant highlighted that the legitimacy of judicial decisions depends fundamentally on the reliability of evidence presented before courts. Forensic science therefore plays a crucial role in ensuring that justice is based on objective and scientifically verifiable standards rather than assumptions or untested assertions. By strengthening evidentiary integrity, forensic expertise helps safeguard constitutional guarantees such as the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21.

Concluding his address, Justice Surya Kant reminded graduates that forensic professionals carry significant ethical responsibilities. Scientific expertise must always be accompanied by integrity, impartiality, and methodological rigour, as forensic evidence may influence judicial outcomes affecting liberty and reputation.

Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony – New Building of Gujarat High Court Arbitration Centre



28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Shri Bhupendra Rajnikant Patel, Chief Minister of Gujarat; Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice N V Anjaria, Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat; Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat; Justice A S Supehia, Judge, High Court of Gujarat; and Shri Kamal Trivedi, Senior Advocate and Advocate General of Gujarat, at the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of New Building of Gujarat High Court Arbitration Centre at Ahmedabad, Gujarat

28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, and Shri Bhupendra Patel, Chief Minister of Gujarat, presided over the laying of the foundation stone for the new state-of-the-art building of the Gujarat High Court Arbitration Centre and the unveiling of its logo. The event was also attended by other Judges of the Supreme Court of India, including, Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice N V Anjaria, Justice Vipul Manubhai Pancholi.

A conference titled *"Institutional Arbitration at a Crossroads: Challenges and the Way Forward"* was also inaugurated at the Gujarat High Court Auditorium. The occasion further marked the release of the Arbitration Centre's newsletter and the launch of its redesigned website.

The programme was jointly organised by the Gujarat High Court Arbitration Centre and the Gujarat State Legal Services Authority under the aegis of the High Court of Gujarat. Justice Surya Kant emphasised that this occasion represents more than a ceremonial event; it is a decisive step toward creating a dispute resolution framework in India that inspires global confidence and commands genuine trust mechanisms. To move forward, he identified three critical challenges:

building deep-seated trust in the neutrality of appointments, expanding institutional capacity to handle high volumes of commercial disputes, and the urgent need for professionalisation within the discipline. The address concluded with a call for institutional honesty, urging stakeholders to measure their progress against global standards rather than past achievements.



28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Shri Bhupendra Rajnikant Patel, Chief Minister of Gujarat; Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; and Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat, at the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of new building of Gujarat High Court Arbitration Centre at Ahmedabad, Gujarat



28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, lighted the ceremonial lamp, in the presence of Shri Bhupendra Rajnikant Patel, Chief Minister of Gujarat; Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; and Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat at Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Convocation Ceremony – Gujarat National Law University



28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India graced the 16th Convocation Ceremony at Gujarat National Law University, Gabdhinagar, Gujarat as the Chief Guest along with Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice N V Anjaria, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat; Prof (Dr) S Shanthakumar, Director, GNLU and Dr Nitin Malik, Registrar, GNLU

28 February 2026: The 16th Convocation Ceremony of Gujarat National Law University, held at Gandhinagar, was distinguished by the august presence of Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The occasion marked a significant milestone for the graduating batch, celebrating academic excellence and the transition of students into the legal profession.

The event was attended by several other distinguished dignitaries from the judiciary and academia. The dais included Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice N V Anjaria, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Sunita Agarwal, Chief Justice, High Court of Gujarat; Prof (Dr) S Shanthakumar, Director, GNLU and Dr Nitin Malik, Registrar, GNLU.

Addressing the graduating class, Justice Surya Kant, reflected on the foundational values that sustain the legal profession and the challenges encountered in its formative years. Speaking to graduates who had already entered professional life, he emphasised that the true demands of the profession are shaped less by opportunity and more by probity, integrity, and the ability to make principled choices, often away from public scrutiny.

Drawing from his early experience at the Bar, Justice Surya Kant highlighted the distance between



28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India addressing the gathering at the 16th Convocation Ceremony of the Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat



28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India along with Prof (Dr) S Shanthakumar, Director, GNLU presented the degrees to the graduating students at the Convocation Ceremony

legal education and the realities of practice. While academic training imparts doctrinal knowledge, the profession requires the ability to meet deadlines, manage client expectations, navigate courtroom dynamics, and exercise sound judgment under constraints. He described this transition as the movement from learning the map to navigating the territory, noting that such disorientation is both natural and formative.

Underscoring the importance of professional self-awareness, he urged graduates to recognise their individual strengths and gain clarity about their role within the profession. He further noted that distinction is rarely achieved by trying to excel at everything, and that sustained growth is more often the result of discipline, focus, and a gradual understanding of one's natural aptitude within the field.

In conclusion, Justice Surya Kant invoked the Upanishadic injunctions *"Satyam Vada, Dharmam Chara"*, urging graduates to anchor their professional journeys in truth, righteousness, and reliability, particularly in moments when such commitments are most tested.

The ceremony also witnessed the inauguration of an AI-enabled virtual reality courtroom simulation by the Chief Justice of India. This initiative is designed to enhance experiential legal education by enabling students to engage with immersive simulated courtroom environments.



28 February 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India along with other dignitaries, experienced the AI-enabled virtual reality courtroom simulation at the 16th Convocation Ceremony of the Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat

Public Events, Inauguration Ceremonies and Other Engagements

Inauguration and Release – Mahila Chaitanya Sravanth Souvenir



21 February 2026 : Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India; and Justice Battu Devanand, Judge, High Court of Andhra Pradesh, attended the Inauguration and Release of Mahila Chaitanya Sravanth Souvenir at Hyderabad, Telangana

Global ADR Summit 2026



22 February 2026 : Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended and chaired a panel discussion on Mediation at the Global ADR Summit 2026 organised by Mediate Guru at New Delhi

Inauguration Ceremony – 7th Floor of the Mediation & Conciliation Centre



27 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Chairman, Mediation & Conciliation Project Committee (MCPC), inaugurated the 7th Floor of the Mediation & Conciliation Centre at the Administrative Annexe Building of the High Court of Allahabad, in the presence of Justice Arun Bhansali, Chief Justice, High Court of Allahabad, and other Judges of the High Court of Allahabad at Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh

Convocation Ceremony – Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur

28 February 2026: Justice K V Viswanathan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, participated as the Chief Guest at the 4th Convocation of the Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur, Maharashtra



Global Engagements

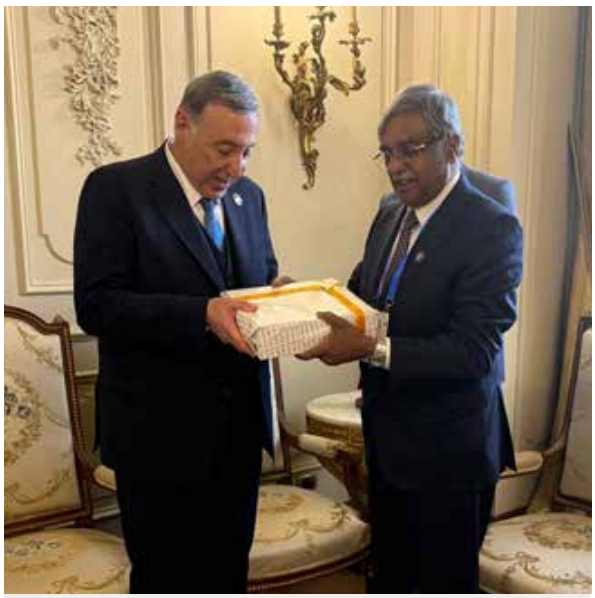
Egypt: Official Engagements



07–09 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, at the Ninth Cairo High-Level Meeting of the Chief Justices and Presidents of the African Constitutional and Supreme Courts and Constitutional Councils, at Cairo, Egypt

07-09 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, participated in the Ninth Cairo High-Level Meeting of the Chief Justices and Presidents of the African Constitutional and Supreme Courts and Constitutional Councils, held in Cairo, Egypt. The meeting was organised by the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt under the theme *"Challenges Facing Constitutional Judiciary in Africa"*.

Justice Vikram Nath delivered a speech on *"Interpretation of the Constitution and the Expansion of Jurisdiction"* during Session 3, under the theme *"Limits of the Jurisdiction of Constitutional Justice"*. The meeting provided a platform for the exchange of perspectives on contemporary issues in constitutional adjudication, fostering dialogue among judicial institutions across jurisdictions.



07–09 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, exchanging mementos with Mr Paul Fahmy Iskandar, President of the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt, at Cairo, Egypt

Uttar Pradesh: Launch of "Nyaya Rath" Mobile Legal Aid Vehicles and State Mediation Helpline



14 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), flagged off "Nyaya Rath" mobile legal aid vehicles for the 74 District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs) of Uttar Pradesh, in the presence of Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Justice Arun Bhansali, Chief Justice, High Court of Allahabad and Patron-in-Chief, Uttar Pradesh State Legal Services Authority; Justice Mahesh Chandra Tripathi, Judge, High Court of Allahabad and Executive Chairman, Uttar Pradesh State Legal Services Authority; and Judges of High Court of Allahabad at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

14 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), inaugurated and flagged off the "Nyaya Rath" initiative of the Uttar Pradesh State Legal Services Authority (UPSLSA) at the Chief Justice Portico, High Court, Lucknow Bench. It comprised Multi-Utility Vehicles for all 74 District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs) of Uttar Pradesh, to function as Mobile Legal Aid Clinics and Mobile Mediation Centres, with the objective of taking "Nyaya at the doorstep" of citizens, particularly at the grassroots.

The programme was graced by Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Justice Arun Bhansali, Chief Justice, High Court of Allahabad and Patron-in-Chief, UPSLSA, Justice D K Upadhyaya, Chief Justice, High Court of Delhi, Justice Shree Chandrashekhar, Chief Justice, High Court of Bombay, Justice Mahesh Chandra Tripathi, Judge, High Court of Allahabad and Executive Chairman, UPSLSA, other Judges of the Allahabad High Court, and officers of UPSLSA.

