SUPREME COURT *Chronicle*

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HIGHLIGHTS

Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education

National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities

Farewell Ceremonies for Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal

Inaugural Ceremony of Fragmentation to Fusion: Empowering Justice via United Digital Platform Integration

Launch of E-Prisons Early Release Processing Module



Chief Justice's Corner

Dear Readers,

The June edition of the *Supreme Court Chronicle* provides a glimpse at the Indian Judiciary's continued commitment to building a justice delivery system that is accessible, technologically resilient and responsive to the evolving needs of society. Over the past month, our collective efforts have remained focused on strengthening institutional capacity while ensuring that constitutional values continue to guide every facet of judicial administration.

This edition highlights several initiatives aimed at the digital transformation of the judiciary which includes the *Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education* in Sikkim, the launch of integrated digital platforms that enable seamless coordination across institutions, the launch of the *E-Prisons Early Release Processing Module*, and programmes focused on legal awareness and welfare delivery.

These developments reflect our belief that technology must serve as an instrument for expanding access and that timely justice must extend beyond the courtroom to encompass every process that affects individual liberty, dignity and access to legal remedies.

Furthermore, the past month also included meaningful engagements with institutions of legal education and judicial training. Discussions during the *National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities* at the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal on the future of National Law Universities, research mentoring and judicial education reinstate our shared responsibility to encourage institutions that nurture scholarship, professional excellence, ethical leadership and an unwavering commitment to constitutional ideals. This edition also presents several important judgments that reinforce constitutional governance and the rule of law.

Guided by constitutional values and strengthened through continuous innovation and incessant dialogues, we remain committed to building a justice delivery system that inspires public confidence and faithfully serves the nation.

Justice Surya Kant
Chief Justice of India

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National Engagements

Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education



01 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education as the Chief Guest along with Justice Rony James Govinden, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Seychelles; Mr Prem Singh Tamang, Chief Minister of Sikkim, as the Guest of Honor; Justice J K Maheshwari, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Justice A Muhamed Mustaque, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim; Justice Bhaskar Raj Pradhan, Judge, High Court of Sikkim; Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India, at Gangtok, Sikkim

01 - 02 May 2026: The Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education was formally inaugurated on 01 May 2026, at Chintan Bhawan in Gangtok, marking a transformative moment in the Indian legal landscape. It was organised by the High Court of Sikkim in collaboration with the e-Committee of the Supreme Court of India. The two-day event served as a platform for high-level deliberations on integrating advanced technology into the justice delivery system.

The Conclave was attended by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, who attended as the Chief Guest and delivered the inaugural address. Mr Prem Singh Tamang, Chief Minister of Sikkim, participated as the Guest of Honour, delivering the executive address and reaffirming the state's support for judicial modernisation. The technical deliberations were significantly enriched by the presence of several Supreme Court judges who served as panelists, chairs, and co-chairs during various technical sessions, including Justice J K Maheshwari, Justice Sanjay Karol, Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Justice S V N Bhatti, Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Justice Sandeep Mehta, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Justice R Mahadevan, and Justice Vijay Bishnoi, Judges, Supreme Court of India. The event was also widely attended by various judges from several High Courts across India, who participated in the high-level deliberations alongside other legal stakeholders. The Conclave culminated with a valedictory address delivered by Mr Om Prakash Mathur, Governor of Sikkim, who reflected on the milestone achievement of a technology-driven, future-ready judiciary.



01 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered the inaugural address at the Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education

The headline achievement of the Conclave was the official declaration of Sikkim as the first paperless state judiciary in the country by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India. This distinction follows the High Court of Sikkim achieving the status of the nation's first paperless High Court, a move described as a fundamental transformation from archaic paper-based systems to a vibrant digital ecosystem. In his address, Justice Surya Kant emphasised that this "digital highway" is redrawing the map of access to justice, particularly in regions with difficult terrain where physical access to courtrooms has historically been a test of endurance. He noted that digital reform is a practical necessity for sustaining the rule of law, ensuring that justice is not confined to urban centers but extends to remote areas like North Sikkim.

Using Sikkim's terrain as a metaphor for the barriers traditionally faced by litigants, he emphasised how digital infrastructure, e-filing, video conferencing, and online judicial services had begun to overcome physical and financial obstacles. The address celebrated India's ongoing digital renaissance in the judiciary, marked by initiatives such as the e-Courts Project, the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), and AI-powered tools like SUVAS and SUPACE, which had enhanced transparency, efficiency, and accessibility within the justice system. He also outlined the path ahead for judicial digitisation, advocating for greater standardisation across courts, wider adoption of the Case Information System (CIS), and the strengthening of e-Seva Kendras to ensure inclusive access to digital services. The address further explored the



01 May 2026: Justice J K Maheshwari, Judge, Supreme Court of India, addressed the gathering at the Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education held at Gangtok, Sikkim

potential of Artificial Intelligence in trial court processes, suggesting its use in areas such as asset verification, case management, and the promotion of greater consistency in sentencing and bail practices. At the same time, it emphasised that technological progress needed to be accompanied by reforms in judicial education, equipping judges with the knowledge required to understand, assess, and ethically deploy emerging technologies.

In conclusion, he underscored the importance of ethical safeguards, critical engagement with AI systems, and continued judicial training to ensure that innovation strengthened the administration of justice. The address concluded by congratulating the Sikkim High Court on becoming a paperless institution and expressing confidence that the discussions at the Conclave would contribute to building a more accessible, transparent, and citizen-centric judiciary.



01 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, also visited the Nathu La Pass. Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Mr Bharat Parashar, Secretary General, Supreme Court of India, and their spouses, along with Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim, also accompanied during the visit

8th Memorial Lecture of Rashtrakavi Shri Ramdhari Singh Dinkar



06 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Mr Manoj Tiwari, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha and Dr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association, attended the 8th Memorial Lecture of Rashtrakavi Shri Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, "Rashmirathi: The Epic of Social Justice" held at Bhim Auditorium, Dr Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC), New Delhi. Justice Surya Kant delivered the lecture at the event

06 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Mr Manoj Tiwari, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha and Dr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association attended the 8th Memorial Lecture of Rashtrakavi Shri Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, "Rashmirathi: The Epic of Social Justice" held at Bhim Auditorium, Dr Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC), New Delhi. In this memorial lecture, Justice Surya Kant reflected upon the enduring relevance of Rashtrakavi Ramdhari Singh Dinkar's Rashmirathi and its deep engagement with the ideals of social justice, equality, and human dignity. He observed that Dinkar used the character of Karna to challenge social hierarchies rooted in birth and caste, and to advocate a society where merit, character, and human worth prevailed over inherited privilege. He concluded by emphasising that the pursuit of justice extended beyond courts and laws and required society itself to embrace compassion, equality, and respect for human dignity.

06 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered the lecture at the 8th Memorial Lecture of Rashtrakavi Shri Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, "Rashmirathi: The Epic of Social Justice" held at Bhim Auditorium, Dr Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC), New Delhi



Mega Camp-cum-Awareness Programme on NALSA Schemes and Government Welfare Schemes



09 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, along with Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Justice Revati Mohite Dere, Chief Justice, High Court of Meghalaya, Justice Hamarsan Singh Thangkhiew and Justice Biswadeep Bhattacharjee, Judges, High Court of Meghalaya and Mr Lahkmen Rymbui, Minister, Government of Meghalaya attended the inauguration of Mega Camp-cum-Awareness Programme on NALSA Schemes and Government Welfare Schemes held at Marngar, Ri-Bhoi District, Meghalaya

09 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India along with Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, inaugurated the Mega Camp-cum-Awareness Programme on NALSA Schemes and Government Welfare Schemes at Marngar, Ri-Bhoi District, Meghalaya under the theme "Bridging the Gap", promoting last-mile delivery of welfare benefits.

Justice Surya Kant, in his inaugural address, emphasised that access to justice must extend beyond courts and legal proceedings to include meaningful access to welfare and public services. Reflecting on his experience with legal aid outreach, he observed that many citizens remain excluded not because benefits are unavailable, but because barriers of awareness, distance, language, procedure, and technology prevent them from accessing them. Justice Surya Kant concluded that true success lies in ensuring that every citizen feels seen, heard, and supported by the system.



09 May 2026:
Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, delivered the inaugural address at the inauguration of Mega Camp-cum-Awareness Programme on NALSA Schemes and Government Welfare Schemes held at Marngar, Ri-Bhoi District, Meghalaya. Mr Lahkmen Rymbui, Minister, Government of Meghalaya, also addressed the gathering

Visit of the Delegation from Bhutan



11 - 14 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, met with the ten-member delegation from Bhutan that visited the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

11 - 14 May 2026: A ten member delegation from Bhutan visited the Supreme Court of India and the High Court of Delhi on a Study Visit to India from 11 May 2026 to 14 May 2026. The Bhutanese delegation comprised of Justice Duba Drukpa, Chief Justice, High Court of Bhutan; Justice Sangay Khandu, Justice Kinley Dorji, Justice Pema Wangchuk, Judges, Supreme Court of Bhutan; Mr Sonam Gyeltshen, Registrar General, Supreme Court of Bhutan; Mr Pema Needup, Director General, Bhutan National Legal Institute; Mr Sonam, Chief IT Officer, Supreme Court of Bhutan, Ms Dechen Tshomo Dorji, Assistant Judge, Supreme Court of Bhutan; Jigme Singye, Assistant Judge, Supreme Court of Bhutan, Ms Thinley Choden, Court Registrar, Supreme Court of Bhutan.



11 May 2026 - 14 May 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Chairman, e-Committee, Supreme Court of India; Justice Anjani Kumar Mishra, Vice Chairman, e-Committee, Supreme Court of India, along with Registrars, Supreme Court of India, met with the ten-member delegation from Bhutan

Visit of the Delegation from the European Union



11 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, had a Courtesy Meeting with His Excellency Mr Hervé Delphin, Ambassador of the European Union to India and Mr Lorenzo Parrulli, Second Secretary, Political Affairs, European Union at the Chief Justice's Residential Office

Fragmentation to Fusion: Empowering Justice via United Digital Platform Integration



16 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the event 'Fragmentation to Fusion: Empowering Justice via United Digital Platform Integration' as the Chief Guest along with Dr Mohan Yadav, Chief Minister, State of Madhya Pradesh as the Guest of Honor at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Cultural & Information Centre, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. The event was also attended by Mr Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Law & Justice; Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Justice P B Varale, Justice N Kotiswar Singh and Justice Alok Aradhe, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, the then Chief Justice, High Court of Madhya Pradesh; Justice Vivek Rusia, Administrative Judge, High Court of Madhya Pradesh and other companion judges, High Court of Madhya Pradesh

National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities



17 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities along with Justice Vikram Nath, Justice B V Nagarathna, Justice M M Sundresh, Justice P S Narasimha and Justice Dipankar Datta, Judges, Supreme Court of India, at National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judge, Supreme Court of India, also attended the Conference

17 May 2026: The Consortium of National Law Universities organised the National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities at National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh which was attended by the Chancellors and the Vice-Chancellors under the Chairmanship of Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India. The event was also attended by Justice Vikram Nath, Justice B V Nagarathna, Justice M M Sundresh, Justice P S Narasimha, Justice Dipankar Datta, Justice Pankaj Mithal, Justice Augustine George Masih, Justice Sandeep Mehta, Justice P B Varale, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Justice N V Anjaria, Justice A S Chandurkar, Justice Alok Aradhe, Judges, Supreme Court of India.



