



51<sup>st</sup> Chief Justice of India  
**SANJIV KHANNA**







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**Supreme Court of India**  
New Delhi



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his wife Smt. Asha Khanna  
at Amrit Udyan, Rashtrapati Bhawan*

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*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with Shri Bharat Parashar (Secretary General)  
and Shri Atul M. Kurhekar (Former Secretary General)*

# Message From the Secretary General



It is with a deep sense of gratitude and respect that we bid adieu to an exceptional judge that Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna has been. Justice Khanna's journey has been marked by intellectual brilliance, tireless commitment to constitutional values, and a fierce devotion to justice that has inspired the entire legal fraternity and the nation at large. The same deserves our deepest respect and admiration. Under his visionary leadership, the Supreme Court has not only carried forward its legacy of being the *sentinel on the qui vive* but has also embraced reform, transparency, inclusion, and accessibility. Justice Khanna has exemplified the highest traditions of judicial statesmanship and shown through his work that compassion and courage, when coupled with a strong commitment to constitutional morality, can transform the pages of the Constitution into a living reality for millions. On behalf of the Officers & Officials of the Supreme Court of India and the entire judicial family, I offer my deepest gratitude for his vision, humility, and unshakeable integrity. Through this special edition we seek to express our heartfelt gratitude to Justice Sanjiv Khanna for several meaningful initiatives spearheaded by him as the Chief Justice of India.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Bharat Parashar'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bharat Parashar



# Conversation with Justice Sanjiv Khanna

## 51<sup>st</sup> Chief Justice of India

What first drew you to the field of law, and did it always feel like it was your calling? If not the law, where else might your path have led?

**Answer:** As I reflect on my journey, I believe law was my calling from a very young age, possibly around Class VIII or IX, when I first became aware of the judiciary and its impact. With my father and elder uncle deeply immersed in the legal field, my fascination grew naturally. My mother was a lecturer at Lady Shriram College. Had it not been for law, I might have taken to teaching. In the 1970s and 1980s, unlike today, opportunities were limited.

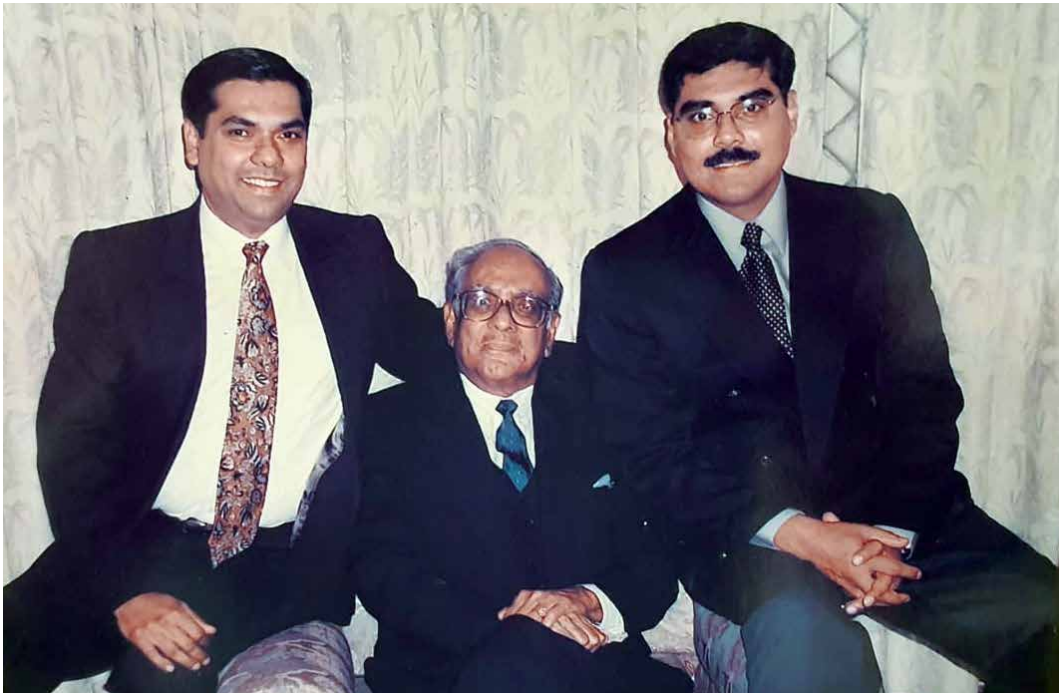


Who have been your guiding lights, professionally and personally, on this journey?