On the same occasion, Justice Vikram Nath also launched the State Mediation Helpline (1800-180-1212) to facilitate free guidance and information for dispute resolution through mediation.

Community Mediation



16 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), inaugurated the pilot project titled "Community Mediation: Towards a Litigation-Free Rural India" at Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh

16 February 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India, and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), launched a pilot project of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) titled *"Community Mediation: Towards a Litigation-Free Rural India"*, along with a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on the subject. It was launched in collaboration with the Uttar Pradesh State Legal Services Authority (UPSLSA) and the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Baghpat, with the objective of strengthening grassroots dispute resolution and reducing litigation in rural India.

During the event, Justice Vikram Nath observed that the long-term aim of the initiative is to build socially resilient rural communities capable of resolving disputes at an early stage, thereby fostering harmony and reducing the burden on courts, and noted that six villages in District Baghpat have been identified for pilot implementation. He emphasised that local disputes, including family disagreements, neighbourhood conflicts and land-related issues, can often be resolved more effectively through structured community dialogue rather than prolonged adversarial litigation.

It was further highlighted that community mediation seeks to revive the long-standing tradition of resolving disputes through collective wisdom, while ensuring confidentiality, neutrality and fairness under modern legal safeguards, and noted that local community members, including retired teachers, elders and social workers, would be identified and trained as mediators to serve as a bridge between the formal legal system and community relationships.

In Re: Order dated 17.03.2025 Passed by the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad in Criminal Revision No. 1449/2024 and Ancillary Issues (2026 INSC 165)

"Our decisions as participants in the legal process, from laying down the procedure that shall have to be faced by common citizens to the final judgment passed in any given case, must reflect the ethos of compassion, humanity, and understanding, which are essential for creating a fair and effective justice system"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice N V Anjaria

In a judgment delivered on **10 February 2026**, a three-judge bench allowed two criminal appeals and disposed of a suo motu writ petition. The Court considered two distinct issues: first, whether the Allahabad High Court was justified in reducing the charge against the accused, at the stage of issuance of summons, from attempt to commit rape to a lesser offence under the IPC and the POCSO Act; and second, the broader need for institutionalised guidelines to promote sensitivity and compassion in the judicial approach while dealing with sexual offences and other vulnerable cases.

Background

The suo motu writ petition was registered on the basis of a letter addressed to the Chief Justice of India by the organisation "We the Women of India", drawing attention to a judgment dated 17.03.2025 passed by the Allahabad High Court in Criminal Revision No. 1449 of 2024.

The proceedings originated before the Special Judge (POCSO), Kasganj, who had issued summons to two accused for offences under Section 376 read with Section 511 of the IPC (attempt to commit rape) and Section 18 of the POCSO Act (punishment for attempt to commit an offence). In revision, the High Court modified the order and directed that the accused be summoned instead for offences under Section 354B of the IPC (assault with intent to disrobe) read with Sections 9 and 10 of the POCSO Act (aggravated sexual assault), holding that the allegations disclosed only preparation and not an attempt to commit rape. Similar concerns were raised in two criminal appeals filed by certain NGOs and the mother of the minor victim.

The factual allegations were that the accused took the minor victim as a pillion rider on their motorcycle, assuring her mother they would drop her home. Instead, they stopped near a culvert, dragged her towards it, and committed sexually offensive acts upon her. The crime was interrupted only because the victim's shrieks attracted two witnesses, causing the accused to flee.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **On "preparation" versus "attempt":** The Court referred to State of *Madhya Pradesh v. Mahendra alias Golu (2022) 12 SCC 442*, which drew a clear distinction between the two concepts. Preparation consists of deliberation and devising means necessary

for commission of the offence. Attempt, by contrast, is the execution of *mens rea* after preparation: it starts where preparation ends, though it falls short of actual commission. The Court held that the allegations squarely disclosed a pre-determined criminal intent which had begun to be executed. Crucially, the High Court itself recorded that the crime was not completed only because of the intervention of witnesses, which confirmed that the stage of attempt had clearly been crossed. The impugned judgment therefore reflected a patently erroneous application of settled principles of criminal jurisprudence.

- **On judicial sensitivity in cases involving vulnerable victims:** The Court acknowledged the wider concern regarding instances of impassive judicial decisions involving sexual offences, particularly those with minor or vulnerable victims. While recognising that action is needed to inculcate sensitivity and compassion into judicial processes, the Court was hesitant to lay down fresh guidelines without a comprehensive study of past efforts, their on-ground results, and different challenges experienced by victims and complainants in similarly sensitive cases. The Court accordingly requested the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, through its Director Justice Aniruddha Bose (former Judge of the Supreme Court), to constitute a Committee of Experts to prepare Draft Guidelines on "Developing Guidelines to Inculcate Sensitivity and Compassion into Judges and Judicial Processes in the Context of Sexual Offences and other Vulnerable Cases". The Committee, chaired by Justice Bose and comprising four domain experts including practitioners, academicians, and social workers, was directed to consider previous measures taken at both judicial and administrative levels, compile offensive words and expressions across different languages that may go unnoticed, and prepare the guidelines in simple language accessible to victims and complainants regardless of their background or legal proficiency. The Committee was requested to submit its report preferably within three months.

Outcome

- The criminal appeals are allowed. The impugned Allahabad High Court judgment dated 17.03.2025 is set aside and the original summons order dated 23.06.2023 of the Special Judge (POCSO), Kasganj under Section 376 read with Section 511 IPC and Section 18 of the POCSO Act is restored.
- The National Judicial Academy, Bhopal is requested to constitute a Committee of Experts, under the chairpersonship of Justice Aniruddha Bose, to prepare comprehensive draft guidelines on judicial sensitivity in sexual offence and vulnerable cases, preferably within three months.
- The suo motu writ petition stands disposed of. The Court, after setting aside the order dated 17.03.2025 and issuing directions for the constitution of a Committee of Experts, observed that the Committee's report, once submitted, would be considered by the Court in a holistic manner and not in the context of a single case.

Power Trust v. Bhuvan Madan (IRP of Hiranmaye Energy Ltd.) & Ors. (2026 INSC 166)

"The legislative intent behind such prompt and summary intervention is 'to ensure revival and continuation of the corporate debtor by protecting the corporate debtor from its own management and from a corporate death by liquidation'"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul M Pancholi

In a judgment dated **18 February 2026**, a three-judge bench dismissed an appeal by the promoter of an insolvent power company challenging the initiation of Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016. The Court reaffirmed the narrow scope of inquiry at the admission stage of a Section 7 application, clarified the limited applicability of the *Vidarbha Industries Power Ltd. v. Axis Bank (2022) 8 SCC 352* precedent and upheld the primacy of the commercial wisdom of the Committee of Creditors.

Background

Corporate Debtor had availed a term loan of ₹1,859 crore from REC Ltd. in 2013, later enhanced by ₹446.97 crore, for setting up a power plant. The accounts were classified as non-performing assets in June 2018 on account of default dating back to 31.03.2018. A loan restructuring proposal was subsequently negotiated, subject to pre-implementation conditions including obtaining a favourable tariff order, creation of a Debt Service Reserve Account, and demonstration of the plant running at full capacity for 72 continuous hours. The Corporate Debtor failed to fulfil these conditions.

The financial creditor thereafter filed a Section 7 application before the NCLT, recording the date of default as 31.03.2018 and the outstanding claim as approximately ₹2,183 crore. The NCLT admitted the application and initiated CIRP in January 2024. The NCLAT upheld this order. During the pendency of the appeal before the Supreme Court, the appellant made five successive settlement proposals ranging from ₹1,101.56 crore to ₹1,671.86 crore, all of which were rejected by the Committee of Creditors (CoC) by overwhelming majorities.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Bar under Section 10A:** The Court rejected the appellant's contention that CIRP was barred under Section 10A, which prohibited initiation of insolvency proceedings for defaults arising between 25.03.2020 and 24.03.2021 owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The date of default as recorded in the Section 7 application was 31.03.2018, which predated the Section 10A window entirely.
- **Novation by Restructuring Proposals:** The Court held that the restructuring proposals of February and September 2020 never crystallised into binding agreements novating the original loan, as the Corporate Debtor had failed to satisfy the essential pre-implementation conditions. The receipt of part payments made towards an existing debt could not amount to acceptance of the restructuring proposals, and such payments did not constitute full satisfaction of the outstanding debt so as to render the Section 7 application inadmissible.
- **Scope of Inquiry under Section 7:** The Court reaffirmed the settled position in *Innoventive Industries Ltd. v. ICICI Bank (2018) 1 SCC*

40 that the role of the Adjudicating Authority at the admission stage under Section 7 is strictly limited to ascertaining the existence of a financial debt and whether a default has occurred. The Court clarified that *Vidarbha Industries Power Ltd.* was decided on its peculiar facts and, as subsequently confirmed in *M Suresh Kumar Reddy v. Canara Bank (2023) 8 SCC 387*, its observations do not operate as a binding precedent diluting the ratio in *Innoventive*.

- **Commercial Wisdom of the CoC:** Once a resolution plan has been approved by the CoC, the court cannot second-guess the commercial wisdom of the CoC in preferring one plan over another. Under Section 12A, withdrawal of CIRP post-constitution of the CoC requires 90% approval of voting share, a threshold that was never met by the appellant's proposals. Any further direction to stall the CIRP at the behest of the promoter would be prejudicial to the interest of a swift and timely insolvency resolution.