17 May 2026: Justice Sandeep Mehta, Justice K Vinod Chandran, Justice A S Chandurkar, Judges, Supreme Court of India, and Justice Dinesh Maheshwari, Chairperson, 23rd Law Commission of India, attended the National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities at National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



17 May 2026: Justice Augustine George Masih, Justice P B Varale, Justice N V Anjaria and Justice Alok Aradhe, Judges, Supreme Court of India and Mr Vineet Joshi, Chairperson, University Grants Commission (UGC), attended the National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities, at National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

The Inaugural Programme included a Welcome Address by Prof (Dr) S Shanthakumar, President, Consortium of National Law Universities, and the Inaugural Address by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India. The thematic deliberations were moderated by Prof (Dr) Rambhatla Venkata Rao, Vice Chancellor, India International University of Legal Education and Research, Goa; Prof (Dr) Faizan Mustafa, Vice Chancellor, Chanakya National Law University, Patna; Prof. (Dr.) Sudhir Krishnaswamy, Vice Chancellor, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru; and Prof (Dr) V C Vivekanandan, Vice Chancellor, Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur, followed by the Valediction and Vote of Thanks by Prof (Dr) Dilip Ukey, Vice President, Consortium of National Law Universities.

Justice Surya Kant, while addressing the gathering, compared the National Law Universities to clean streams that feed a larger river, explaining that they are essential to the health of India's justice system. He also stressed that NLUs were not created as placement machines, but to produce judges, scholars, public servants, legal aid lawyers, and citizens fluent in the grammar of justice, and called upon Vice-Chancellors to make them truly national, genuinely accessible, and constitutionally purposeful.



17 May 2026: Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, the then Chief Justice, High Court of Madhya Pradesh, along with the Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of National Law Universities, attended the National Conference on Functioning and Governance of National Law Universities at National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Inauguration of CLEA-MILAT Research Mentoring Programme 2026



18 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India and President, Indian Law Institute, at the Inaugural Ceremony of CLEA (Commonwealth Legal Education Association)-MILAT (Menon Institute of Legal Advocacy & Training) Research Mentoring Programme (RMP), held at Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, along with Justice K V Viswanathan, Judge, Supreme Court of India, Prof (Dr) S Sivakumar, President, CLEA and Senior Prof (Dr) V K Ahuja, Director, Indian Law Institute, New Delhi

18 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; attended the Inaugural Ceremony of CLEA (Commonwealth Legal Education Association)-MILAT (Menon Institute of Legal Advocacy & Training) Research Mentoring Programme (RMP) held at Indian Law Institute, New Delhi. It was also attended by Justice K V Viswanathan, Judge, Supreme Court of India as the Guest of Honor. Senior Prof (Dr) V K Ahuja, Director, Indian Law Institute, New Delhi was also present during



18 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India and President, Indian Law Institute, delivered the Inaugural Address at CLEA-MILAT Research Mentoring Programme held at Indian Law Institute, New Delhi



18 May 2026: Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, during the Valedictory Ceremony along with Prof (Dr) S Sivakumar, President, CLEA; Senior Prof (Dr) V K Ahuja, Director, Indian Law Institute, New Delhi and Prof (Dr) Manoj Kumar Sinha, Vice-Chancellor, DNLU, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, at CLEA-MILAT Research Mentoring Programme held at Indian Law Institute, New Delhi

the event. Justice P S Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the Valedictory Ceremony and delivered the Valedictory Address.

While delivering the Inaugural Address, Justice Surya Kant described the inauguration of the CLEA-MILAT Research Mentoring Programme 2026 as more than an academic event, an affirmation of faith in young minds, in the patient labour of scholarship, and in the power of ideas to shape a more thoughtful and just society. He placed the Programme against the paradox of the present moment: information is abundant, artificial intelligence can summarise vast bodies of law in seconds, and yet genuine scholarship may be becoming rarer.

Concluding with a warning about integrity in the age of AI, he urged young scholars not to write merely to publish, but to clarify, question, and illuminate. As India approaches 2047, he described legal scholarship as part of the nation's aspiration for intellectual leadership.

The event concluded with a renewed emphasis on the importance of fostering a robust culture of legal research, academic excellence, and mentorship. Bringing together members of the judiciary, academia, and the legal fraternity, the Research Mentoring Programme seeks to provide aspiring scholars with meaningful opportunities for intellectual engagement and collaborative learning. The initiative reflects a shared commitment to strengthening legal scholarship and encouraging research that contributes to the continued evolution of India's legal system and jurisprudence.

Nyaay Kala Exhibition



19 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Justice P S Narasimha, Justice K V Viswanathan, Justice P B Varale, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Judges, Supreme Court of India; Dr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Ms Pragya Baghel, Secretary, Supreme Court Bar Association and Dr Anindita Pujari, Senior Advocate, at the Nyaay Kala Exhibition organised by Supreme Court Bar Association in collaboration with National Judicial Museum and Archive (NJMA) and Migration and Asylum Project (MAP) at Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

11th Convocation Ceremony of Central University of Punjab



23 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, virtually attended the Convocation Ceremony of Central University of Punjab and delivered the convocation address at the 11th Convocation Ceremony of Central University of Punjab, Bathinda, Punjab

Farewell Ceremony for Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal by SCAORA



27 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India along with Justice Vikram Nath, Justice Sanjay Karol, Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Justice S V N Bhatti, Justice Augustine George Masih, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India and Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India during the Farewell Ceremony for Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judges, Supreme Court of India, organised by Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCAORA)

27 May 2026: The Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCAORA) organised a farewell ceremony for Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judges, Supreme Court of India. The ceremony was attended by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India along with Justice Vikram Nath, Justice Sanjay Karol, Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Justice S V N Bhatti, Justice Augustine George Masih, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul M Pancholi, Judges, Supreme Court of India and Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General.

While delivering the Address, Justice Surya Kant described the farewell for Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal as the first formal occasion in a series of tributes to them, and also as the first solemn occasion for the newly elected SCAORA body. Rather than catalogue their careers or judgments, he chose to speak about the kind of persons and constitutional servants they are, noting that institutions are ultimately shaped by the people who inhabit them.

Justice Maheshwari was remembered through the places that formed him: Jaura in Morena District, the Gwalior Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, and later Indore. Coming from a middle-class family in a small town, he built his practice over two decades through hard work and honest application, rose to the highest Court in the country, and yet never allowed high office to alter his essential humility and graciousness.

Justice Pankaj Mithal was presented through a different but equally rooted journey, coming from a legal family that stretched across three generations from Meerut and Allahabad. His article on the Birth and Life of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad was described as the act not of an ambitious lawyer building a portfolio, but of someone moved by the history of the institution in which he worked.

Farewell Ceremony for Justice J K Maheshwari & Justice Pankaj Mithal by SCBA



29 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India; Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India; Dr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Mr Rahul Kaushik, Senior Advocate and Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Ms Pragya Baghel, Secretary, Supreme Court Bar Association at the Farewell Ceremony for Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judges, Supreme Court of India, organised by Supreme Court Bar Association

29 May 2026: Supreme Court Bar Association organised a farewell ceremony for Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal, Judges, Supreme Court of India, which was attended by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India along with Mr R Venkataramani, Attorney General for India; Dr Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Mr Rahul Kaushik, Senior Advocate and Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Ms Pragya Baghel, Secretary, Supreme Court Bar Association.

In this farewell address, Justice Surya Kant paid tribute to the distinguished judicial careers of Justice J K Maheshwari and Justice Pankaj Mithal and reflected upon their contributions to the Supreme Court and the justice delivery system.

Speaking about Justice Maheshwari, he highlighted his integrity, administrative leadership, and commitment to ensuring access to justice, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, when he spearheaded the functioning of virtual courts and digital reforms in the Andhra Pradesh High Court. He also noted the empathy and human-centred approach reflected in his judicial decisions.

Turning to Justice Mithal, the Chief Justice praised his judicial temperament, intellectual depth, and commitment to constitutional values. He referred to Justice Mithal's contributions to constitutional jurisprudence, his interest in literature and Indian languages, and his concern for the welfare and professional growth of young lawyers. The address underscored the humility, dignity, and collegiality that both judges brought to the institution.

Concluding the ceremony, the Chief Justice expressed gratitude for their years of service and observed that their influence would continue to inspire the judiciary and the legal profession long after their retirement from the Bench.

Passing-Out Parade of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)



31 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the Passing-Out Parade of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), at the ITBP Academy, Mussoorie, Uttarakhand where he was presented with a memento in recognition of his esteemed presence

31 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, attended the Passing-Out Parade of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) held at the ITBP Academy, Mussoorie, Uttarakhand and addressed the gathering.

Addressing the Passing-Out Parade of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the Chief Justice of India congratulated the newly trained personnel on completing their rigorous training and joining one of the country's most distinguished security forces. He observed that the ceremony marked not merely the completion of a training programme but the beginning of a lifelong commitment to national service.

Highlighting the vital role played by the ITBP in safeguarding India's frontiers under some of the most challenging geographical and climatic conditions, he emphasised the values of courage, discipline, resilience, and dedication that defined the force. Referring to the ITBP motto, "Shaurya, Dridhata, Karm Nishtha," he urged the young personnel to uphold these ideals throughout their careers. The Chief Justice also acknowledged the contribution of trainers and paid tribute to the sacrifices made by their families.

He concluded by expressing confidence that the young Himveers would discharge their duties with honour, uphold the proud traditions of the force, and continue to serve as steadfast protectors of India's sovereignty, security, and national pride.



31 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, during the Parade Inspection at the Passing-Out Parade of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), held at the ITBP Academy, Mussoorie, Uttarakhand

Events at Judicial Training & Research Institute, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh



16 May 2026: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice B V Nagarathna, Judges, Supreme Court of India, along with Justice Arun Bhansali, Chief Justice, High Court of Allahabad, Justice Mahesh Chandra Tripathi and Justice Rajan Roy, Judges, High Court of Allahabad attended the One-Day Conference on "Development of Judicial Skills for Civil Judges (Junior Division), 2022 Batch", and inauguration of the 'Aryabhatta Computer Lab' organised by the Judicial Training & Research Institute in its Campus at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Launch of the Book "The Constitution Is My Home" by Ms Indira Jaising



21 May 2026: Justice B V Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India attended the launch of Book "The Constitution Is My Home", authored by Ms Indira Jaising and Ritu Menon, at India International Centre, New Delhi and delivered the Keynote Address. Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, also attended the Book Launch event virtually. Mr Anand Grover, Senior Advocate and Mr Sreenivasan Jain, Journalist, also attended the event

All India Moot Court Competition 2026 by Vivekananda Law College



09 May 2026: Justice N Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the 3rd All India Moot Court Competition 2026 organised by Vivekananda Law College, Puttur, Karnataka

Global Engagements

International Conference on "Constitutional Supervision and the Global Challenges of the Modern Time"



19 - 21 May 2026: Justice J B Pardiwala, Judge, Supreme Court of India, and Mr Barthélemy Kéré, Representative of Burkina Faso at the International Conference on "Constitutional Supervision and the Global Challenges of the Modern Time" organised by the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation at St Petersburg, Russia

19 - 21 May 2026: Indian Delegation headed by Justice J B Pardiwala, Judge, Supreme Court of India, and also comprising Justice Utkarsh T Desai, Judge, High Court of Gujarat, participated in the International Conference of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation titled 'Constitutional Supervision and the Global Challenges of the Modern Time', organised by the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation in St Petersburg, Russia.



19 - 21 May 2026: Justice J B Pardiwala, Judge, Supreme Court of India, delivered a speech during Session 1 of the Conference titled "Constitutional Supervision under Geopolitical Turbulence"

Justice J B Pardiwala delivered a speech during Session 1 of the Conference titled "Constitutional Supervision under Geopolitical Turbulence" held on 20 May 2026. Both the Judges also took part in Q&A sessions and discussions held during the Conference.

On the invitation of Mr Denis Grunis, Head of the International Cooperation Department, Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, Indian Delegation also visited the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, Moscow, on 22 May 2026. Mr Rakesh Kumar, Registrar, International Relations, Supreme Court of India accompanied during the visit to the Russian Federation.