**Answer:** The Delhi High Court, in the early 1980s and again in the late 1990s, was home to judges of exceptional intellect and unwavering integrity. Justice Rajinder Sachar, Justice Avadh Bihari Rohatgi, Justice G.C. Jain, Justice S.B. Sinha, and Justice Arijit Pasayat left a lasting impression on me. In my formative years, I had the privilege of working with Shri F.C. Bedi, who primarily practiced in the District Courts, and Shri D.K. Kapoor, then the Central Government Standing Counsel in the Delhi High Court. I must also mention Mr. B.J. Nayar, whose chamber I had the opportunity to use.

On the personal front, my parents instilled in me the values of integrity and compassion from an early age. My school principal, Mr. M.N. Kapoor, was a remarkable figure—he often shared his life experiences with us and taught us what it meant to live with character and conviction.

But above all, the Indian Constitution has been my enduring source of guidance. Its principles, values, and vision continue to inspire and illuminate the path forward.



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his father Justice D.R. Khanna and Brother Mahin Khanna*

Moving from the Bar to the Bench is a pivotal shift. What perspective did you have to recalibrate most?

**Answer:** The transition from the Bar to the Bench requires a recalibration of perspective. Fortunately for me, though significant, the shift was smooth. Moving from an argumentative mindset to a neutral and impartial one came naturally and happened quickly. As a judge, one must adopt a dispassionate and objective approach, setting aside personal biases and prejudices.

Equally important is the need to develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the law—its application demands consideration of multiple viewpoints and often divergent precedents. There is also the weight of responsibility that every judge carries, knowing that each decision can impact people's lives and livelihoods.

Within two or three months of my elevation, I was sitting singly, hearing over 100 cases a day. In that short span, I had already reserved more than 100 judgments. There were no law clerks at the time, yet I was able to dictate and clear my backlog. The professional life of a judge is not only challenging



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna taking oath as a Judge of the High Court of Delhi*

and satisfying, but also offers a continuous and steep learning curve—one that keeps you intellectually engaged every single day.

In your years as a judge, what moments have left the deepest imprint on you?

**Answer:** Throughout my years as a judge, several experiences have stayed with me and shaped my understanding of the law and its impact.

*Firstly*, during my time as the presiding judge of the Division Bench of the Delhi High Court, I was assigned the roster for *habeas corpus* petitions. Many of these involved young men and women in relationships opposed by their families. These cases presented a delicate balance between personal liberty and familial expectations, and often touched upon sensitive emotional and social issues. Young advocates associated with the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee played an essential role, engaging with the parties and their families in the privacy of my chamber. My fellow judge and I would then step in. In several matters, we were able to help the families reach an understanding. The confidence and clarity shown by these young individuals—often from diverse social and regional backgrounds—left a strong impression. It reflected the quiet shifts taking place in Indian society, as more people move across states and settle in urban areas, gradually eroding older barriers.

*Secondly*, working with judges from a range of backgrounds in the Supreme Court was deeply engaging. While the presence of multiple voices and differing views in constitutional courts can appear challenging, it is also what enriches the institution. Constructive disagreement often leads to decisions that are more considered and balanced. The polyvocality of the Court—rooted in the diversity of thought and experience—proves to be a necessary strength. As long as there is openness to listening, it allows constitutional courts to respond effectively to the shifting concerns of society and contribute meaningfully to the development of Indian jurisprudence.

*Thirdly*, serving as the Executive Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) gave me the opportunity to engage directly with people far removed from formal courtrooms. Interacting with paralegal *adhikar mitras*, visiting villages and jails, and speaking to inmates gave me a clearer



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna interacting with a Jail inmate at Parappana Agrahara prison in Bengaluru*

view of how legal aid operates on the ground. These interactions highlighted the importance of rehabilitation, the real meaning of access to justice, and the role legal support can play in restoring dignity. It also brought into sharper focus issues such as drug addiction, poverty, and the cycles of vulnerability they create.

As Chief Justice, the responsibility is immense and the spotlight constant. How do you stay centred amidst it all?