Outcome

The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal. The specific directions issued were as follows:

- The appeal challenging the admission of the Section 7 application and initiation of CIRP against Hiranmaye Energy Ltd. was dismissed.
- The stay on CIRP granted by this Court vide order dated 12.09.2025 was vacated, allowing the CIRP to proceed forthwith.
- The application filed by SREI Equipment Finance Ltd. seeking release of the ₹ 125 crore deposited by the appellant as a condition of the stay was rejected, as no crystallised award against the appellant had been placed on record and the deposit was made to secure the stay of CIRP and not to secure any claim of SEFL. Accordingly, the Registry was directed to refund the sum of ₹125 crore held as fixed deposit, along with accrued interest, to the appellant.

West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Co Ltd. v. Adhunik Power & Natural Resource Ltd. & Ors. (2026 INSC 202)

"Ordinarily, when a contract is reduced to writing, its terms must be determined from the document itself. However, this rule does not put an embargo on looking into such facts which (i) establish a link between terms of the contract and existing facts ie attending circumstances, or (ii) impart meaning to a term which may otherwise be meaningless or unworkable"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice B V Nagarathna and Justice Joymalya Bagchi

In a judgment dated **27 February 2026,** a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court partly allowed appeals filed by West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd. (WBSEDCL) against an order of the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL). The Court upheld APTEL's finding that cancellation of the Ganeshpur captive coal block and enactment of the Coal Mines (Special Provision) Act, 2015 constituted Change in Law events under the Power Purchase Agreement/Power Supply Agreement (PPA/PSA), entitling Adhunik Power and Natural Resources Ltd. (APNRL) to compensation with effect from 25.08.2014.

However, the Court set aside APTEL's direction that APNRL was also entitled to compensation for coal procured through e-auction/import to meet the shortfall in tapering linkage prior to the cancellation of the coal block, holding that such compensation was barred by Article 2.5 of the PPA/PSA.

Background

WBSEDCL and PTC India Ltd executed a Power Supply Agreement in January 2011 for supply of 100 MW for 25 years, with APNRL executing a back-to-back PPA with PTC. The PPA/PSA contemplated APNRL's captive coal block at Ganeshpur, Jharkhand (held jointly with TISCO) as the primary fuel source. Article 2.5 barred APNRL from claiming any escalation in energy charges if coal was procured from alternative sources. Article 10 provided for compensation upon Change in Law events, so as to restore the affected party to the same economic position.

Since the captive block could not be operationaliszed, APNRL sourced coal under tapering linkage and met the shortfall through e-auction and imports. On 25.08.2014, the Supreme Court in *Manohar Lal Sharma v. Principal Secy. and Ors. (2014) 9 SCC 516* cancelled all allotments of coal blocks by the Screening Committee, including APNRL's Ganeshpur block. The Coal Mines (Special Provision) Act, 2015 followed. APNRL then filed a petition before Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) seeking pass-through of energy charges based on actual fuel costs. CERC awarded compensation for e-auction/import coal procured pending operationaliszation of the captive block but declined to treat the coal block cancellation as a Change in Law event under Article 10. On appeal, APTEL upheld the e-auction/import compensation and reversed CERC on Change in Law, holding that both the *Manohar Lal* judgment and the 2015 Act constituted Change in Law events under Articles 10.1.1(b) and 10.1.1(f), and remanded the matter to CERC for awarding appropriate compensation with effect from 25.08.2014 along with carrying costs.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **On the identity of the captive coal block:** Despite the PPA/PSA not expressly stipulating the source of coal, the Court affirmed its identity from surrounding circumstances, namely the Minutes of Meeting dated 03.01.2011 recording APNRL's captive coal block at Ganeshpur in joint venture with TISCO, and WBSEDCL's own letter dated 30.04.2012 enquiring about coal lifting from the same block. Applying the principle affirmed in *Anglo American Metallurgical Coal Pty Ltd. v. MMTC Ltd. (2021) 3 SCC 308,* that extrinsic evidence can be used to give meaning to contractual terms that are ambiguous or vague. WBSEDCL, having been a party to these correspondences, could not resile from them.
- **On Change in Law under Article 10:** The *Manohar Lal Sharma* judgment interpreted the Coal Mines Nationalisation Act, 1957 and the MMDR Act, 1957 differently from the interpretation previously adopted by the Government, resulting in cancellation of coal block allotments. This squarely fell within Article 10.1.1(b) (change in interpretation of law by a competent court). The Coal Mines (Special Provision) Act, 2015, which altered the process of coal block allocation, fell within Article 10.1.1(f) (change in law relating to Mining Laws affecting input cost or raw material). Together, these events materially affected APNRL's right to procure coal from its captive block.

APTEL was justified in awarding Change in Law compensation from 25.08.2014 with carrying costs.

- **On the scope of Article 2.5 versus Article 10:** The Court drew a clear distinction between the two provisions. Article 2.5 was an indemnity protecting WBSEDCL against escalation in coal price beyond the levelsized price where coal is procured from sources other than the captive source. Article 10 applies when a Change in Law materially affects APNRL's ability to operate the coal block and fulfil its obligations under the PPA/PSA.
- **Applicability of Article 2.5 Indemnity Clause:** The Court disagreed with APTEL's view that APNRL was entitled to compensation for procurement of coal through e-auction/imports to meet the shortfall in tapering linkage prior to cancellation of the coal block on 25.08.2014. The Minutes of Meeting dated 03.01.2011 recorded that the Ganeshpur Captive Coal Block had been allotted to APNRL in joint venture with TISCO and was assured to be operational when supply to WBSEDCL commenced. In this backdrop, APTEL's restrictive interpretation of the indemnity clause under Article 2.5 of the PPA/PSA was held untenable, as it would expose WBSEDCL to coal cost escalation.

Outcome

- The appeals are partly allowed and APTEL's order dated 04.09.2025 is set aside to the extent it awards compensation for e-auction/import coal procurement to meet the shortfall in tapering linkage pending operationalisation of the Ganeshpur captive coal block.
- Compensation on account of Change in Law events with effect from 25.08.2014, along with carrying costs till the date of actual payment, is upheld.

Shobha Namdev Sonavane v. Samadhan Bajirao Sonvane and Others (2026 INSC 181)

"At the cost of repetition, it may be mentioned that the provisions of rioting, unlawful assembly having been invoked, the prosecution was under no obligation to identify and fix the individual acts of the accused"

Coram: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta

In a judgment dated **23 February 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed the appeal and cancelled the bail granted to the respondents, ruling that the High Court erred by requiring the identification of individual roles in a case involving an unlawful assembly.

Background

On 19.08.2022, the appellant's husband was intercepted near the Shirdi-Lasalgaon Road by six individuals, including respondent Nos. 1 and 2, who allegedly assaulted him with iron rods and sticks while uttering caste-based insults. The appellant and her relatives were also beaten when they attempted to intervene in the attack, which

was reportedly motivated by a long-standing civil dispute regarding a right of way over agricultural land. The appellant's husband succumbed to his injuries five days later while undergoing treatment.

The High Court granted bail to the respondents, inter alia, on the ground that the injured witness could not state with certainty which part of the deceased's body was targeted by the respondent-accused, and that the specific role of each accused in the incident had not been indicated. Aggrieved thereby, the appellant challenged the decision, contending that the findings recorded by the High Court in the impugned judgment affect the merits of the case and that the parameters for grant of bail in a case involving the murder of a person belonging to the Scheduled Caste community were not duly considered by the High Court.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Distinction in Bail Review:** The Court clarified that while the cancellation of bail under Section 439(2) CrPC typically follows the misuse of liberty or tempering with evidence, a superior court may reverse a bail order if it ignores relevant material or relies on extraneous considerations. It determined that the present case falls into the latter category.
- **Parameters for Serious Offenses:** Citing *Shabeen Ahmad v. State of Uttar Pradesh ((2025) 4 SCC 172)* and *Ajwar v. Waseem ((2024) 10 SCC 768)*, the bench observed that a superficial application of bail parameters undermines the gravity of the offense and risks weakening public faith in the judiciary. It emphasiszed that courts must consider relevant factors, including, the nature of the accusations and the role attributed to the accused before granting release in grievous crimes.
- **Impact on Society:** Referring to *Victim 'X' v. State of Bihar & Anr. (2025 INSC 877),* the Court held that it is expected to exercise jurisdiction to cancel bail when the facts are so grave that they shake the conscience of the Court. It reasoned that releasing the accused in such instances would have an adverse impact on society and fail to subserve the ends of justice.
- **Doctrine of Common Object:** The Bench held that the High Court's emphasis on individual roles was erroneous, as under Section 149 IPC, every member of an unlawful assembly is equally responsible for acts committed in furtherance of their common object. It noted that because the assembly's object was to kill the deceased due to civil enmity, the prosecution was under no obligation to fix individual acts to specific injuries.
- **Misplaced Reliance on Factual Gaps:** The Court found the High Court's observations regarding the time gap before death and the uncertainty of the fatal blow to be irrelevant to the consideration of bail. This aspect ought to have been considered by the trial court while appreciating the medical evidence.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal, set aside the High Court's order, and cancelled the bail granted to the respondents. The court further directed the respondents to surrender before the trial court.

Suhas Chakma v. Union of India & Ors.
(2026 INSC 198)

"...the enduring strength of a constitutional democracy lies not in the severity of its punishments, but in its commitment to restore dignity, hope and opportunity even to those who have transgressed the law"

Coram: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta

In a judgment delivered on **26 February 2026,** a two-judge bench issued a comprehensive set of enforceable directions in a writ petition seeking reform of India's prison system, retaining the matter as a continuing mandamus to oversee the expansion and reform of Open Correctional Institutions (OCIs) across all States and Union Territories, with a view to making them effective instruments of rehabilitation, reformation and social reintegration.