Legal Aid

2nd National Lok Adalat of 2026



09 May 2026: Glimpses of the 2nd National Lok Adalat, 2026, held across 21 States and 06 Union Territories

09 May 2026: The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) successfully organised the 2nd National Lok Adalat of the year 2026 across 21 States and 06 Union Territories through thousands of benches constituted at various courts, tribunals, consumer commissions, and permanent lok adalats. Owing to summer vacations and administrative exigencies, the National Lok Adalat shall be conducted on 13 June 2026 in Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal; on 20 June 2026 in Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Telangana; and on 11 July 2026 in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Karnataka. The 2nd National Lok Adalat of 2026 reaffirmed the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution by disposing of 2,80,58,210 crore cases- significantly preventing 2,47,51,452 pre-litigation cases from entering the judicial system while concurrently easing the judicial burden by disposing of 33,06,758 pending cases. The total settlement amount for these cases approximately to ₹9,991.70 crores.

The outcomes of this Lok Adalat reaffirm the public's growing trust in collaborative dispute resolution mechanisms that offer swifter and more harmonious alternatives to conventional litigation. NALSA continues to uphold its constitutional mandate by facilitating inclusive access to justice for all, particularly for vulnerable and under-represented communities, and by promoting a culture of peaceful settlement through sustained Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) efforts.

Launch of 'E-Prisons Early Release Processing Module'



27 May 2026: Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, Justice Vikram Nath and Justice J K Maheshwari, Judges, Supreme Court of India, attended the launch of 'E-Prisons Early Release Processing Module'

27 May 2026: The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) successfully launched the "E-Prisons Early Release Processing Module" at the Pan India level in virtual mode marking a significant step towards ensuring timely, transparent, and technology-driven consideration of remission and premature release of eligible prisoners across the country. The initiative has been developed pursuant to the directions issued by the Supreme Court in *Surendra @ Sunda v. State of Uttar Pradesh,* 2026 INSC 414.

The Module was launched by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India & Patron-in-Chief, NALSA, in the august presence of Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA, and Justice J K Maheshwari, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Chairman, SCLSC. The programme was further attended by Mr Bharat Parashar, Secretary General, Supreme Court of India; Mr Sanjiv Pandey, Member Secretary, NALSA; Mr Kunal Vepa, Director, NALSA; other officers of NALSA; and Mr Shashikant Sharma, Scientist-G, along with his team. The programme was also attended virtually by Patron-in-Chief, SLSAs; Executive Chairpersons, SLSAs; Chairpersons, HCLSCs; Member Secretaries, SLSAs; Director General of Prison, Uttar Pradesh; Superintendent, Central Jail, Agra; Superintendent, District Jail, Lucknow; and officers of the National Informatics Centre (NIC).

The E-Prisons Early Release Processing Module has been developed by the National Informatics Centre within the existing e-Prisons platform to address systemic delays in processing remission and premature release cases. The module was initially implemented as a pilot project at Central Jail, Agra and District Jail, Lucknow. Following the successful implementation of the pilot phase, the module is now ready for adaptation and implementation across States and Union Territories in accordance with their respective remission and premature release policies.

Speaking on the occasion, Justice Surya Kant observed that a prisoner who has become eligible for consideration of remission or premature release under the law should not remain in uncertainty only because procedures move slowly or responsibility travels across offices without resolution, and that administrative delay, if left unattended, risks diminishing the very fairness that the process is intended to secure. The initiative is expected to significantly benefit eligible prisoners by ensuring timely consideration of their cases in accordance with law and policy.

Right of Parole, Remission and Release Under Poor Prisoners' Scheme



31 May 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority, interacted with the personnel during the "Right of Parole, Remission and Release under Poor Prisoners' Scheme" at Central Prison, Parappana Agrahara, Bengaluru

31 May 2026: The National Legal Services Authority and Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Department of Prisons and Correctional Services have organised "Right of Parole, Remission and Release under Poor Prisoners' Scheme" at Central Prison, Parappana Agrahara, Bengaluru.

Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority, inaugurated the 'Computer Lab', an initiative of R V College of Engineering and 'Tele MANAS' (Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States), an initiative of NIMHANS at Central Prison, Parappana Agrahara, Bengaluru. He was accompanied by Justice Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice, High Court of Karnataka and Patron-in-Chief, Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Bengaluru; Justice Anu Sivaraman, Judge, High Court of Karnataka and Executive Chairperson, Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Bengaluru; Mr K S Bharath Kumar, Registrar General, High Court of Karnataka; Mr H Shashidhara Shetty, Member Secretary, KSLSA, Bengaluru; Mr Sanjiv Pandey, Member Secretary, National Legal Services Authority.

During the visit, they interacted with the inmates who have availed legal aid/services from Legal Aid Defence Counsels, office of DLSA, Bengaluru Urban and Bengaluru Rural. They also inspected Barracks, Prison Legal Aid Clinic and de-addiction centre.

The programme underscored the continued commitment of the legal services institutions and prison authorities towards ensuring access to justice, legal awareness, and rehabilitation of inmates. By integrating legal aid with educational, mental health, and welfare initiatives, the event highlighted a holistic approach to prisoner welfare and prison reforms.

3rd Zonal Workshop on 'From Classroom to Courtroom: Law Students as Catalysts for Social Justice'



31 May 2026: Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority; Justice Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice, High Court of Karnataka and Patron-in-Chief, Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Bengaluru and Justice Anu Sivaraman, Judge, High Court of Karnataka and Executive Chairperson, Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Bengaluru at the 3rd Zonal Workshop on the theme 'From Classroom to Courtroom: Law Students as Catalysts for Social Justice'

31 May 2026: The Karnataka State Legal Services Authority and Karnataka State Law University, in association with M S Ramaiah College of Law (RCL), has organised the 3rd Zonal Workshop on the theme 'From Classroom to Courtroom: Law Students as Catalysts for Social Justice' at the M S Ramaiah College of Law Auditorium, MSRIT Campus, Mathikere, Bengaluru.

Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority, inaugurated the workshop and Justice Vibhu Bakhru, Chief Justice, High Court of Karnataka and Patron-in-Chief, Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Bengaluru has presided over the programme.

The workshop also witnessed the august presence of Justice Anu Sivaraman, Judge, High Court of Karnataka and Executive Chairperson, Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Bengaluru; Mr Sanjiv Pandey, Member Secretary, National Legal Services Authority; Mr K S Bharath Kumar, Registrar General, High Court of Karnataka; Mr H Shashidhara Shetty, Member Secretary, KSLSA, Bengaluru; Prof (Dr) C Basavaraju, Vice Chancellor, Karnataka State Law University, Hubballi; Mr M R Anandaram, Director, RCL; and Prof (Dr) Uma Mahesh Satyanarayan, Principal, M S Ramaiah College of Law (Autonomous), Bengaluru as Chief Guests.

Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, National Legal Services Authority, New Delhi delivered the Inaugural address. He highlighted the importance of legal education going beyond classrooms and becoming a tool for justice, equality, and social change. He expressed his view that law students should not only aim for careers like advocates or judges but also understand their responsibility towards society. Referring to Article 39A of the Constitution and the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, he also emphasised on the need for free legal aid and equal access to justice for all.

The workshop was attended by about 1,300 participants (law students and faculty co-ordinators) from 97 Law Colleges of Bengaluru.

Fresh from the Bench

Association for Democratic Reforms & Ors. v. Election Commission of India & Ors. 2026 INSC 564

"The story of democracy is therefore not only a story of voting, but also of identifying the persons entitled to participate in the choice of government. The electoral roll is the legal record of that political community. For this reason, disputes concerning electoral rolls are never merely administrative. They go to the composition of the electorate and, in turn, to the foundation of representative government"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi

Author: Chief Justice Surya Kant

In a judgment dated **27 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court disposed of a batch of writ petitions challenging the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar. The Court upheld the Election Commission of India's (ECI) authority to conduct such an exercise, ruling that the SIR was a legitimate, proportionate, and constitutionally grounded measure intended to restore the accuracy and integrity of the electoral process.

Background

In an order by ECI dated **24 June 2025**, a Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls across all Assembly constituencies in Bihar was notified. The ECI noted that the last intensive revision in the state occurred in 2003; in the two decades since, the rolls had only undergone summary revisions. Rapid urbanisation and large-scale migration had potentially led to multiple entries, defective data, and the inclusion of ineligible persons. The SIR involved a house-to-house enumeration where electors not listed in the 2003 roll were required to submit specific government documents to prove eligibility. Initially, nearly 65 lakh electors were excluded from the draft roll for non-submission of forms. Subsequent judicial interventions allowed for the inclusion of the Aadhaar Card as a twelfth document of identity and the Court also noted that claims corrections and objections could be submitted even after the deadline. By the time the final roll was published on 30 September 2025, the net result was a roll of 7.42 crore electors (down from 7.89 crore prior to the SIR). The Petitioners argued that the exercise was an arbitrary inquisition into citizenship that placed an unconstitutional burden on voters.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Complementary Nature of Articles 324 and 327**: The Court rejected the contention that the Election Commission of India's absolute authority under Article 324 dissipates upon the enactment of legislation by Parliament under Article 327. Instead, the legislative authority of Parliament under Article 327 and the Commission's constitutional mandate under Article 324 are viewed as complementary. These provisions are intended to function in conjunction rather than as adversarial or mutually exclusive spheres. Consequently, any legislation promulgated under Article 327 must not be interpreted in a way that nullifies or immobilises the essential constitutional

duties assigned to the Commission under Article 324.

- **Amplitude of Section 21(3) of the RP Act**: The Court emphasised that Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, provides the ECI with an independent and unfettered source of authority to conduct special revisions in such a manner as it may think fit. The Court interpreted the term 'any' in the phrase 'any constituency' to contextually mean 'many' or 'all', enabling the Commission to exercise its special revisional powers in line with its wide constitutional and statutory jurisdiction.

- **Legitimacy and Proportionality:** Applying the proportionality test, the Court determined that the objective of the SIR to maintain an accurate electoral roll is vital to democratic legitimacy. The measures implemented demonstrate a rational nexus to the objective sought to be achieved, and are not disproportionately excessive. It includes robust procedural safeguards to preclude arbitrary exclusion. This exercise was rooted in a legitimate, constitutional purpose: the restoration of the accuracy and integrity of the electoral roll. Given the scope of the problem and the safeguards in place, the Commission's actions are not considered disproportionate to the intended objective.

- **Verification v. Adjudication of Citizenship:** The Court held that the Commission is authorised, through its constitutional mandate, to conduct a limited enquiry into citizenship to ensure eligibility for inclusion in the electoral roll. Such an enquiry does not constitute a definitive determination of citizenship, and any resulting actions are strictly limited to electoral consequence. Consequently, the impact of such a finding is narrow: it pertains solely to an individual's qualification for the electoral roll and their right to participate in elections. It does not, however, operate to strip an individual of their citizenship claims, nor does it preclude a final adjudication of that status by the Competent Authority under the Citizenship Act.

- **Presumption of Validity:** While inclusion in the electoral roll gives rise to a presumption of validity, such presumption is rebuttable and cannot be construed as imposing a total prohibition against the Commission's authority to perform a Special Intensive Revision.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court upheld the SIR and issued several vital directions:

1. The ECI's determination for electoral purposes does not assume finality regarding a person's legal status as a citizen.

2. Persons whose names have been deleted from the 2003 roll on account of the Commission being of the opinion that they are not citizens, the Commission shall refer such cases within 4 weeks to the Competent Authority under the Citizenship Act, 1955, for adjudication of their citizenship.

3. The Competent Authority shall take the necessary decision in accordance with law, preferably before the next Parliamentary, Assembly, local body elections, whichever is earlier, after giving notice and an opportunity of hearing to the deleted individuals, if any.

4. All persons who are domiciled in Bihar and whose names have been erroneously deleted on the ground that they are absent, dead, shifted or in duplication may assail the decision of the Commission by way of judicial review.

Pila Pahan @ Peela Pahan & Ors v. State of Jharkhand & Anr. (2026 INSC 604)

"Notwithstanding severe institutional pressures and ever-growing caseloads, the High Courts have, over decades, discharged their constitutional obligations with dedication, resilience, and distinction. Their continued functioning under such circumstances stands as a testament to the institutional strength, sense of duty, and enduring commitment that have long characterised this nation's judiciary"

Coram: Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi

Author: Chief Justice Surya Kant

In a judgment dated **29 May 2026,** a two judge Bench disposed of the writ petitions and issued binding, pan India guidelines to remedy the persistent delay in the pronouncement of reserved judgments by High Courts. The Supreme Court observed that the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 is not confined to the trial stage but extends to every stage of the proceeding, and is violated when judicial silence leaves a litigant's fate hanging in the balance for indefinite periods. The Court further noted that while Trial Courts have statutory timelines, the statutory lacuna regarding High Courts necessitated the exercise of its jurisdiction under Article 142 to ensure that constitutional and legal rights aren't rendered illusory by the mere passage of time.

Background

The Petitioners, having been convicted of various offenses and sentenced to life imprisonment in Jharkhand, had served over a decade in custody by the time their criminal appeals were heard and judgments were reserved between January and June 2022. Seeking relief from undue delays in the pronouncement of these reserved judgments, they approached the Supreme Court in 2025. The Court's initial inquiry revealed that while the High Court of Jharkhand had numerous long-pending matters, some dating back to early 2022, it had also rapidly decided 75 appeals within a single week following the Supreme Court's intervention.

The Court, in recognising a systemic issue, expanded the scope of the proceedings nationwide, directing all High Courts to report on reserved judgments and delays in uploading orders to their websites. Although the original Petitioners were eventually released after their judgments were finally delivered, the Court maintained the petitions to address the broader 'larger issue' of judicial delays. To assist in this, an Amicus Curiae was appointed to analyse reports and standardise the formatting of judgment records across all High Courts to include clear dates for reservation, pronouncement, and uploading. Following a thorough analysis of nationwide delays, draft guidelines for uniform judicial conduct were circulated to all Registrar Generals, and the matter is currently reserved for final orders.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Article 21 and Personal Liberty:** The Court held that the right to life and personal liberty is violated by undue delay in pronouncing a reserved judgment. This right is not limited to the trial stage but extends to every stage of the proceeding, as a "silent" court is unacceptable to a citizen whose fate hangs in the balance.
- **Impact on Adjudication Quality:** A judgment reflects the arguments that preceded

it; therefore, it is most faithful when it follows the hearing closely. Prolonged intervals between hearing and pronouncement impair the quality of justice.

- **Public Trust as an Institutional Foundation:** Confidence in the justice delivery system rests on the regularity with which courts speak. Regularity in pronouncement is not a matter of administrative convenience, but is essential for public confidence in the administration of justice.
- **Filling a Statutory Lacuna:** While Trial Courts have statutory timelines for judgments, High Courts do not. The Court emphasised that this legislative gap must be bridged by judicial guidelines to prevent legal rights from becoming "illusory by the mere passage of time".
- **Institutional Pressure v. Constitutional Duty:** The Court acknowledged that High Court judges endure "mammothian obligations" and rosters exceeding 100 matters a day. However, these pressures cannot justify institutional silence that leaves litigants in a state of continued confinement or uncertainty.

Outcome and Directions

- Reasoned judgments must be pronounced within a maximum period of three months from the date of reservation. Matters involving bail, anticipatory bail, and death references must be prioritised. Bail orders should preferably be pronounced and uploaded on the same day or the next day.
- Orders for bail or acquittal must be communicated to jail authorities on the date of pronouncement, with release mandatory by the next day at the latest. Registries must send automated monthly emails to the Chief Justice and the concerned Bench listing all reserved judgments pending for that month.
- If a judgment remains unpronounced after three months, the Chief Justice shall direct the Bench to pronounce it within two weeks. If still undelivered, the case must be reassigned to another Bench for a fresh hearing.
- After three months of silence, a party may apply for early judgment. If the delay reaches three and half months, they are entitled to pray for the case's withdrawal and re-assignment.
- High Court websites must display the date of reservation against case statuses. Certified copies must explicitly mention the dates of reservation, pronouncement, and uploading. Reasoning for operative orders must be uploaded within 15 days, with automated SMS/email alerts sent to the advocates upon publication.

Ann Saurabh Dutt v. Lieutenant Colonel Saurabh Iqbal Bahadur Dutt (2026 INSC 475)

"To brandish the effort of the wife to pursue her own career goals as acts of cruelty, as the same may have hurt the sentiments of the husband or the in-laws, is highly objectionable and deplorable in the era where the society proudly talks of women empowerment"

Coram: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta

Author: Justice Sandeep Mehta

In a judgment dated **12 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed part of an appeal filed by Ann Saurabh Dutt, which set aside

the findings of the Family Court and Gujarat High Court that found her to be guilty of cruelty and desertion. The Court determined that a woman's choice to have a career outside of her marriage and living apart from her husband for the benefit of her child cannot be construed as matrimonial misconduct. The Court held that while the divorce decree remains in force, the grounds for granting a divorce will be based on the irretrievable breakdown of marriage and not on cruelty and not on desertion. The Court dismissed the plea of the husband seeking prosecution of the wife for perjury.

Background

The Appellant, a qualified dentist, married the Respondent, an Army officer in 2009. After living together for some time, the Respondent was posted to Kargil. Due to her pregnancy and the fact that their daughter required special medical treatment later on, the Appellant needed to live in Ahmedabad where there were better medical facilities for during her pregnancy and after the birth of the child. The Appellant was able to establish and continue to operate her own dental practice while living in Ahmedabad. As time passed the relationship between the Appellant and Respondent deteriorated actions and a divorce petition filed by husband. The Family Court granted a divorce based upon the grounds of cruelty and desertion due to the wife pursuing her career as a dentist by opening a dental clinic she did not inform her husband or his family of and also because the wife did not live with the husband at his place of assignment. The Gujarat High Court affirmed the findings of the Family Court regarding both cruelty and desertion.

The Appellant before the Supreme Court had not challenged the divorce itself, but sought to expunge the adverse findings of cruelty and desertion. The Respondent also separately challenged the denial of his request to have the Appellant prosecuted for alleged perjury.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Women's Professional Autonomy:** The Court held that marriage does not extinguish a woman's independent identity or professional aspirations. A qualified woman cannot be expected to sacrifice her career solely because of her husband's posting.
- **Career Pursuit Not Cruelty or Desertion**: The Appellant's decision to establish and continue her dental practice was a legitimate professional choice and could not be treated as cruelty or desertion.
- **Rejection of Patriarchal Assumptions**: The Court criticised the Family Court's expectation that a wife must reside wherever her husband is posted, describing such reasoning as regressive and inconsistent with modern constitutional values.
- **Welfare of the Child**: The Court found that the Appellant's daughter would have a safer environment and access to better quality of medical care, so her actions did not constitute desertion.
- **No Evidence of Religious Coercion**: The Court ruled that there was insufficient evidence to support the Respondent's allegation that the Appellant had attempted to physically coerce the Respondent into converting to Christianity.
- **Irretrievable Breakdown of Marriage**: The Court affirmed the decree of divorce based on the fact that the Respondent and the Appellant had completely separated from each other, and the Respondent has remarried, thus creating an irretrievable breakdown of marriage.
- **Perjury Proceedings Not Maintainable:** The Court determined that the Respondent had not established sufficient evidence to support his allegations against Appellant that

would warrant initiating perjury proceedings, and such allegation appeared to have been fabricated as a result of the rancorous nature of the parties' divorce.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court reversed the decision upheld by the High Court and Family Court's finding of cruel treatment and desertion by the wife. The divorce decree was upheld; however, the divorce decree must now be considered a divorce that was based on the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage. The husband's application for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court in relation to his request to prosecute the wife for allegation of perjury was dismissed by the Supreme Court.

Padam Mehta & Anr. v. State of Rajasthan (2026 INSC 476)

"At a more fundamental level, the right to receive education in one's mother language finds its normative basis in Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution, for the guarantee of freedom of speech and expression necessarily encompasses the right to receive information in a form that is both meaningful and comprehensible. The true value of this freedom lies not merely in the ability to communicate, but in the ability to understand, internalize, and process information so as to make informed choices"

Coram: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta

Author: Justice Sandeep Mehta

In a Judgment dated **12 May 2026,** a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court overruled the Rajasthan High Court's decision wherein the High Court had dismissed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) which expressed interest in seeking education in the Rajasthani language. The Supreme Court held that access to education in one's native language is closely linked to positive educational experience and is consistent with the guarantee of quality education, freedom of expression and meaningful learning opportunity. Although the Supreme Court found that there was no longer a need to provide relief concerning the Rajasthan Eligibility Examination for Teacher (REET), 2021 since the recruitment process had already concluded, the Court ordered the State of Rajasthan to formulate a comprehensive plan for enhancing education that is based upon the use upon the use of one's native language and to include Rajasthani language classes in schools over time.

Background

The Appellants, Padam Mehta and another individual, have submitted a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Rajasthan High Court, seeking to have the Rajasthan State Government include the Rajasthani Language into the REET (Rajasthan Eligibility Exam for Teachers) 2021 syllabus and provide instructions through either the Rajasthani language, or some other related local language. They have stated that Rajasthani is not merely a dialect, but a separate and distinct language that has a rich cultural heritage, and, therefore, Rajasthani children could learn more effectively if they are educated in their own language. The Appellants cited rights under Constitution and the National Education Policy 2020, which require the State to promote native-language based education. The petition was dismissed by Rajasthan High Court because the Appellants did not prove the

State had any legal obligations or any corresponding statutory obligations which could be enforced. The Appellants appealed to the Supreme Court against the decision of the Rajasthan High Court.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Language and Constitutional Rights:** The Court observed that language is not just a means to communicate; it is also part of a person's identity, dignity and right to be included in the social fabric. The right to attend school and get an education in a language you can understand is an important constitutional right.
- **Importance of Mother Tongue Education:** The Court emphasised that effective comprehension is the basis for quality education, providing that when students are taught in their mother tongue, they will learn better and develop their cognitive abilities.
- **Constitutional and Statutory Support:** The articles of the Constitution used by the Court were 19(1)(a), 21A, 41, 45, 51A(k), and 350A that promotes using a child's first language to provide educational instruction whenever feasible.
- **National Education Policy, 2020:** The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 supports the use of the mother tongue, local language or a regional language as the medium of education in primary schools, and was cited by the Court.
- **Right to Receive Education in a Language of Choice:** The Court ruled on the right of an individual to receive education in a language they can understand within their own region, as recognised in several Supreme Court decisions about free speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a).
- **Criticism of State Inaction**: Despite the fact that Rajasthani is currently taught at many universities in Rajasthan, the Court was highly critical of the State's reliance on there being no recognition for Rajasthani in the Eighth Schedule, as it provided no grounds for their inability to take action to implement mother tongue-based education.
- **Recognition of Rajasthani Language:** The State's contention that only languages that have been recognised in the Eighth Schedule may be taught in schools is excessively technical and restrictive, as Rajasthani is a recognised language.
- **Limits of Judicial Intervention:** The Court acknowledged that creating policies is an area of the executive branch of government; however, the judiciary has a duty to ensure that the executive does not make constitutional rights ineffective through the failure to take any action.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court granted the leave to appeal and reversed the decision of the High Court. The Court concluded that allowing children to receive an education in their native language will result in improved understanding for children and this conclusion is supported by the Constitution of India, The Right to Education (RTE) Act, and the National Education Policy. The Court ordered the Rajasthan Government to develop a mother-tongue based education policy; classify "Rajasthani" as a language for the purpose of education; and implement Rajasthani as a subject in school over time.