Background

This writ petition was instituted under Article 32 of the Constitution by Suhas Chakma, raising serious concerns regarding the persistent problem of overcrowding in prisons across the country. The petition highlighted that excessive prison populations had resulted in inhuman and degrading living conditions for inmates, infringing their fundamental rights under Article 21. The petition was initially heard alongside *In Re: Contagion of COVID 19 Virus in Prison (Suo Motu Writ Petition (Civil) No.1/2020)*, but was de-tagged in 2023 and thereafter proceeded as a standalone matter focusing on open prisons/camps as a structural solution to prison overcrowding.

Data from the NCRB's Prison Statistics India, 2023 painted a deeply concerning picture: prisons across the country are operating at 120.8% occupancy, with several States including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the NCT of Delhi reporting occupancy levels exceeding 150%. Against this backdrop, OCIs (minimum-security, open-regime prisons designed to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration through self-discipline and trust) emerged as the most cost-effective and constitutionally aligned response, with per-prisoner daily expenditure in OCIs at ₹49.60 as compared to ₹333.12 in closed prisons. The Court appointed Senior Advocate Mr K Parameshwar and Senior Advocate Mr Vijay Hansaria as amici curiae, and Ms Rashmi Nandakumar appeared for the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Article 21 extends its guarantee behind prison gates**: The Court reaffirmed that prisons are not spaces where constitutional values cease to operate. The guarantee of life and personal dignity under Article 21 obligates the State to ensure that incarceration does not degenerate into inhumanity. Prisoners do not cease to be bearers of constitutional rights upon incarceration, and the State's obligation to treat them with humanity, fairness and compassion stands heightened where liberty is lawfully curtailed. OCIs, the Court held, embody this constitutional promise by recognising that trust, responsibility and graded liberty are essential for meaningful reform.
- **OCIs remain under-utilised and absent in several States**: Empirical data gathered revealed that wherever OCIs are functional, they remain substantially under-utilised, even as closed prisons suffer chronic overcrowding. Several States including Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Sikkim lack any functioning OCI facilities altogether. The

Court found that despite clear judicial exhortations since *In Re: Inhuman Conditions in 1382 Prisons (2018)*, the States' response continues to be marked by "rank apathy and indifference".

- **Exclusion of women prisoners from OCIs constitutes gender discrimination**: The Court found a deeply troubling pattern of exclusion: States including Assam, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have categorically stated that women are ineligible for transfer to OCIs. Even in States where eligibility theoretically exists, data showed that no women have actually been transferred. The Court held that this exclusion amounts to blatant gender discrimination, violative of Articles 14, 15(1) and 21. It held that security concerns cannot constitute a perpetual justification for denying women the right to reformation and rehabilitation, and that constitutional obligations cannot be made contingent upon institutional convenience.
- **Rigid eligibility criteria frustrate the rehabilitative purpose**: In several States, prisoners are required to spend between four to twelve years in closed prisons before being considered for transfer to OCIs, extending to twenty-one years in Gujarat. The Court held that eligibility must be based primarily on the nature and classification of offences, demonstrated reformative potential, institutional conduct and readiness for social reintegration — not on rigid or unduly long periods of closed incarceration. Individualised assessments through transparent and reasoned procedures are required.
- **OCIs functioning as labour camps rather than rehabilitation institutions**: The Court noted with concern that a large number of OCIs function, in substance, as labour camps, with inmates engaged predominantly in repetitive manual or agricultural work without meaningful skill development, economic sustenance or avenues for personal advancement. Reformation, the Court held, does not take root in isolation; it matures through measured and responsible interaction with the disciplines, expectations and shared obligations of ordinary social life. States are under a constitutional obligation to develop structured skill augmentation, vocational education and apprenticeship programmes for OCI inmates.
- **Absence of uniformity requires Common Minimum Standards**: The Court found a troubling absence of uniformity in governance, eligibility norms, rehabilitative facilities and management of OCIs across States and Union Territories. Directing the constitution of a High-Powered Committee, the Court tasked it with formulating nationally consistent Common Minimum Standards, harmonising correctional practices with constitutional mandates.

Outcome

The Court kept the writ petition pending to ensure implementation and issued the following enforceable directions:

- **Under-utilisation and Absence of OCIs:** States lacking functioning OCIs shall assess feasibility and develop establishment protocols within three months. Alternatively, they shall create open/semi-open barracks within existing closed prisons. States with existing OCIs shall develop time-bound protocols for filling up vacancies in OCIs and open barracks.
- **Women Prisoners:** All States shall develop protocols to restructure OCIs and allocate adequate capacity for women within three months. Security concerns shall not be made grounds for denying women access. States/UTs shall, within three months, amend existing rules that directly or indirectly exclude women from eligibility for transfer to OCIs.

- **Eligibility Criteria and Rehabilitative Avenues:** All States shall rationalise eligibility criteria based on reformative potential and nature of offences. OCIs shall be reimagined as institutions of structured rehabilitation — providing vocational training, community-based employment, healthcare, banking facilities, digital literacy and formal education. Disciplinary reversion to closed prisons shall not be employed as a default punitive response.
- **High-Powered Committee for Common Minimum Standards:** A High-Powered Committee for Reform and Governance of Open Correctional Institutions is constituted, to be chaired by Justice S Ravindra Bhat, Judge (Retd), Supreme Court of India. The Committee shall formulate Common Minimum Standards encompassing eligibility criteria, living conditions, wages, healthcare, education, vocational training, family integration and disciplinary safeguards — with a draft report to be submitted to the Supreme Court within six months of its first meeting. The matter is listed on 01 September 2026 for consideration of this report.
- **Expansion of Correctional Infrastructure:** All States shall undertake a comprehensive assessment of prison infrastructure within three months to identify sites for new OCIs and closed prisons where open/semi-open barracks can be created.
- **Compliance and Monitoring:** All High Courts are directed to register suo motu writ petitions as a continuing mandamus to monitor compliance. Each State and Union Territory shall constitute a Monitoring Committee for the Management of OCIs headed by the Executive Chairman of the State Legal Services Authority, or his nominee. State Monitoring Committees shall submit quarterly status reports, with the first report due on or before 21 August 2026. High Courts shall compile consolidated annual reports to the Supreme Court, with the first such report due on or before 31 March 2027.

Bhagyalaxmi Co-operative Bank Ltd. v. Babaldas Amtharam Patel (D) Through Legal Representatives & Others (2026 INSC 205)

"Critically, however, a plain reading of the said provision [Section 133 of Indian Contract Act, 1872] reveals that such discharge of the surety is not absolute in nature. The surety is discharged only in respect of transactions that occurred subsequent to the variance of the terms of the contract"

Coram: Justice B V Nagarathna and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

In a judgment dated **27 February 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed the appeal and restored the sureties' liability for the original sanctioned loan amount. The court held that, under Section 133 of the Indian Contract Act, an unauthorisized variance in contract terms discharges a surety only regarding subsequent transactions rather than absolving them of the entire debt.

Background

In 1993, the principal debtor obtained a cash-credit facility of ₹4,00,000 from the appellant

bank, for which respondent Nos. 1 and 2 executed contracts of guarantee. However, the borrower allegedly connived with bank employees to withdraw amounts significantly exceeding this sanctioned limit, eventually defaulting on a total sum exceeding ₹26 lakhs. The bank initiated recovery proceedings against both the borrower and the sureties, leading the Board of Nominees to decree the suit only against the borrower. However, in appeal before the Gujarat State Co-operative Tribunal, sureties were held liable for the original ₹4,00,000 limit.

The High Court subsequently set aside the Tribunal's order, holding that the bank's action in permitting the overdrawing constituted a lapse that discharged the sureties entirely under Section 139 of the Act. The High Court reasoned that there could be no bifurcation of liability between the initially sanctioned loan and the overdrawn amounts, concluding that the sureties must either be liable for the entire amount or not at all.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Application of Section 133:** The Court observed that any variance made without the surety's consent in a contract between a debtor and creditor, discharges the surety only as to transactions subsequent to the variance. It reasoned that a surety cannot be bound to a final obligation that differs from what they initially guaranteed, as the liability extends only to the specific contract they assented to.
- **Discharge via unauthorisized Variance:** Citing *Bonar v. Macdonald ((1850) 3 HLC 226)*, the Court observed that any variance in an agreement made without the surety's knowledge or consent will discharge the surety if it prejudices them or amounts to a substitution of a new agreement for a former one. This principle applies even if the original agreement is substantially performed despite the unauthorisized variance.
- **The Cardinal Rule of Engagement:** The Court established the cardinal rule that a guarantor must not be held liable beyond the specific terms of their engagement citing *State of Maharashtra v. Dr. MN Kaul (D) by his LRs (AIR 1967 SC 1634).* It clarified that while immaterial alterations do not discharge a surety, material alterations that significantly affect the surety's position will absolve them from liability, provided the variation was not made with their consent.
- **Co-extensive Liability Standards:** Referring to *State Bank of India v. M/s Indexport Registered ((1992)3 SCC 159)*, the Court upheld the principle that a surety's liability is co-extensive with that of the principal debtor. It noted that, as established in *Syndicate Bank v. Channaveerappa Beleri ((2006)11 SCC 506)*, the timing and liability of a guarantor depend entirely on the specific terms of the contract of guarantee.
- **Mandatory Statutory Bifurcation:** The Court found the High Court's refusal to bifurcate the liability to be erroneous and contrary to the plain reading of the statute. It concluded that such bifurcation is mandated by the statute to determine the extent of a surety's liability following an unauthorisized modification of the original contract.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal and set aside the High Court's judgment ruling that the sureties are held liable to the extent of the original sanctioned loan amount of ₹4,00,000 with applicable interest. The Court clarified that the sureties are not responsible for any excess amounts permitted to be withdrawn from the cash-credit facility without their consent, as these subsequent transactions constituted an unauthorisized variance of the contract under Section 133 of the Act.