Sukhendu Bhattacharjee and Others v. The State of Assam and Others (2026 INSC 523)

"What emerges from the principles enunciated in the aforesaid decisions is that the State cannot rely upon the mere form of engagement to deny fair and equitable treatment to employees who have served it for long years. The consistent thread running through these judgments is that Umadevi (supra) cannot be invoked as a blanket barrier to justify prolonged and continued engagements of a temporary or ad hoc nature, especially where the employees have been discharging essential and recurring functions of the State"

Coram: Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta

Author: Justice Sandeep Mehta

In a judgment dated **21 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the judgment and order of the Division Bench of the Gauhati High Court. The appeals were preferred against the High Court's decision to reverse a Single Judge's order that had directed the regularisation of workers left out of a previous state-wide exercise. The Supreme Court held that the State, acting as a "model employer", cannot selectively deny the benefit of regularisation to a small group of eligible workers when approximately 30,000 similarly situated employees had already been regularised under the same policy.

Background

Starting in 1980, the Government of Assam engaged Muster Roll (MR) workers to meet growing manpower needs for public works. Following a series of cabinet decisions, on 22 July 2005, the State committed to regularising Muster Roll and Work Charged workers engaged prior to 01 April 1993. Under this policy, approximately 30,000 workers were regularised. However, the Appellants, who were also engaged before the 1993 cut-off and had served for decades, were excluded due to clerical errors, spelling mistakes, or administrative omissions. Despite repeated undertakings to the High Court that these omissions would be rectified, the State issued a 2012 Office Memorandum halting all further regularisations, citing the Supreme Court's decision in *Secretary, State of Karnataka v. Umadevi, (2006) 4 SCC 1* as a legal barrier.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Parity and Article 14:** The Court observed that the Appellants were identically placed to the 30,000 regularised workers regarding their engagement date and nature of service. It held that once a policy decision is taken to benefit a defined class, the State cannot selectively deny it to a smaller group without a rational basis, as selective implementation is manifestly arbitrary and violates Article 14.
- **The State as a Model Employer:** Emphasising that the State bears a heightened constitutional obligation, the Court ruled that it must act with probity, fairness, and candour. It criticised the State for giving solemn representations to a constitutional court and subsequently resiling from them by citing technical hurdles, stating that a model employer must avoid exploiting the vulnerability of employees at the lowest pedestal of the hierarchy.
- **Misapplication of *Umadevi*:** The Court clarified that *Umadevi* was intended to prevent regularisation of persons appointed without following the constitutional scheme of public employment under Articles 14 and 16 and not to penalise long-serving employees performing essential functions of the State. It held that *Umadevi* cannot be used as a

shield to justify exploitative engagements continued for decades or to allow the State to extract regular work while avoiding long-term obligations by using temporary labels.

- **Legitimate Expectation and Executive Authority:** The Court found that the State's 2005 policy and repeated assurances created a legitimate expectation of fairness. It further noted that the State's act of seeking court permission to implement its own Cabinet decision was an unwarranted surrender of executive authority, as regularisation is an executive function that does not require prior judicial approval.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals, set aside the Division Bench's judgment, and affirmed the Single Judge's order. It directed the State to treat the Appellants as regularised in service from the same date as the original 30,000 beneficiaries of the 2005 policy. The State must create supernumerary posts to facilitate this and provide all consequential benefits, including pay fixation, continuity of service, and pensionary benefits. For deceased or retired Appellants, benefits are to be released to legal heirs or recalculated as notional regularisation. The entire exercise must be completed within one year.

Rohit Chaturvedi v. State of Uttarakhand and Others (2026 INSC 490)

"… remission is not an extension of the sentencing process, but a distinct executive function concerned with the present and future, namely, the prisoner's conduct, evidence of reformation, and prospects of reintegration into society. To predicate its denial only on the heinous nature of the offence is to collapse this distinction and to reconvert remission into a retrospective reaffirmation of guilt, which the criminal justice system has already adjudicated upon"

Coram: Justice B V Nagarathna and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

Author: Justice B V Nagarathna

In a judgment dated **15 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed a writ petition filed by the Petitioner, quashing an arbitrary and non-speaking communication dated 09 July 2025, from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) that had rejected his premature release. The Court granted the benefit of premature release, holding that the gravity or heinousness of an offence alone cannot constitute the sole ground for denying remission.

Background

The Petitioner was convicted for murder under Sections 120B and 302 of the IPC in a CBI-investigated case and sentenced to life imprisonment by a Special Court in Dehradun in 2007, a decision subsequently affirmed by both the High Court and the Supreme Court. After undergoing more than 22 years of incarceration, the Petitioner initiated proceedings seeking premature release in 2022. After initial rejections and multiple rounds of litigation, following the Supreme Court's direction in *Bilkis Yakub Rasool v. Union of India, (2024) 5 SCC 481* that clarified the jurisdictional boundaries, the appropriate Government for considering remission or suspension or commutation is the Government of the State in which the trial and conviction took place and not where the crime was committed. Pursuant to this, the Government of Uttarakhand evaluated his conduct and recommended his premature release. However, because the original investigation was conducted by the CBI, the concurrence of the Central Government was mandatory under Section

477(1) of the BNSS. MHA, by a communication dated 09 July 2025, rejected the State's proposal. The Petitioner approached the Supreme Court to quash this rejection, contending that the MHA's decision was arbitrary, especially given that a similarly situated co-accused had already been granted premature release by the State of Uttar Pradesh after undergoing a lesser period of incarceration.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Ex facie non-speaking and cryptic rejection violative of principles of natural justice:** The Court found that the MHA communication, which merely stated that the Competent Authority "does not concur" with the State's proposal, was ex facie non-speaking and reflected complete non-application of mind. The Court emphasised that recording reasons is an indispensable safeguard against arbitrariness, and its absence violates principles of natural justice and frustrates effective judicial review.

- **Futility of remand as an empty formality:** While a non-speaking order would ordinarily warrant remanding the matter back to the authority for fresh consideration, the Court declined to do so because the Union of India had already conclusively articulated its stance on the merits relying entirely on the heinousness of the crime before the Court. Relegating the Petitioner, who had already suffered 22 years of incarceration, to another round of administrative assessment would be an empty formality and unnecessarily prolong the proceedings.

- **Nature of offence inadequate as sole ground for denial:** Following *Satish v. State of UP, (2021) 14 SCC 580*, the Court held that neither the length of the sentence nor the gravity of the original offence can, by themselves, constitute the sole basis for refusing premature release. Further relying on *Mohd Giasuddin v. State of AP, (1977) 3 SCC 287*, the Court clarified that remission is a distinct, reformative executive function focused on the prisoner's present conduct and prospects of reintegration, not an extension of the sentencing process. The gravity of the offence is a consideration exhausted at the stage of sentencing. Invoking Plato's curative theory of punishment, the Court held that justice does not permit permanent incarceration in the shadow of a past act; relying solely on the gravity of the crime for denying remission amounts to "emotive retribution" and a retrospective reaffirmation of guilt.

- **Entitlement based on parity and state recommendation:** Proceeding to examine the merits, the Court observed that the State of Uttarakhand, the authority best positioned to assess the prisoner's institutional discipline and rehabilitation, had positively recommended his release based on his good conduct over 22 years. Furthermore, a co-accused had already been granted premature release after a lesser period of incarceration. The Court held that denying similar consideration to the Petitioner, in the absence of cogent distinguishing circumstances, fell foul of constitutional fairness and non-arbitrariness.

Outcome and Directions

The Court allowed the writ petition and quashed the impugned letter dated 09 July 2025 issued by the MHA, declaring it arbitrary, non-speaking, and unsustainable in law. Having concluded that the Petitioner is entitled to the benefit of remission, the Court directed the Respondents to treat him as having been prematurely released. Furthermore, noting that the Petitioner was already out on interim bail, the Court explicitly directed that his surrender shall not be required. All pending miscellaneous applications were also disposed of accordingly.

Syed Iftikhar Andrabi v. National Investigation Agency, Jammu (2026 INSC 503)

". . . it is clear beyond doubt that the preference for bail, or the often invoked principle 'bail is the rule and jail is the exception' flows from the constitutional primacy of personal liberty under Article 21 and, therefore, cannot be displaced by legislation"

Coram: Justice B V Nagarathna and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

Author: Justice Ujjal Bhuyan

In a judgment dated **18 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court ordered the release of an undertrial prisoner who had spent nearly six years in custody under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA). The Court addressed the critical interface between the stringent bail embargoes of Section 43-D (5) of the UAPA and the fundamental guarantee of personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution. Crucially, the Bench reaffirmed that statutory restrictions cannot hollow out the constitutional force of larger Bench decisions, specifically the three-judge Bench ruling in *Union of India v. KA Najeeb, (2021) 3 SCC 713.*

Background

The Appellant, Syed Iftikhar Andrabi, was a Village Level Worker in the Rural Development Department of Jammu & Kashmir and a political activist associated with people's conference. Following the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, he was initially placed under preventive detention, which the High Court later quashed. However, on 11 June 2020, he was arrested in connection with a major drug and cash seizure involving his relatives, with allegations that he was an overground worker for proscribed terrorist organisations like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM).

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) charged him with narco-terrorism, alleging he raised funds through narcotics to fund anti-national activities. By the time the matter reached the Supreme Court, the Appellant had undergone over 5 years and 9 months of incarceration. Charges were framed in 2023 and the trial progressed at a slow pace, with more than 350 prosecution witnesses still to be examined. The High Court had previously denied him bail, citing the seriousness of the charges and the statutory bar under UAPA.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **The Constitutional Supremacy of Article 21:** The Court reaffirmed that the right to a speedy trial is a fundamental right anchored in Article 21, describing it as "overarching and sacrosanct". It held that while statutes like the UAPA may calibrate liberty for national security, they cannot altogether invert the constitutional relationship between liberty and detention. Constitutional Courts are not restrained by restrictive penal statutes if they find that an undertrial's fundamental rights have been infringed. The Bench emphasised that "Bail is the rule and jail is the exception" is a constitutional mandate, not a mere statutory slogan and must be upheld regardless of the nature of the crime.
- **The "Melting Down" of Statutory Rigours:** The Court relied on the three-judge Bench decision in *KA Najeeb*, which established that the rigours of Section 43-D (5) of the UAPA must "melt down" when a timely trial is no longer possible. It warned that Section 43-D (5) should not be used as the sole basis for

denying bail, as this would breach the right to a speedy trial. Continued incarceration cannot go unabated simply because the State has met a low prima facie threshold while the trial continues for years. Pre-trial detention must not be permitted to convert into punishment through indefinite delay.

- **Adherence to Judicial Discipline:** The Bench expressed serious reservations regarding the recent two-judge Bench decisions, specifically *Gurwinder Singh v. State of Punjab 2024 INSC 92* and *Gulfisha Fatima v. State (Govt. of NCT of Delhi), 2026 INSC 2*, which appeared to depart from the *Najeeb* ratio. The Court categorically stated that a smaller Bench cannot dilute, circumvent or disregard the law declared by a larger Bench. It clarified that *Najeeb* is the binding law entitled to *stare decisis* and cannot be treated as a narrow and exceptional departure confined to extreme situations.

- **Impact of Abysmal Conviction Rates:** The Court took judicial notice of statistics showing that the nationwide conviction rate under the UAPA (2019-2023) is a mere 2% to 6%, indicating a high likelihood of acquittal (approx 94% to 98%). Specifically, in Jammu and Kashmir, the annual conviction rate is abysmal, consistently below 1%. This reality makes the prima facie true standard under Section 43-D(5) constitutionally suspect when applied to years of pre-trial custody.