The Deputy Commissioner and Special Land Acquisition Officer v. M/s S V Global Mill Limited (2026 INSC 138)

"...express exclusion is the general rule and implied exclusion is only an exception that comes into play depending on the nature and scheme of the concerned legislation"

Coram: Justice M M Sundresh and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma

In a judgment delivered on **February 9, 2026**, a two-judge Bench resolved a batch of civil appeals by holding that Section 5 of the Limitation Act, 1963 applies to first appeals filed before High Courts under Section 74 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (the 2013 Act).

Background

The 2013 Act established the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Authority (the Authority) to adjudicate disputes relating to compensation, apportionment, and rehabilitation/resettlement arising from land acquisition. Under Section 70, the Authority's award is treated as a decree of a civil court. Under Section 74, any aggrieved person may prefer a first appeal against such award before the High Court within sixty days, with the High Court having discretion to allow a further period not exceeding sixty days. Across a large number of States, landowners whose compensation disputes were decided by the Authority filed appeals in High Courts with some delay and sought condonation under Section 5 of the Limitation Act, 1963 (the 1963 Act). Several High Courts dismissed these applications and the underlying appeals, holding that the 2013 Act, as a special statute prescribing its own limitation period, impliedly excluded the application of Section 5. The Supreme Court consolidated these appeals to settle the question.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Section 29(2) of the Limitation Act is the governing provision:** Section 29(2) of the 1963 Act mandates that Sections 4 to 24 of the Limitation Act, including Section 5 on condonation for sufficient cause, apply to every special or local law unless expressly excluded by that law. The critical question was whether the 2013 Act contains any such express exclusion.
- **The 2013 Act contains no express exclusion:** A careful reading of Section 74 and the entire scheme of the 2013 Act reveals no provision expressly excluding Section 5 or Sections 4 to 24 of the 1963 Act. Parliament's practice, when it intends to bar condonation, is to use explicit language to that effect. The 2013 Act is silent.
- **The onus to prove implied exclusion is heavy, and was not discharged:** Implied exclusion is an exception to the general rule; it arises only where the nature and scheme of the special law make Sections 4 to 24 clearly inapplicable. The Court held that no such case had been made out with respect to the 2013 Act, "owing to its unique scheme".
- **The Authority's award is a deemed decree; Section 74 is an appeal against it:** Section 70 expressly treats the Authority's award as a

decree. An appeal against a decree is a regular appellate proceeding for which the general law of limitation, including Section 5, is ordinarily available.

- **The 2013 Act is a beneficial welfare legislation and must be interpreted liberally:** The historical and constitutional backdrop of the 2013 Act, enacted to secure just and fair compensation and rehabilitation for persons whose land is compulsorily acquired, requires that it be construed in a manner that advances, rather than frustrates, its objects. A pedantic approach to limitation that forecloses aggrieved landowners from access to the courts contradicts this purpose.
- **Section 103 reinforces, rather than displaces, the 1963 Act:** Section 103 of the 2013 Act provides that its provisions are in addition to, and not in derogation of, any other law. This fortifies the concurrent operation of the Limitation Act rather than excluding it.
- **Precedents under other statutes are inapplicable:** The Court distinguished *Hukumdev Narain Yadav v. Lalit Narain Mishra (1974) 2 SCC 133* and related decisions, where implied exclusion of the Limitation Act was upheld in the context of election petitions under the Representation of the People Act, 1951. That Act contains Section 86, which expressly provides for summary dismissal of time-barred election petitions, making it a fundamentally different legislative scheme. Cases decided under other statutes such as the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, the Consumer Protection Act and the Electricity Act were likewise held inapplicable, as those enactments deal with entirely different parties, mechanisms and authorities and, crucially, do not contain a provision equivalent to Section 103 of the 2013 Act.
- ***Pari materia* provisions cannot be blindly imported across statutes:** The Court cautioned that interpretation of a word or provision must be made contextually with respect to each statute. Any approach to interpretation that imports the meaning assigned to a provision in one enactment into a different enactment could "destroy the very object enshrined under the 2013 Act, being a welfare legislation."
- **Incidental question on Section 24(1)(a):** The Court clarified that Section 24(1)(a) applies to all cases where no award was passed under Section 11 of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 before the commencement of the 2013 Act. In such cases, compensation is to be determined entirely under the provisions of the 2013 Act (save for rehabilitation and resettlement entitlements). First appeals in these matters lie under Section 74 of the 2013 Act and not under Section 54 of the 1894 Act.

Outcome and Directions

All applications seeking condonation of delay in preferring first appeals under Section 74 of the 2013 Act were allowed. The impugned High Court judgments were set aside to the extent they dismissed appeals on the ground of limitation without examining them on the merits. The appeals were directed to be restored and decided afresh by the High Courts. State Governments were directed to take necessary measures and issue appropriate directions to officers dealing with Section 74 appeals to ensure timely filing. High Courts were directed to adopt a pragmatic rather than a pedantic approach when dealing with condonation applications in this class of matters.

Mahendra Prasad Agarwal v. Arvind Kumar Singh & Ors (2026 INSC 175)

"There is no doubt about the fact that the 'consider jurisprudence', so routinely adopted these days and if we may use the expression - to throw the ball out of the Court, is counterproductive and harms the system"

Coram: Justice Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhe

In a judgment dated **10 February 2026**, a two-judge bench disposed of the appeal and issued specific procedural directions to resolve a sixteen-year-old litigation, ruling that repetitive remands for reconsideration and the routine use of "consider jurisprudence" harm the judicial system and delay substantive relief.

Background

The respondents were appointed as lecturers in a private college in 1993, but their financial assistance ceased following a government policy change regarding non-aided colleges, in August, 2000. They initiated legal action in 2010 seeking salary payments, which began a protracted cycle where the High Court repeatedly directed state authorities to "look into the matter" or "reconsider" the claims, only for the government to issue successive rejection orders in 2011, 2013, and 2023.

Later, the respondents filed a contempt petition before the High Court alleging non-compliance. But, even with the commencement of contempt proceedings, there were a series of inconclusive directions for filing multiple affidavits. Following the Government's decision dated 09.05.2025 dismissing the demands, the High Court passed the impugned order directing that the contempt case be listed for framing of charges.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Critique of "Consider Jurisprudence":** The Court observed that the routine practice of directing authorities to "consider" a matter– often used to "throw the ball out of the Court" – is counterproductive to the legal system. It reasoned that when a legal right is justified, relief must follow immediately.
- **Clarity in Judicial Directions:** The bench noted that the High Court failed to articulate clear and categorical directions regarding the existence of a right or its violation. In such a situation, the only choices remaining would be to comply, appeal, or face contempt.
- **Abuse of Contempt Jurisdiction:** The Court identified a "bad practice" where contempt jurisdiction is invoked for quick relief even when authorities have passed appealable orders. It pointed out that the government's detailed order dated 09.05.2025 has remained unchallenged.

Outcome

The Supreme Court permitted respondents to file a writ petition against the government order dated 09.05.2025, which shall be heard alongside the pending contempt proceedings. Furthermore, in view of the prolonged litigation spanning over 16 years, it was directed that the High Court shall not remand the matter to the authorities for further reconsideration, as the Government's stance is already clear.

The Tiruchirappalli District Cricket Association v. Anna Nagar Cricket Club & Anr. (2026 INSC 154)

"It should be the deeper Sadhana (endeavour) of the State, and it is also our Constitutional duty to ensure that sporting facilities and opportunities flourish with institutional efficiency, integrity, professionalism, and expertise"

Coram: Justice Pamidighantam Sri Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhe

In a judgment delivered on **13 February 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed the appeal in part and set aside the High Court's order to the extent it applied certain sports governance reforms to the appellant association. The Supreme Court observed that the specific directions regarding the mandatory composition of sports associations established in *S Nithya v. Union of India WP (MD) No. 3447 of 2019* and *Secretary, Tamil Nadu Olympics Association v. S Nithya, WA No. 1202 of 2022* are inapplicable to cricket associations, which are instead governed by the regulatory framework established in the case of *BCCI v. Cricket Assn of Bihar CA No. 4235/2014.*

Background

The appeal arose from two distinct writ petitions filed against the appellant, a district cricket association registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act. In the first petition, the Anna Nagar Cricket Club (Respondent No. 1) sought directions to be granted membership and voting rights, alongside permission to participate in a knockout tournament. In the second petition, an ex-office bearer (Respondent No. 2) approached the High Court seeking the conduct of free and fair elections based on a fresh voters list. Respondent No. 2 further sought to compel the appellant to comply with governance norms established in the *S Nithya* judgments, which mandated that every state sports federation ensure a minimum of 75% of its members are eminent sportspersons with voting rights. The appellant contests it on the grounds that such athletics-based reforms are unviable for the sport of cricket.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Inapplicability of Athletics Reforms to Cricket**: The Court held that the *S Nithya* judgment, which arose from athletics governance, cannot be applied to cricket associations because the legal field for cricket is already governed by the *BCCI* judgment.
- **No Requirement of Eminent Sportspersons for District Association Membership:** The Court noted that the *BCCI* judgment does not prescribe that 75% of a district association's membership must be eminent sportspersons, nor does it make membership for district associations contingent on such a qualification.
- **Autonomy of District Associations**: The Court observed that the judgment in BCCI does not warrant District Associations to model their regulations and bye-laws on the exact lines of the BCCI Constitution. There is no judgment or document on record to demonstrate a universal understanding or judicial direction requiring district-level associations to mirror the BCCI's legal framework. Consequently, the argument that the appellant must restructure its functioning and laws in strict terms of the BCCI Constitution cannot be accepted.
- **Access to Sporting Facilities and Opportunities:** The Bench emphasiszed

that sporting facilities and opportunities are material resources of the community and must remain accessible, not just for pursuing sport, but also for its administration.

- **Need for Voluntary Reform:** While rejecting judicially enforced restructuring in this instance, the Court stated it is necessary for associations to volunteer to adopt reformative measures like good governance, refined management, transparency, and the exclusion of conflicts of interest.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal in part, setting aside the High Court's judgment regarding the applicability of the *S Nithya* directions. The Court directed the High Court to dispose of the pending writ appeals expeditiously concerning the membership and composition of the appellant association. This would enable the statutory authorities to complete their inquiries and facilitate the conduct of election of appellant association at the earliest.

Pathmavathi & Ors. v. Bharthi AXA General Insurance Co. Ltd. & Anr. (2026 INSC 131)

"...consistency, though desirable, cannot be elevated to a point where it eclipses the core objective of awarding 'just compensation'. The law must remain responsive to lived human realities, especially in cases involving the sudden rupture of familial bonds"

Coram: Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma

In a judgment delivered on **06 February 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed a civil appeal filed by the family of a fatal road accident victim, substantially enhancing the compensation awarded by the courts below, while reaffirming the mandatory nature of future prospects for fixed-salary employees and clarifying the proper scope of consortium under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

Background

On 09.06.2011, D Velu, a 37-year-old driver, was killed when a tanker lorry driven rashly and negligently struck his two-wheeler. His widow, two minor children, and parents lodged a claim petition before the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal (MACT), seeking ₹20,00,000/- in compensation. The appellants claimed that the victim was employed as a driver at the material time, and earning a regular monthly income at ₹10,000/-.

The MACT, discounting the documentary evidence, reckoned the victim's monthly income at only ₹6,000/- and awarded a total compensation of ₹9,37,000/-. The High Court of Madras partly enhanced the award to ₹10,51,000/- by revising the income to ₹7,000/-, but failed to grant any amount towards future prospects, and separately awarded ₹60,000/- under the head of "loss of love and affection." Aggrieved by the inadequacy of the award, the claimants approached the Supreme Court.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Income Assessment:** The Court held that the victim's monthly income had to be

taken at ₹10,000/-, as established by the unimpeached salary certificate and the employer's affidavit. It reaffirmed that the determination of income must be founded on proof placed on record and cannot rest on conjecture or assumptions divorced from evidence.

- **Mandatory Nature of Future Prospects:** Relying on the Constitution Bench decision in *National Insurance Co. Ltd. v. Pranay Sethi ((2017) 16 SCC 680)*, the Court held that for a deceased who was on a fixed salary and below the age of 40 years, an addition of 40% of the established income towards future prospects is compulsory. The Court stated this "is not a matter of choice, but a binding norm flowing from Article 141 of the Constitution". The High Court's omission to apply this settled principle was characterised as a manifest error of law.
- **Loss of Love and Affection vs. Loss of Consortium:** The Court addressed the conceptual tension in the law by tracing the evolution from *Pranay Sethi*, which confined conventional heads to loss of estate, loss of consortium, and funeral expenses, through *Magma General Insurance Co. Ltd. v. Nanu Ram ((2018) 18 SCC 130)*, which expanded "consortium" to include spousal, parental, and filial consortium. Following *United India Insurance Co. Ltd. v. Satinder Kaur ((2021) 11 SC 780)*, the Court clarified that "loss of love and affection" is subsumed within the broader head of "loss of consortium" and cannot be awarded as a separate head. The separate award of ₹60,000/- under this head was accordingly set aside, with adequate amounts awarded under the three forms of consortium instead.
- **Just Compensation:** The Court reiterated that compensation under Section 168 of the Act must be fair and reasonable, without being arbitrary or niggardly. It observed that no monetary award can truly compensate for the loss of a loved one, and that compensation is, at best, a rough estimate and a token attempt to ease the financial burden on the dependents.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal and enhanced the total compensation to **₹20,80,000/**, as against ₹10,51,000/- awarded by the High Court. The revised computation was as follows.

- Loss of income, with 40% addition for future prospects: ₹18,90,000/-
- Spousal consortium: ₹50,000/-
- Parental consortium: ₹80,000/- (₹40,000/- each parent)
- Filial consortium: ₹40,000/- (awarded only to the mother, as the victim's father had passed away)
- Funeral expenses: ₹10,000/-
- Transport charges: ₹10,000/-

The insurer was directed to pay the balance amount within twelve weeks, along with interest at 9% per annum from the date of filing the claim petition till realisation.

Rakesh Mittal v. Ajay Pal Gupta @ Sonu Chaudhary and Another (2026 INSC 161)

"…..the value of life and liberty of members of society is not limited only to their 'person' but would also extend to the quality of their life, including their economic well-being"

Coram: Justice Sanjay Kumar and Justice K Vinod Chandran

In a judgment dated **17 February 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed the appeal and set aside the bail granted to the respondent, ruling that the High Court erred by ignoring the accused's extensive criminal history, his use of multiple aliases, forged identities, and his past conduct of absconding while applying the principle of parity.

Background

The appellant, a foodgrain supplier, filed an FIR alleging that the four accused persons conspired to cheat him of over ₹6.5 crores by issuing cheques that were subsequently dishonoured for want of funds. The investigation revealed that the accused had prepared forged documents, including Aadhaar cards with false addresses, to facilitate the fraud. It was further discovered that the principal offender, Respondent No. 1, operated under different aliases and had used fake identities to mask his criminal activities.

Respondent No. 1 remained a fugitive for more than 20 months following the registration of the FIR and was only apprehended in August 2025 after the state announced a reward for his capture. The High Court granted him bail on the grounds of parity with co-accused, the duration of his incarceration, and the assumption that the offences were triable by a Magistrate.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Premature Assumption on Trial Jurisdiction:** The Court observed that the High Court overlooked the addition of Sections 409 and 467 of the IPC, which carry potential sentences of life imprisonment or terms up to ten years. It reasoned that since these offences are not limited to three-year sentences, a Magistrate could always commit the case to a Court of Sessions, making the High Court's assumption of a Magistrate-only trial premature.
- **Balance of Liberty and Social Order:** Invoking *Neeru Yadav v. State of Uttar Pradesh and Another ((2016) 15 SCC 422)*, the Court emphasised that while individual liberty is a priceless treasure, it is not absolute and must be restrained when an individual becomes a danger to the collective. It reasoned that the High Court must exercise discretion cautiously when there is a likelihood of offences being repeated or a danger of justice being thwarted.
- **Protection of Economic Well-being:** The Court reasoned that the value of life and liberty extends beyond mere physical existence and includes the quality of life, including economic well-being. In cases where conmen exploit and feast upon the gullibility of others to steal hard-earned money, these factors must be weighed heavily during bail considerations.
- **Identification of a Career Criminal:** The bench noted that the respondent's use of diverse aliases, fake IDs, and deliberate changes of identity, including his father's name, clearly manifested a nefarious intention to dupe victims. It reasoned that since the respondent had previously secured bail and chose to engage in the same activities again,

he had demonstrated himself to be a career criminal and a menace to society.

- **Misapplication of the Parity Principle:** The Court held that the High Court should not have blindly extended the parity principle without considering the distinctive features of the respondent's individual case. It concluded that letting the respondent loose on society would pose a significant risk and hazard to others given his failure to turn over a new leaf.

Outcome

The Court concluded that the bail order granted to Respondent No. 1 was unsustainable in both facts and law, as it observed that the High Court had misapplied the parity principle while overlooking the respondent's extensive criminal history and his previous conduct of absconding, which collectively established him as a habitual offender and a significant hazard to society. Consequently, the Court allowed the appeal and set aside the High Court's order.

Zeba Khan v. State of UP & Others (2026 INSC 144)

"Non-disclosure of material aspects such as criminal antecedents, prior bail rejections, duration of custody, compliance with constitutional and statutory safeguards, and the progress of trial may result in the unwarranted grant of bail, or conversely, the prolonged incarceration of accused persons despite substantial custody having already been undergone"

Coram: Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Justice R Mahadevan

In a judgment delivered on **11 February 2026,** a two-judge bench allowed the appeal and set aside the High Court's order which had granted bail to the accused. The Supreme Court observed that an applicant seeking the discretionary relief of bail is under a solemn obligation to make a fair and complete disclosure of all material facts. The deliberate suppression of serious criminal antecedents amounts to an abuse of the process of law and strikes at the very root of the administration of criminal justice.

Background

The appeal was filed by the complainant challenging the Allahabad High Court judgment which granted bail to Respondent No. 2 (Mazahar Khan). The prosecution alleged a large-scale organised scam involving the fabrication and circulation of forged legal qualifications. Specifically, Respondent No. 2 was accused of procuring a forged LLB degree and marksheets, to falsely project himself as a qualified advocate. The degree was purportedly issued by Sarvodaya Group of Institutions, claimed to be affiliated with Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal University. Despite verification from the University confirming the Sarvodaya Group of Institutions had no affiliation with the University, the High Court had granted bail, leading to this challenge.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Principles for Annulment of Bail:** The Court held that while personal liberty is a high constitutional value, a bail order is

liable to be interfered with if it is arbitrary, perverse, or ignores material considerations. The discretion to grant bail, though wide, is structured by well-settled legal principles and not unfettered.

- **Significance of Criminal Antecedents:** Relying on *Ash Mohammad v. Shiv Raj Singh @ Lalla Babu (2012) 9 SCC 446,* the bench emphasised that criminal history is a significant factor in the exercise of judicial discretion, especially when the nature of the allegations has a grave societal impact. The Court clarified that while a history-sheeter is not disentitled to bail as a rule, antecedents constitute a significant factor while deciding the bail applications.
- **Suppression as Fraud on the Court:** The Court observed that the accused deliberately concealed nine pending FIRs across different states involving similar offences of fraud and forgery. Relying on *Kusha Duruka v. State of Odisha (2024) 4 SCC 432*, the Court reiterated that such concealment constitutes a fraud on the court and attracts the maxim *suppressio veri, expressio falsi.*
- **Standards for Transfer of Investigation:** Regarding the prayer to transfer the case to a special agency, the court reiterated the principle held in *Disha v. State of Gujarat and others (2011) 13 SCC 337*, that this is only warranted in exceptional circumstances involving real likelihood of bias, mala fides, or abuse of power. Applying this principle to the present case, no specific or substantiated material was placed on record to demonstrate that the investigation conducted by the State Police was vitiated by mala fides, bias, or extraneous influence. Thus, the Court found no justification to invoke its extraordinary jurisdiction, particularly when the investigation stands completed and cognizance has already been taken by the competent court, to direct transfer of the investigation to a special agency.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal, set aside the High Court's judgment, and cancelled the bail granted to Respondent No. 2.