- **Evidentiary Gaps and Inadmissible Confessions:** The Court noted there was no recovery of contraband or cash from the person or premises of the Appellant. The core evidence, including his alleged links to Pakistan-based commanders, rested almost entirely on confessions made before the police which are *prima facie* hit by Section 25 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872. The Court observed that one of the phone numbers used to link the Appellant to terrorists was actually a toll-free customer care number for a network provider in Karachi, Pakistan. It further noted that the approver's deposition had yielded nothing incriminating against the Appellant.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal and set aside the High Court's order, directing that the Appellant be released on bail. The Court stated that this judgment was necessary to "clarify and reiterate the legal position" following *K A Najeeb* to prevent future confusion in trial and High Courts.

To ensure the integrity of the ongoing proceedings, the Court issued the following specific directions:

1. The Appellant must be produced before the Special NIA Court within 7 days to be released on terms and conditions determined by that Court.

2. The Appellant is required to deposit his passport with the Special NIA Court immediately upon release.

3. The Appellant must report to the Handwara Police Station once every fortnight (15 days) at a fixed date and time.

4. The Appellant must continue to cooperate fully with the trial proceedings and is strictly prohibited from attempting to threaten or influence any witnesses.

Prajwala v. Union of India and Others
(2026 INSC 609)

"The lack of a Victim Protection Plan is a serious lacuna that carries the risk of derailing any and all rescue efforts, as there is no clear, guiding, and binding framework for how victims are to be handled, both during and after rescue. As a consequence, the manner of protection and rehabilitation to be offered to such victims is arbitrary and contingent on the will or whims of the person charged with their care at the ground level, thereby seriously and systemically impairing the realisation of the victims' fundamental rights"

Coram: Justice J B Pardiwala and Justice R Mahadevan

Author: Justice J B Pardiwala

In a judgment dated **29 May 2026**, two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed the Miscellaneous Application filed by the Petitioner and held that a victim of human trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) has a right to rehabilitation, which is a Fundamental Right under Articles 21 and 23 of the Constitution. The Court stated that there are substantial gaps in the rescue, protection, rehabilitation, reintegration and reparation of trafficking victims despite the presence of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA), the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS), and other Government schemes.

Background

In the year 2004, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed by the Petitioner, an organisation that aids and rehabilitates victims of trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The Petitioner argued that current legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms fail to adequately support victims of trafficking. Specifically, survivors are often misidentified as offenders due to the lack of a Comprehensive Victim Protection Plan—a framework essential for managing the entire continuum of care, from pre-rescue and rescue to long-term rehabilitation and social reintegration. On 16 November 2015, the Union of India filed an affidavit stating that a committee would be constituted to draft comprehensive legislation on the issue, and based on this assurance, the Court had disposed of the Writ Petition. However, the Inter-Ministerial Committee which would prepared a comprehensive legislation and establish an Organised Crime Investigation Agency was not constituted. Although several drafts were prepared and a Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha in 2018, it ultimately did not become law. The Petitioner therefore, has now filed an application to implement its earlier order and implement proper victim protections to victims of trafficking.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Right to Rehabilitation is a Constitutional Right:** Article 21 and Article 23 of the Constitution of India grant the Right to Life and Personal Liberty and the Right to Constitutional Remedies to every citizen of the country. The Court held that trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation is one of the most serious violations of an individual's dignity and freedom. Based on Articles 21 and 23 of the Constitution, victims of trafficking have the right to be rehabilitated. Rehabilitation should not be treated as a discretionary matter by the government, but as an enforceable constitutional duty.

- **Existing Framework Contains Serious Gaps :** The Court noted that India possesses numerous statutory and policy mechanisms within its legal framework, such as the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956; the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023; the Anti-Human Trafficking Units and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act, 2008. However, the implementation and coordination of these mechanisms were deficient. Typically, victims are not rescued adequately and lack adequate protection from traffickers; the current system provides insufficient rehabilitation support, inadequate economic support and puts them at an increased risk of facing re-trafficking. The Court observed that while the rehabilitation standards varied considerably, there is a lack of a coherent victim-oriented framework.

- **Victims are not to be treated as Offenders:** The Court reiterated that trafficked individuals are victims of a serious violation of their basic human rights. Victims are not to be treated as criminals and must not be subjected to indignity during the process of rescue, investigation and rehabilitation. In addition, the Bench stresses that all anti-trafficking efforts should be centred on victims; spread awareness, and inform them of their rights and ensure protection from further victimisation.

- **Need for a Comprehensive Victim Protection Plan:** Given the absence of a comprehensive plan, the Court, invoking its powers under Articles 32 and 142, has outlined an extensive Victim Protection Plan addressing all of the following: Collecting and planning pre-rescue intelligence; conducting actual rescues; providing medical and psychological care after rescue; shelter and security; legal assistance; compensation; and educational and vocational training; assistance with reintegration and reparation; protection from being trafficked again; and banning online trafficking. With reference to the case of *Vishal Jeet v. Union of India, (1990) 3 SCC 318,* the Bench sustained the proposition that rehabilitation is a guaranteed constitutional right, but also modified its rationale in light of the present civil liberties. The Court stated that the rehabilitation of voluntary adult sex workers cannot be imposed on them without their consent. *Vishal Jeet* concentrated on the physical infrastructure of protective homes.

- **No Direction for the Establishment of OCIA:** The Court recognised that trafficking constitutes organised crime; however, they declined to compel the creation of the Organised Crime Investigation Agency (OCIA). Additionally, they stated that the NIA's jurisdiction had been expanded to include all offences related to trafficking since this Court issued its ruling on October 13th, 2015, or since the passage of new Criminal Law Acts. As such, they deemed that issuing a judicial direction to establish a separate agency was beyond the scope of a writ of mandamus, as the creation of a national investigative agency could only be effected through new legislation.

Outcome

The Supreme Court allowed the application and held that the victims have a constitutionally protected right to rehabilitation enshrined under Articles 21 and 23 of the Indian Constitution. Additionally, the Court issued a comprehensive Victim Protection Plan and declined to direct the establishment of an OCIA.

Bency John v. Kerala State Electricity Board Ltd & Ors. (2026 INSC 562)

"A railway servant though appointed in a Government Railway under rules made exclusively for the Railways in exercise of powers under the proviso to Article 309 of the Constitution remains a person holding a civil post in connection with the affairs of the Union under the administrative control of the Central Government"

Coram: Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma

Author: Justice Dipankar Datta

In a judgment dated **26 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the orders of the Division Bench of the High Court of Kerala. The Court restored the judgment of the Single Judge, which had protected the pay fixation benefits of the Appellant. The Supreme Court held that service in the Indian Railways is a Central Government service and must be reckoned as such for all service benefits, including pay weightage, when an employee moves to a State-controlled Board that recognises prior government service.

Background

The Appellant, Bency John, served in the Indian Railways for over ten years in a regular pensionable post before being relieved in 2001 to join the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) as a sub-engineer. At the time of his joining, the Railways remitted his pro-rata pension liability to the Board, and his Service Book formally recorded that his prior railway service was to be reckoned for pensionary benefits. For over a decade, the Board's own orders (from 1996) and binding Long Term Settlements with employee unions (from 2000 and 2007) stipulated that regular pensionable 'former Government service followed by Board service' without break would be counted for computing qualifying service for weightage in pay revision. Relying on these provisions, the Appellant was granted weightage benefits for years. However, in December 2012, the Board's Chief Internal Auditor issued an objection, asserting that Railway Service cannot be reckoned as a Central Government Service for weightage. The High Court's Division Bench eventually upheld this view, reasoning that Railway servants are not Central Government servants because they are governed by their own separate statutory rules rather than the general Central Civil Services (CCS) Rules of 1964 & 1965.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Railways as an Integral Department of Central Government:** The Court clarified that the Indian Railways is not a separate legal entity or a Public Sector Undertaking, but a department of the Government of India. It held that regular employees of the Railways are civil servants of the Central Government who hold civil posts under the Union as contemplated by Articles 309 and 311 of the Constitution. They also have the locus standi to move Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT).
- **Irrelevance of Separate Service Rules:** The Court rejected the Division Bench's reasoning that the existence of separate rules (like the Railway Services Rules) altered the fundamental status of the employees. It noted that the CCS Rules specifically exclude Railway servants precisely because they are a distinct category of government servants for whom the President has made separate rules under Article 309 with the existence of separate rule providing adjudicatory mechanism to the Railway Board.

- **Constitutional and Statutory Recognition:** The Court highlighted that under Section 2(34) of the Railways Act, 1989, a "railway servant" is explicitly defined as a person employed by the Central Government. Furthermore, Railway servants enjoy the same Article 311 safeguards as other civil servants and fall under the jurisdiction of the Central Administrative Tribunal for service matters.
- **Railway Board's Role:** The Court observed that the Railway Board functions as a specialised body exercising the powers of the Government of India for administrative convenience. Therefore, service under the Railway Board is, in every legal sense, service under the Central Government.
- **Estoppel and Binding Nature of Settlements:** The Court held that the Board, having accepted the pro-rata pension contribution from the Railways and having acted upon its own orders and statutory settlements for years, was estopped from unilaterally withdrawing the benefit.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals and ordered as follows:

1. The orders of the Division Bench allowing the Board's appeals were set aside, and the judgment of the Single Judge was restored.
2. The Appellant is entitled to all benefits flowing from the Single Judge's judgment, and the Board is prohibited from withdrawing any benefit accrued in his favor.
3. The Board must grant these benefits within three months of the judgment.
4. The Court also directed the Board not to discriminate against other similarly situated employees who may approach them for similar relief based on this judgment.

State of UP v. Anjuman Ishaat-e-Taleem Trust & Ors. (2026 INSC 597)

"...the submission grounded on alleged retrospective application of the RTE Act regime by judicial interpretation does not merit acceptance. The statutory framework in itself is plain: it neither invalidates past appointments retrospectively nor visits existing teachers with immediate disqualification. On the contrary, both the original enactment and its amendment are premised upon legislative recognition of existing appointments while simultaneously stipulating a time-bound mechanism for securing minimum qualifications in the larger interest of maintaining standards in elementary education"

Coram: Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Manmohan

Author: Justice Dipankar Datta

In a judgment dated **29 May 2026**, a Division Bench of the Supreme Court dismissed a batch of review petitions challenging its previous direction that all in-service teachers must qualify the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) in order to remain in service or be promoted (under the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, Section 23). The Division Bench of the Supreme Court held that the requirement to qualify TET for in-service teachers was procured via the decision made by the Supreme Court, and did not represent an ex post facto imposition of an entirely new term and condition of service. The Supreme Court exercising its power under Article 142 of Indian Constitution has extended its previous ruling regarding the requirement to obtain a TET certificate until 31 August 2028.

Background

The review petitions were filed by various State Governments, teachers' associations, and individual teachers, challenging the ruling of the Supreme Court in *Anjuman Ishaat-e-Taleem Trust v. State of Maharashtra, (2025) 6 SCC 1*. The Court held that TET qualification was a mandatory requirement for continuation in service and promotion of in-service teachers appointed before the passing of the RTE Act of 2009. The Court has exercised its authority under Article 142 of the Constitution of India to grant these three teachers two years from 1st September 2025 to pass the TET examination, otherwise, they will be disqualified from their service. According to the Petitioners, the decision has misinterpreted Section 23 of RTE; it imposed previously non-existent requirements on the existing employment of the teacher; it has ignored the provisions of Section 12A of National Council for Teachers Education Act (NCTEA), 1993; and it has given the teachers an unreasonably short period for satisfying the new requirements imposed by the Court's ruling.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Limited Scope of Review Jurisdiction:** The Court has reiterated that the appropriate authority on review is limited to errors that can readily be seen in the record because review authority cannot be used as a substitute for appeal; an individual has mere disagreements with a conclusion can simply not create a basis for obtaining authority on review.
- **Applicability of TET to In-Service Teachers:** The Court, interpreting Section 23 of the RTE Act, stated that the statutory scheme makes it clear that teachers already in-service at the date the RTE Act came into effect must have completed the required minimum qualifications by law, and the Courts cannot retrospectively impose TET qualification as a prior condition of employment by interpreting the statute. Instead, TET qualification is a statutory requirement.
- **NCTE Act Cannot Override the RTE Act:** The Court did not find any merit in the NCTE Act's First Proviso's use. The Court held that the statute's Second Proviso expressly requires that existing teachers obtain their minimum qualification requirement within the RTE statute's prescribed time period.
- **No Impermissible Alteration of Service Conditions:** The Court held that requiring TET qualification for serving teachers does not constitute an arbitrary or retroactive alteration of service conditions. The Court further observed that the TET requirement is a statutory requirement that is designed to secure quality elementary education, which is consistent with Article 21A of the Constitution.
- **Primacy of Children's Right to Quality Education:** The Court emphasised that the RTE Act is a child-centred piece of legislation and therefore, the continuance of unqualified teachers in the system would not be acceptable at the expense of educational standards and the constitutional right of children to receive a quality education.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court found no error apparent on the face of the record warranting review and upheld the requirement of TET qualification for in-service teachers. Having regard to the paramountacy of ensuring continuity in elementary education of children, the SC deemed it appropriate to grant limited relief by extending the period earlier stipulated for acquiring the TET qualification, again, in exercise of its power under Article 142 of the Constitution.