Guidelines

- Additionally, the Court provided an *"illustrative disclosure framework"* as a recommendatory guide to ensure full and candid disclosure in bail proceedings. This was passed in the backdrop of the Court noticing a growing trend of accused persons securing discretionary relief by suppressing material facts.
- This framework is categoriszed into six key areas: *case details* (such as FIR number and maximum punishment), *custody and procedural compliance* (including date of arrest and total period of custody undergone), the *status of trial* (outlining the stage of proceedings and witness examination details), *criminal antecedents* (listing all previous FIRs and their current legal status), *previous bail applications* (requiring disclosure of all previous bail applications and their outcomes across various courts), and *coercive processes* (such as being declared a proclaimed offender or the issuance of non-bailable warrants).
- A copy of the judgment was directed to be circulated to all the High Courts to examine the feasibility of issuing appropriate administrative directions or incorporating suitable provisions in their respective Rules. Furthermore, a copy of the judgment was circulated to the District Judiciary for guidance.

The State of Kerala & Anr. v. M/s Panacea Biotec Ltd. & Anr. (2026 INSC 200)

"Here, an official complaint was made on authorisation by the State Government. In this factual setting, Section 202 of the Code would necessarily have to be construed harmoniously with Section 200 of the Code when considering postponement of the issue of process"

Coram: Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Justice S V N Bhatti

In a judgment dated **26 February 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed the appeals and restored the summoning orders, ruling that the mandatory inquiry under Section 202 of the Code is not required for complaints filed by public servants and that the limitation period commences only once the identity of the offenders is established.

Background

In 2005, a medical officer reported a labeling discrepancy in a vaccine manufactured by the respondents, where the outer carton was labeled as "Easy Five" (pentavalent) while the inner vial was labeled "Easy Four" (tetravalent), which does not contain the Hepatitis vaccine. The Drugs Inspector initiated an inquiry in January 2006, seizing invoices and recording statements from suppliers who confirmed that several vials were wrongly labeled and had been returned to the manufacturer due to being misbranded.

The Inspector filed a formal complaint in 2009 for offenses under the Drugs & Cosmetics Act. The High Court quashed the complaint on the grounds that the Magistrate failed to conduct a mandatory statutory inquiry under Section 202 of the Code since the respondents resided outside his territorial jurisdiction. The State appealed this decision, while the respondents cross-appealed, arguing the complaint was also barred by the three-year limitation period.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Commencement of Limitation Based on Identity:** The Court reasoned that under Section 469(1)(c) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), the limitation period begins only from the day the identity of the offender is known to the person aggrieved or the investigating officer. In this case, while the initial complaint was received in January 2006, the investigation to establish the exact identity of all accused was only completed on 18.04.2006, meaning the complaint filed in January 2009 was within the mandatory three-year period
- **Harmonious Construction of the Code:** The Court reasoned that under Section 200 of the Code, a Magistrate is not required to examine the complainant or witnesses when a written complaint is filed by a public servant acting in the discharge of their official duties. Consequently, the Court observed that in such factual settings, Section 202 of the Code must be construed harmoniously with Section 200 when determining the necessity of postponing the issue of process against out-of-jurisdiction accused.
- **Status of Public Servants:** Citing *Cheminova India Limited v. State of Punjab ((2021) 8 SCC 818)*, the Court reasoned that the legislature has placed the public servant on

a different pedestal, exempting Magistrates from recording their statements under the proviso to Section 200 of the Code.

- **Liability of the directors:** Addressing the liability of directors under Section 34 of the Act, the Court held that whether individuals were in charge of and responsible to the company are questions of fact.The Court reasoned that such determinations are best left to be determined by the Trial Court at the appropriate stage.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals, set aside the High Court's orders, and held that the original orders taking cognizance and issuing summons were good in law. As the original Managing Director had passed away during the pendency of the matter, the Court directed that they be substituted by the person(s) in charge of the respondent companies' affairs. The Trial Court was directed, upon an appropriate application, to array these individuals as accused and issue fresh summons.

Parameshwari v. The State of Tamil Nadu & Ors. (2026 INSC 164)

"The rationale behind victim compensation is to rehabilitate the victim for the loss and injury caused to them as a direct consequence of the crime or offence and not to exonerate the offender/accused from their culpability"

Coram: Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Vijay Bishnoi

In a judgment dated **17 February 2026**, a two-judge bench allowed the appeal and restored the trial court's sentence, holding that reducing a sentence for a heinous crime to the period already undergone in exchange for enhanced compensation is a travesty of criminal jurisprudence.

Background

In 2009, the private respondents attacked a victim with knives due to previous enmity, inflicting four life-threatening stab injuries to his chest, abdomen, and hand. The Trial Court convicted the respondents under Sections 307, 326, and 324 of the IPC, sentencing them to three years of rigorous imprisonment, a decision later upheld by the District Sessions Fast Track Mahila Court.

During the pendency of the High Court revision, the victim passed away in 2017 due to unrelated circumstances, and the appellant, his wife, was impleaded in his place. The High Court confirmed the conviction but modified the sentence to the two months already undergone based on the lapse of ten years and the respondents' willingness to pay ₹1,00,000/- in enhanced compensation. Challenging this reduction as illegal and misplaced, the appellant approached the Supreme Court.

Court's Reasoning and Observations

- **Proportionality in Sentencing:** Citing *Hazara Singh v. Raj Kumar and others ((2013) 9 SCC 516)*, the bench held that the cardinal principle of sentencing is that the sentence must be proportionate to the gravity of the offence. It explained that the Court must adopt corrective machinery based on a factual

matrix that includes the nature of the weapons used and the planning involved.

- **Avoidance of Undue Sympathy:** Invoking *State of M.P. v. Saleem Alias Chamaru and Another ((2005) 5 SCC 554)*, the Court warned that inadequate sentences stemming from undue sympathy erode public confidence and harm the justice system. It asserted that a liberal attitude toward serious crimes merely because of the passage of time is counterproductive to societal interests.
- **Compensation v. Punitive Measures:** The Court observed that the criminal justice system aims for the twin objectives of deterrence and reformation, noting that victim compensation is intended as an addition to a sentence rather than a substitute for punishment. It further reasoned that such compensation is rooted in victimology to rehabilitate the sufferer for their injuries and must never be employed to exonerate an accused person from their criminal culpability
- **Compensation as "Blood Money":** The bench condemned the practice of reducing sentences in exchange for increased compensation, citing *Shivani Tyagi v. State of U.P. & Another (2024 SCC OnLine SC 842),* to label such payments as "Blood Money". It held that while compensation is restitutory, it cannot be considered a substitute for punitive measures that cannot be "purchased by money".
- **Fundamental Sentencing Factors:** The Bench observed a trend wherein compensation is treated as a substitute for sentence. Keeping this in mind, the Bench culled out certain basic factors to be considered while imposing sentence. These factors included: Proportionality, Consideration to Facts and Circumstances, Impact on Society, and Aggravating and Mitigating Factors.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal, set aside the High Court's modified sentence, and restored the Trial Court's judgment of conviction and sentence.

Priyanka Kumari and Ors. v. The State of Bihar and Ors. (2026 INSC 167)

"Nothing has come on record to suggest that the University in which the appellants studied was non-existent. Meaning thereby, they must have studied and after passing the examination, had got their degrees"

Coram: Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Vijay Bishnoi

In a judgment delivered on **18 February 2026**, a two-judge bench set aside the High Court's order and allowed the appeal, thereby quashing the termination of the appellants' services. The Supreme Court observed that students who obtained degrees from a state university, which was later declared unconstitutional, should not be deprived of the benefits of those degrees.

Background

The appellants were appointed as librarians by the State of Bihar in 2010. Their appointment was based on Bachelor of Library Science degrees obtained in 2004 from the University of Technology and Science, Raipur. This university was established under the Chhattisgarh Niji Kshetra Vishwavidyalaya Act, 2002, which was later declared ultra vires by the Supreme Court in 2005, in the case of *Prof. Yashpal v. State of Chhattisgarh (2005) 5 SCC 420.* In 2015, a PIL raised concerns that certain persons appointed as librarians held degrees from an unrecognised institution. Following the PIL and subsequent action by the State Government, the appellants' services were terminated. Challenging the same, writ petition was filed before the High Court, which was dismissed on 22.08.2018. The order passed by the Single Judge was upheld in an intra-court appeal vide order dated 11.04.2019. Challenging this order, the present appeal has been filed.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations:

- **Application of the *Prof. Yashpal* Precedent:** The Court noted that although the provisions of the 2002 Act had been struck down, the State Government was directed to take appropriate measures to affiliate institutions established by private universities with existing State universities, in order to protect the interests and careers of the students studying therein.
- **Status of the Appellants' Degrees:** The issue concerns students who had passed out prior to the filing of the writ petition in *Prof. Yashpal* judgment. The Court noted that there was nothing on record to suggest that the University in which the appellants studied was non-existent, and that they had studied, passed the examinations, and obtained their degrees.

  There was no evidence suggesting the university was bogus or that no actual education was imparted.
- **State Appointment and Continued Service:** Furthermore, the State of Bihar had appointed the appellants in 2010, long after the 2005 judgment was in the public domain, and they had served satisfactorily for over five years.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the High Court's judgment. The Court declared the termination orders illegal and directed that the appellants be reinstated into service with continuity.