Supriya Kumari M C v. State of Kerala and Ors.
(2026 INSC 537)

"Criminal liability under Section 304-A IPC necessitates a direct, proximate nexus between the negligent act and the death (causa causans);" where the appellant had been exonerated on merits in parallel consumer proceedings, allowing the criminal prosecution to continue on identical allegations constituted a gross abuse of the process of law"

Coram: Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Prasanna B Varale

Author: Justice Prasanna B Varale

In a judgment dated **25 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed a criminal appeal by an anaesthetist, quashing proceedings under Section 304-A IPC. The Court held that telephonic advice by an off-duty doctor falls short of the gross negligence required for criminal liability, emphasising that prosecution is legally unsustainable as it lacked proximate causal nexus to the death and following conclusive exoneration in parallel consumer proceedings.

Background

The Appellant, a senior anaesthetist, completed her shift and left the hospital after ensuring a patient was stable following piles surgery in May 2002. The patient was shifted to the post-operative care ward, wherein his health started deteriorating after 8 p.m. and eventually died. The post-mortem revealed that the deceased's left coronary had a blockage of 80% and the cause of death was identified to be death due to acute coronary insufficiency. The prosecution alleged the Appellant was grossly negligent for telephonically instructing a nurse to administer the analgesic sensorcaine instead of attending personally. Although the Petitioner was not named in the initial FIR, she was named in subsequent chargesheets based on an expert panel report. Following the rejection of her discharge applications by the lower Courts, the High Court of Kerala declined to quash the proceedings under Section 482 of the CrPC. Whereas, in a parallel consumer proceedings, the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum categorically exonerated the Appellant on merits. The Appellant approached the Supreme Court, contending that continuing the prosecution under Section 304-A of the IPC, despite the absence of a proximate causal nexus to the death and her conclusive civil exoneration, constituted a gross abuse of the legal process.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Inconsistent Statements Devoid of Evidentiary Value:** The Court noted that the High Court failed to properly evaluate the expert panel report, which highlighted inconsistencies in the attending nurse's statements. Consequently, the Court held that such inconsistent statements lacked any evidentiary value to sustain a charge of a rash and negligent act against the Appellant.
- **Exoneration on Merits and Continuation of Criminal Proceedings:** The Court noted that the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum had dismissed the complaint against the Appellant on merits and that this finding had attained finality insofar as the Appellant was concerned, as the complainants challenged only the quantum of compensation awarded against the hospital. Relying on *Radheyshyam Kejriwal v. State of West Bengal (2011) 3 SCC 581* and *Videocon Industries Ltd. v. State of*

Maharashtra, (2016) 12 SCC 315, the Court observed that where an accused has been exonerated on merits in civil proceedings on the same set of facts, continuation of criminal proceedings may amount to an abuse of the process of law.

- **Threshold for Criminal Medical Negligence:** Referring to *Jacob Mathew v. State of Punjab, (2005) 6 SCC 1*, the Court reiterated that criminal negligence under Section 304-A IPC requires a higher degree of negligence than civil liability. It observed that the alleged improper administration of *Sensorcaine* by the nurse occurred after the Appellant had left the operation theatre, and the material on record did not disclose gross negligence attributable to the Appellant so as to attract criminal liability.
- **Expert Medical Opinion:** The Court observed that *Jacob Mathew* requires an independent medical opinion from a doctor qualified in the same branch of medical practice before proceeding against a medical professional. It noted that the expert panel did not include an anaesthesiologist and, therefore, its opinion did not satisfy the requirement laid down in *Jacob Mathew* for evaluating the medical issues involved in the case.
- **Requirement of Proximate Causation:** The Court reiterated that liability under Section 304-A IPC requires a direct and proximate causal connection between the alleged negligent act and the death. It noted that the post-mortem attributed the immediate cause of death to acute coronary insufficiency due to significant coronary artery disease, and held that the material on record did not establish the requisite proximate causal nexus between the Appellant's alleged negligence and the patient's death.

Outcome and Directions

The Court allowed the appeal and set aside the impugned order passed by the High Court of Kerala. Consequently, the Court quashed the underlying criminal proceedings against the Appellant, pending before the Judicial Magistrate First Class-I, Kannur, and formally discharged her from all the offences alleged against her. All pending applications were disposed of accordingly.

New India Assurance Company Limited v. Dolly Satish Gandhi & Anr. (2026 INSC 489)

"Amount received under medical insurance is not deductible from compensation under Motor Vehicles Act as the two stand on a different footing"

Coram: Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice Vipul M Pancholi

Author: Justice Sanjay Karol

In a judgment dated **15 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court dismissed an appeal filed by New India Assurance Company Limited, holding that money received as mediclaim/medical insurance is not deductible from compensation awarded by a Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

Background

The case arose from a motor vehicle accident involving 'A', who sought compensation before an MACT for various heads including medical

expenses. Simultaneously, the claimant received money under a private medical insurance policy for the same expenses. The Appellant-insurer argued that awarding the same amount under the MACT award would lead to a "double benefit" and duplication of restitution. The High Court of Judicature at Bombay, resolving a conflict between its own divergent benches, had ruled that mediclaim is not deductible. The Supreme Court was tasked with settling this question of law due to the "contrarian views galore" across various High Courts in India.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Statutory v. Contractual Distinction:** The Court held that compensation under the Motor Vehicles Act (MVA) and mediclaim payments stand on entirely different footings; while MVA compensation is a statutory entitlement arising from an accident or death, mediclaim is a contractual sequitur of past premiums paid by the claimant. The Court held that a statutory benefit flows from the authority of law to fulfill public welfare, whereas a contractual benefit flows from the mutual will and agreement of private parties.
- **Nature of "Double Benefit":** The Court held that receiving both amounts does not constitute an impermissible "double benefit" because the mediclaim payment is the fruit of the claimant's own hard-earned money and prudence. The Court held that deducting these benefits would result in an "unjust benefit" to the tortfeasor's insurer and an "undue advantage" to the mediclaim company, which would receive premiums without having to fulfill its payout obligations.
- **Independent Accrual:** The Court held that mediclaim is independent of accidental coverage, as it is purchased to manage skyrocketing medical expenses and the general uncertainties of life, not just motor accidents. The Court observed that a Mediclaim policy is a necessary facet of financial preparation that people undertake given that the ability to meet sudden medical costs does not rest with everyone, and that the issue is not a matter of mere "Sherlockian deduction" as mediclaim policies do not specifically deal with accidental coverage alone.
- **Impact of Judicial Inconsistency:** The Court observed, regarding the numerous contrary positions taken by various High Courts, that unaddressed inconsistencies lead to judicial uncertainty and difficulty for both counsels and the justice delivery system. The Court observed that when contrary views exist, the application of law becomes a matter of choice rather than a definitive outcome, which negatively impacts judicial efficiency.
- **Different Compensation Standards:** The Court held that mediclaim and compensation under the Motor Vehicles Act (MVA) are based on different standards: mediclaim is limited to the amount covered by the policy, while MVA compensation is based on the broader principle of just and fair compensation, without a fixed monetary limit. The MVA therefore stands on a higher pedestal as a statutory benefit under a beneficial law, and the two cannot be treated as equivalent merely because they cover similar expenses.

Outcome and Directions

The Court held that the appeal was meritless and dismissed it, confirming that mediclaim proceeds cannot be deducted from MACT awards. The matter was remanded to the High Court for a determination consistent with this opinion.

Alpha Corp Development Private Limited v. Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA) and Others (2026 INSC 449)

"Given the facts obtaining presently, we are of the firm view that this was an eminently fit case for lifting the corporate veil, as EIL was the main driving force in the development of the projects and in payment of GNIDA' s dues. The subsidiary companies were only a front"

Coram: Justice Sanjay Kumar and Justice Alok Aradhe

Author: Justice Sanjay Kumar

In a judgment dated **05 May 2026**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court allowed the appeals and set aside the judgment and order of the NCLAT. The appeals were preferred against the NCLAT's decision to overturn NCLT orders that had approved resolution plans for stalled real estate projects. The Supreme Court held that the corporate veil must be lifted to recognise that the assets of the subsidiary companies were, in reality, controlled by the holding company (Corporate Debtor), thereby protecting the interests of thousands of innocent homebuyers.

Background

The Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) was initiated against Earth Infrastructures Limited (EIL), the Corporate Debtor (CD), in 2018. Long before this, Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA) had allotted land for various projects to EIL and its subsidiaries, including Earth Towne Infrastructures Private Limited (ETIPL), Neo Multimedia Limited, and Nishtha Software Private Limited. While the land leases were technically in the names of these subsidiaries, EIL was the actual developer and primary source of funding for the projects. Following defaults and the stall of construction in 2016, resolution plans by Alpha Corp Development Private Limited (Alpha) and Roma Unicon Designex Consortium (Roma) were approved by the NCLT. However, the NCLAT set aside these approvals, reasoning that the leased lands belonged to the subsidiaries and could not be treated as assets of the CD (EIL) during its CIRP.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Lifting the Corporate Veil:** The Court observed that EIL and its subsidiaries were inextricably connected and formed part of one concern. It held that the subsidiaries were merely a front and EIL was the main driving force in project development and payment of dues, making it a fit case to disregard the separate legal entities to protect public interest.
- **Inaction by GNIDA:** The Court noted the NCLAT's finding that, despite repeated representations by homebuyers and assurances that the issue of penal interest would be considered, GNIDA did not take effective steps to address the stalled projects. It also noted that GNIDA's obligations under the lease deeds included monitoring project development and ensuring timely completion by taking action against defaulting parties.
- **Protection of Homebuyers:** Referring to the public trust doctrine, the Court noted the NCLAT's observation that substantial amounts had been collected from allottees who had awaited possession for several years while the projects remained stalled. The Court

further noted that the NCLAT considered GNIDA's lack of due diligence in recovering its dues as a relevant factor in directing waiver of penal interest and recalculation of dues.

- **Project-Specific CIRP:** The Court affirmed that insolvency resolution in the real estate sector should generally proceed on a project-specific basis to protect solvent projects and genuine homebuyers from collateral prejudice.
- **Waiver of Penal Charges:** The Court ruled that GNIDA's failure to act diligently disentitled it from charging penal interest, penal charges, or time-extension penalties but can still recover principal amount due to it.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals, restored the resolution plans of Alpha and Roma, and set aside the NCLAT judgment. The Court directed GNIDA to recalculate its dues by deducting all penal interest and charges. These recalculated principal amounts are to be paid by the resolution applicants in equated monthly installments over twenty-four months, with the first payment due by 07 July 2026. The Court further ordered that these dues must be absorbed by the resolution applicants and not burdened upon the homebuyers.

Alka Agrawal v. State of Maharashtra (2026 INSC 489)

"Merely because the offences under the IPC were not established before the criminal court, it would not imply that it becomes a kind of embargo against putting into motion the provisions of the MPID Act or that the invocation of provisions of the MPID Act is barred thereby"

Coram: Justice Manoj Misra and Justice N V Anjaria

Author: Justice Manoj Misra

In a judgment dated **15 May 2026,** a two-judge Bench allowed the appeals and set aside the impugned judgment and order passed by the Nagpur Bench of the High Court, which had dismissed the Appellants' revision application with a cost of ₹5,00,000/- after characterising the dispute as a purely civil loan transaction. The Supreme Court observed that Section 2(c) of the Maharashtra Protection of Interest of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) Act, 1999, (hereinafter, the MPID Act) uses the phrase "includes and shall be deemed always to have included", creating a legal fiction that brings any receipt of money to be returned within the ambit of a "deposit" regardless of its nomenclature. The Court further held that the High Court misdirected itself in concluding that private individuals could not be a "financial establishment" under Section 2(d) and that the failure of separate criminal proceedings acted as an embargo against invoking the remedial provisions of the MPID Act.

Background

The Appellants, comprising five family members and two companies, were induced in 2016 to invest a total of ₹2.51 crore for setting up a resort in Tadoba, Maharashtra. The Respondents promised 24 percent annual interest payable quarterly in advance, with repayment of the principal by 31 December 2019. Following the Respondents' default in repaying both the interest and principal, the Appellants initiated multiple legal proceedings, including summary suits, proceedings under Section 138 of the NI Act

upon dishonour of a cheque, and an application seeking registration of an FIR under the IPC, which the High Court treated as arising out of a civil loan transaction. They subsequently invoked the Maharashtra Protection of Interest of Depositors (MPID) Act, 1999. The High Court dismissed their revision application with costs of ₹5 lakh, holding that the Respondents were not a "financial establishment" and the transaction did not constitute a "deposit". The Appellants challenged this finding before the Supreme Court.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Inclusive Scope of "Deposit":** The Court observed that Section 2(c) of the MPID Act uses the phrase "includes and shall be deemed always to have included", creating a legal fiction that makes the term inclusive rather than restrictive. The repeated use of the word "any" appearing five times in the substantive definition reflects a clear legislative intent to cast a broad net to protect the public.
- **Irrelevance of Nomenclature:** The Court held that labeling the transaction as a "loan" is a "convenient suggestion" that does not remove it from the scope of the Act. It is the basic attributes of the transaction money received to be returned after a period with or without benefits rather than its name, that determines its character as a "deposit".
- **Private Persons as "Financial Establishments":** Under Section 2(d), a "Financial Establishment" is defined as "any person accepting deposits". The Court clarified that private individuals like the Respondents who accept money in this manner assume this character and can be subjected to legal action under the Act.
- **Distinct Statutory Regimes:** As a "self-contained Code", the MPID Act provides a quasi-criminal remedy that operates in a different field than the IPC. Hence, the inability to establish criminal offences under the IPC does not act as an embargo against putting into motion the provisions of the MPID Act.
- **Protection of Public Interest:** The Act was specifically enacted to curb the "unscrupulous activities" of establishments that grab money from the public through promises of high interest and then fraudulently default.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court allowed the appeal, setting aside the High Court's judgment and the reasons supplied therein. The Court issued the following directions:

1. The amounts lent by the Appellants were declared to be "deposits" within the meaning of Section 2(c) of the MPID Act.
2. Respondent Nos. 2 to 6 were held to be a "Financial Establishment" under Section 2(d) of the Act.
3. The Appellants are entitled to invoke Section 3 and proceed with the remedial measures provided under the MPID Act for the ventilation of their grievances.
4. The judgment of the High Court, including the imposition of ₹5,00,000/- in costs, was declared wholly erroneous in law and was quashed.

M/s Mansi Finance (Chennai) Ltd v. M Lalitha & Ors. (2026 INSC 547)

"While Section 138 of the NI Act creates the offence of dishonour of cheque, Section 141 of the NI Act extends criminal liability to every person who, at the time the offence was committed, was in-charge of and responsible to the company or association for the conduct of its business"

Coram: Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and Justice N V Anjaria

Author: Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra

In a judgment dated **26 May 2026**, a Division Bench of the Supreme Court partly allowed the quashing of criminal charges under Sections 138 and 141 of the Negotiable Instruments (NI) Act, 1881. The Court reiterated that vicarious liability under Section 141 of NI Act should be based on specific factual assertions as well as corroborating evidence, to demonstrate that the accused was involved in the running of the business of the entity in question. In relation to certain office bearers of the Society, the Court restored the criminal proceedings while dismissing the prosecution against another accused because there was no specific allegation of the accused's role in committing the offence.

Background

A registered educational society received a loan of around ₹4.5 crore from an Appellant-finance company, to be used for both business and developmental purposes, with the transaction being documented by both promissory notes and memorandums created by some of the Society's office-bearers. The Society issued a cheque for the payment of the debt it owed to the Appellant for ₹5.12 crore, but when presented for payment at a bank, was rejected with a stamp stating that the account was blocked. A complaint was subsequently filed by the Appellant against the registered educational society and its office-bearers in the High Court of India, based on non payment of the debt and failing to comply with the statutory demand letter. The complaint was based on Sections 138 and 141 of the Negotiable Instruments Act 1881.

In the exercise of powers granted by the Criminal Procedure Code to quash the proceedings against four office-bearers of the registered educational society, the High Court did so because there were not sufficient averments in the body of the complaint to establish the liability of the four office-bearers under section 141 of NI Act. The Appellant therefore appealed to the Supreme Court of India for further relief as a result of the High Court's decision.

Court's Reasoning and Key Observations

- **Vicarious Liability under Section 141 Requires Foundational Facts:** The Court reiterated that Vicarious Liability under Section 141 of NI Act 1881 is not automated. A complaint must provide enough evidence to claim criminal liability and show that there is a person in charge of the entity or corporation at the time of the offence
- **Complaint Must be Read as a Whole:** The Court reiterated the principle established in the *S M S Pharmaceuticals*, *National Small Industries Corporation* and other precedents, the Court observed that the whole complaint should be taken into consideration rather than being the subject of an overly technical analysis. The Court should proceed to

consider the totality of the evidence and the totality of the allegations.

- **Active Participation in Financial Transactions is a Relevant Consideration:** The Court found that Respondents 1, 2 and 4 had all participated in the material financial transaction and were signatories to various documents including a Memorandum of Understanding, promissory notes and other financial transaction. Such material furnished a sufficient factual foundation to proceed against them under Section 141 NI Act 1881.
- **Mere Designation is Insufficient to Attract Liability:** In respect of Respondent no. 3, the Court recorded that there was no documentation of his involvement in the transaction and that he did not have responsibility other than designing as an executive member of the Society. Mere holding of an office, without supporting factual allegations, cannot attract vicarious criminal liability.
- **Scope of Quashing Jurisdiction:** The Court stated that at the stage of quashing the charge, the inquiry is restrictive to determining whether there is prima facie case; however, when determining the actual extent of the accused's participation or an obligation, these issues go to trial, and, therefore, cannot normally be resolved via an application for quashing pursuant of Section 482 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973.

Outcome and Directions

The Supreme Court partially allowed the appeal. The High Court order, in so far as it quashed the proceedings against R1, 2, and 4 was set aside and the quashing of appeal against R3 was upheld.

Bid Adieu



31 May 2026: Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the retirement function held to felicitate the retiring employees at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 May 2026:
Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate the retiring employee Ms Saroj Kumari Gaur, Deputy Registrar, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 May 2026:
Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate the retiring employee Mr Satish Chandra, Assistant Registrar, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 May 2026:
Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate the retiring employee Mr Venugopalan S V, Senior Court Assistant, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



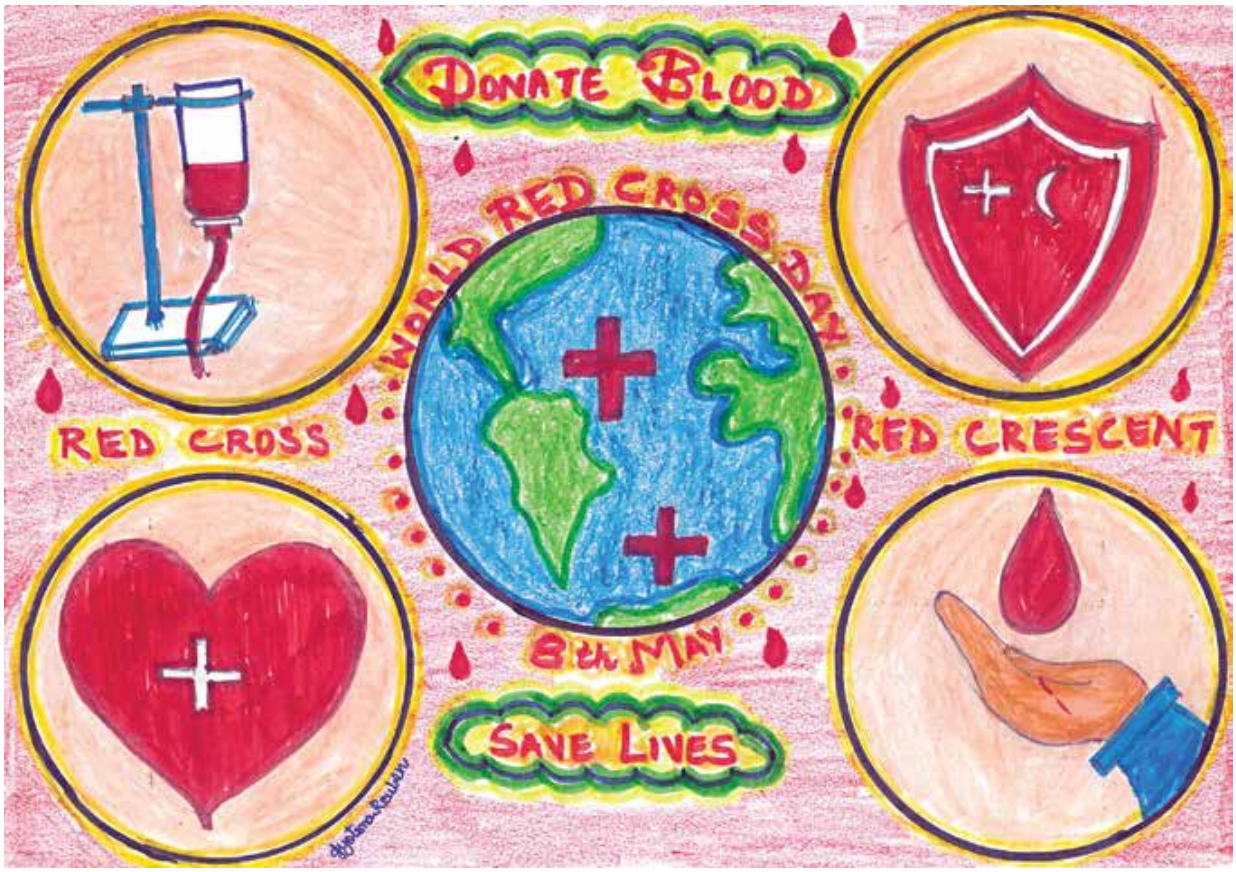
31 May 2026:
Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate the retiring employee Mr Shekhar Chander, Restorer Grade - II, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi



31 May 2026:
Justice P B Varale, Judge, Supreme Court of India, presented a memento to felicitate the retiring employee Mr Hari Prasad, Special Process Server, at the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi

Beyond the Court: Creativity Abound

World Red Cross Day (8 May)



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Supreme Court of India
Tilak Marg, New Delhi-110001

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