Training Hub

Awareness Programme on Cyber Security



20 February 2026: An Awareness Programme on Cyber Security for Staff of the Registry was organised for dealing assistants of the Registry at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi. The resource persons for the programme comprised the team from the Computer Cell, led by Dr Deepak Kumar Sharma, Additional Registrar. The programme highlighted essential aspects of cyber safety, covering topics such as password and account security, email protection, safe handling of judicial data, social engineering threats, and mechanisms for identifying and reporting cyber incidents

Computer Training Programme (Basic) for Non-Clerical Staff



27 February 2026: The Training Cell organised a Computer Training Programme (Basic) for dealing assistants of the Registry at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi. The resource persons for the programme comprised the team from the Computer Cell. The training provided an overview of ICT usage, including SUPNET, e-HRMS, and PFMS, along with working knowledge of ICT equipment such as UPS, computers, printers, scanners, VoIP phones, and photocopy machines, with emphasis on safe handling of devices. It also covered safe internet practices, highlighting essential dos and don'ts, and introduced the S.A.F.E. and C.A.R.E. guidelines for effective management

Training Programme on Gender Sensitization for Senior Court Assistants

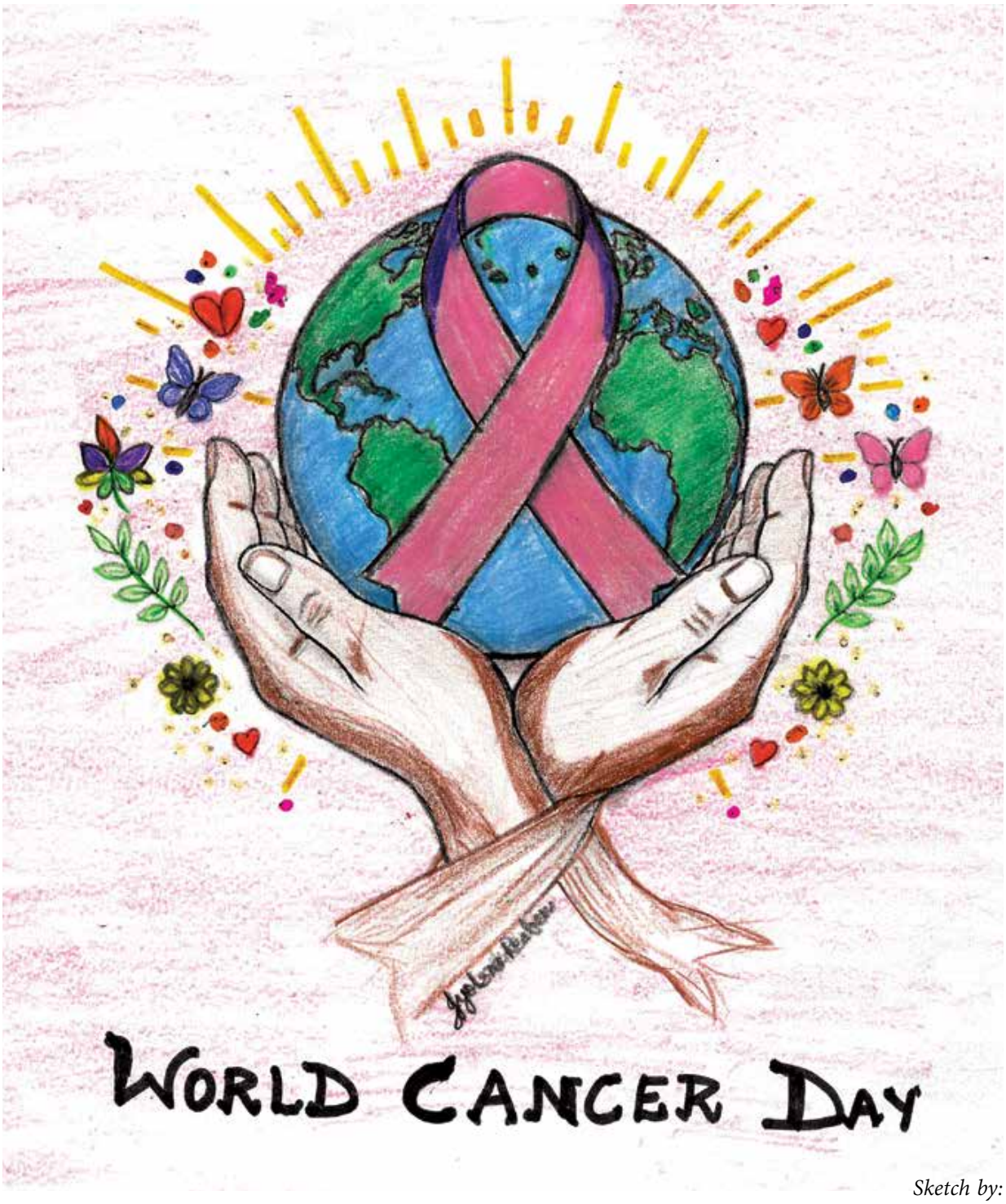


28 February 2026:
The Training Cell organised a training programme on Gender Sensitization for Senior Court Assistants at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi, comprising awareness sessions on gender sensitivity and an overview of the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The session was conducted by Ms Sujata Singh, Member Secretary, Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee (GSICC) and Ms Sneh Sharma, Resource Person. The session further focused on enhancing understanding of gender awareness, inclusivity, and the need for a respectful and dignified workplace culture



Beyond the Court: Creativity Abound

World Cancer Day – February 04



Sketch by:
Dr. Jyotsna Eveline Reuben
Director, Judges Library

Hope's Adjourned Verdict

In Delhi's February dawn, the light cuts soft and clear,
No winter chokehold now, just haze that lingers near.
World Cancer Day arrives on the fourth, quiet as a file,
Orange ribbons pinned like notices, small against the trial.

I walk past AIIMS gates, where names are called in turn,
Another scan, another wait, lessons no one learns.
The doctor reads the report like passing down a charge—
"Cells resist," he says, "but progress—small discharge."

We call it "public nuisance," this disease that won't obey,
No FIR, no summons served, it lingers anyway.
Chemo runs like endless adjournments, radiation the plea,
Yet the body mounts its own defense, fierce with tenacity.

Tears hide in metro crowds, prayers at traffic lights red,
A fighter grips the railing, refusing to be led.
Not every case is closed; new trials bring a stay—
Science files its fresh appeal, and hope lights up the way.

Orange on my coat feels fragile, yet it holds the spark,
We breathe, we fight, we rise—because the fight's our mark.
Tomorrow's judgment isn't sealed; in every stubborn beat,
Life argues back, unbowed, and claims another seat.

Poem by:
Mohammad Ali
Junior Court Assistant

आओ मिल विज्ञान को सीखें

आओ मिल विज्ञान को सीखें, और ज्ञान बढ़ाये चुटकी में
उत्तम प्रयोग और शिक्षा से, कर लो दुनिया मुट्ठी में
विज्ञान ही है जो दुनिया को, हर बार अचंभित करती है
नये नये अविष्कारों से, इंसान में भरती बुद्धि है

दुनिया भर में लोगों ने, विज्ञान में नाम कमाया है
महिलाओं ने अपने हुनर से, विज्ञान मे नाम बनाया है
मैडम क्यूरी ने मेहनत से, रेडियम पोलीयम खोजा है
दो दो नोबल नाम किए है, यह दुनिया में अनोखा है

महिलाओं ने अपनी कला से, विज्ञान की पर्तें हैं खोली
नन्हें नन्हें कोमल दिल में, विज्ञान की ऊर्जा है घोली
विज्ञान ज्ञान का सागर है, नित नए प्रयोग कराती है
उम्मीदों में रखती है, दुनिया दर्शन करवाती है

संचार पद्धति में परिवर्तन, वह विज्ञान के कारण है
चिट्ठी की अब रीति पुरानी, वीडियो कॉलिंग की बारी है
बदलाव बहुत चीजों में आया, विज्ञान ने करके हमको दिखाया
ऐ. आई. ने है चौकाया, विज्ञान की ताकत को दर्शाया

अग्नि मिसाइल बना के जिसने, विश्व में इतिहास रचा
मिसाइल नारी बन टेस्सी थॉमस, ने देश को अभिमान दिया
चन्द्रयान को कक्षा में, पहुंचाने वाली ऋतु ही थी
रॉकेट वुमेन नाम से दुनिया, ने उनको सम्मान दिया

नौ महीने कदमताल कर, अंतरिक्ष को नापा है
सुनीता विलियम्स दुनिया भर में, वैज्ञानिक अभिलाषा है
नारी मन विज्ञान को समझे, ऐसा एक विश्वास गढ़ा
नारी को सबला करने का, शिक्षा एक हथियार बना

Poem by:
Mohd Tasvirul Islam
Assistant Librarian, Judges Library

International Mother Language Day – February 21

Mother Tongue in Motion



Harsh Maheshwari
Senior Court Assistant

National Conference on Safety of Women at Workplace (SHe-Box)



Nidhi Jain
Editor, Supreme Court Reports

14 February 2026: Ms Nidhi Jain, Editor, SCR, Supreme Court of India attended the National Conference of Safety of Women at Workplace [SHe-Box] organised by Ministry of Women and Child Development at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Bid Adieu



28 February 2026: Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the retirement function held to felicitate the retiring employees (L-R) – Shri Jagdish Kumar, Restorer Gd-I; Shri Naresh Kumar, Senior Personal Assistant; Ms Vidya Negi, Deputy Registrar (NS); and Shri Meenu Prasad Sharma, Junior Court Attendant at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



28 February 2026: Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate the retiring employees at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



Supreme Court of India
Tilak Marg, New Delhi-110001

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