**Answer:** As Chief Justice of India, the weight of responsibility and constant public scrutiny come with the role. However, I found that by staying focused on both the judicial and administrative aspects of my work, I could manage both the responsibility and the spotlight. True strength, I realised, lies in discharging one's duties with equanimity, always prioritizing the institution's best interests over external validation.

My focus was clear: first, to address arrears, improve the ease of filing and listing cases, and identify dormant or infructuous matters. Transparency was



*Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu administering oath to Justice Sanjiv Khanna as the Chief Justice of India*

a key priority, along with implementing a data-driven strategy to tackle the growing pendency of cases. Early in my tenure, steps were taken to appoint ad-hoc judges in High Courts. Additionally, the new case categorization framework, already developed, was introduced to streamline case identification and management.

What is one piece of advice you believe every young lawyer should hear but rarely does?

**Answer:** Never lose sight of the human story behind every case. While the technicalities of law are important, it is often the facts and the principles of equity that guide decisions. Always listen to your client and understand their perspective, but remember that what is argued in court is ultimately your prerogative. Arguments should be concise and impactful; mastering the art of articulating complex legal principles in a clear, convincing manner is essential.



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna at the Third Convocation Ceremony of Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur*



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his Law Researchers at his Residential Office*

Your initiative to include ‘Beyond the Court’ and ‘Bid Adieu’ in the Supreme Court Chronicle brought warmth to the institution. What inspired you to humanise the Court’s narrative in this way?

**Answer:** There is much more to life than just work in the office and courtroom. The staff in the courts are multifaceted individuals, with diverse talents, interests, and passions. This was the inspiration behind introducing the “Beyond the Court” section in the Supreme Court Chronicle. It offered a



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his Staff on the occasion of Republic Day 2025*

unique perspective, with numerous contributions pouring in. Judicial officers and staff from various High Courts and District Courts also shared their paintings, drawings, and photographs with the Supreme Court.

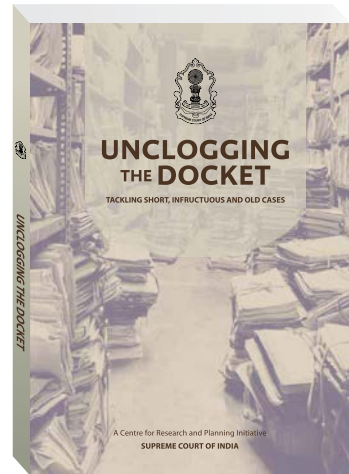
The idea behind the “Bid Adieu” section was to acknowledge the contributions of staff members retiring from service, expressing our gratitude on behalf of this institution. This section helps preserve the memories and experiences of those who have served and been an integral part of the Supreme Court of India.

One of your first endeavours as Chief Justice was addressing the issue of mounting case pendency. Could you share what motivated this and the progress you have seen?

**Answer:** Case arrears and delays in decisions are pressing issues that directly undermine society’s faith in the rule of law. Timely justice is not just a right, but a necessity for every litigant and citizen. Beyond appointing ad-hoc judges in High Courts and establishing evening courts in district courts, we took decisive action in the Supreme Court. In November 2024, the CRP was entrusted with reviewing paperbooks of pending cases—both listed and unlisted—to identify

short or infructuous matters. This initiative has been executed with rigor, resulting in a Case Clearing Ratio of approximately 106% over the past six months.

Additionally, we engaged a team from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, to assess Section I-B. Their recommendations for enhancing file scrutiny and case listing are currently being implemented. The results are already tangible, with 248 cases being scrutinized and verified daily. While this is an ongoing process, the categorization of cases is poised to expedite case disposal. This effort is driven by data and supported by sustained, focused work, ensuring continued progress toward more efficient justice.



With the baton about to be passed, what reflections would you like to leave behind—for the institution and its future custodians?

**Answer:** I am happy to pass the baton to none other than Mr. Justice B.R. Gavai, a legal mind of exceptional depth, experience, and wisdom. I am confident that Mr. Justice B.R. Gavai, with his vision and deep understanding of the law, will not only continue the work of advancing existing schemes and policies but will also introduce innovative initiatives that will drive the institution forward.

*Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Chief Justice of India  
sharing a lighter moment with Justice B.R. Gavai*



# A Judicial Odyssey of the 51<sup>st</sup> Chief Justice of India

**B**orn on 14 May 1960, Justice Sanjiv Khanna hails from a distinguished legal family. His father, Justice Dev Raj Khanna, served as a Judge of the High Court of Delhi, while his mother, Smt. Saroj Khanna, taught Hindi at the prestigious Lady Shri Ram College. His paternal uncle, Justice Hans Raj Khanna, is renowned for his principled dissent in the ADM Jabalpur case during the Emergency period in the late 1970s, where he stood firm on the inviolability of fundamental rights, a stance



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his family at the Rashtrapati Bhawan*



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his Colleagues at the High Court of Delhi*

that later cost him the position of the Chief Justice of India, but earned him enduring respect across the board.

Justice Khanna completed Bachelor of Arts from St. Stephen's College and thereafter studied Law at Faculty of Law, Delhi University, which laid a strong foundation for his legal career.

After completing his legal studies at Campus Law Centre, Delhi University, Justice Khanna enrolled as an Advocate with the Bar Council of Delhi in the year 1983. He initially practised in the District Courts of Delhi and later, set up his practice in the High Court of Delhi where he dealt with diverse matters, including matters pertaining to Constitutional Law, Direct Taxation, Arbitration, Commercial Laws, Company Law, Land Laws, Environment Protection Laws, Medical Negligence etc. He was the Senior Standing Counsel for the Income Tax Department for 7 years and later, he was also appointed as the Senior Standing Counsel (Civil) for the National Capital Territory of Delhi from 2004 till his elevation to the High Court of Delhi in June,

2005. He also worked as an Additional Public Prosecutor in the High Court of Delhi. As an amicus curiae, he assisted the High Court of Delhi in several criminal cases and cases involving issues of public importance.

On 24 June 2005, Justice Khanna was elevated as an Additional Judge of the High Court of Delhi and was made a Permanent Judge on 20 February 2006. Whilst a Judge of the High Court of Delhi, he acted as the Chairman/Judge-in-charge, Delhi Judicial Academy (DJA), Delhi International Arbitration Centre (DIAC) and the District Court Mediation Centres.

Justice Khanna's elevation to the Supreme Court of India on 18 January 2019 marked a significant phase in his judicial career, during which he authored several landmark judgments. Beyond the courtroom too, Justice Khanna has played pivotal roles in legal education and services. He served as the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), contributing to the promotion of legal aid and

*Justice Sanjiv Khanna after being designated the Chief Justice of India*





*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his wife Smt. Asha Khanna and Officers from the Supreme Court Registry on the Occasion of Republic Day 2025*

awareness. Additionally, he was a member of the Governing Council of the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, influencing judicial training and reforms.

Justice Khanna's leadership was marked by a commitment to reducing case pendency, enhancing judicial efficiency, and upholding the rule of law.

Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna's journey illustrates a firm dedication to justice, marked by legal scholarship, constitutional integrity, and efforts to uphold transparency and accountability within the judiciary. His leadership was marked by a commitment to reducing case pendency, enhancing judicial efficiency, and upholding the rule of law.



*Chief Justice Khanna at the 1st Cricket Premier League organised by SCAORA*

# A New Era of Justice: Chief Justice's Roadmap

After taking oath as the 51st Chief Justice of India, Justice Khanna had stated that his vision was to strengthen the foundations of Indian judiciary, to ensure that it remains a beacon of hope and justice for all citizens. He envisioned a judiciary that was inclusive, impartial, and responsive to the needs of our diverse nation.

His mission was to promote accessibility, transparency, and efficiency in the delivery of justice, leveraging technology and innovative approaches to bridge the gap between



*Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu administering oath to Justice Sanjiv Khanna as the 51<sup>st</sup> Chief Justice of India*



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu; Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri Jagdeep Dhankar; Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi; Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, Former Chief Justice of India; and Union Minister for Law and Justice, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, after being sworn in as the Chief Justice of India*

the courts and the people. Upon embarking on the exciting journey as the Chief Justice of India, he aimed to foster a culture of excellence, integrity, and accountability within the judiciary, promoting collaboration and synergy among all stakeholders. His goal has been to ensure that justice is not only delivered but also seen to be delivered, reinforcing the trust and faith of our citizens in the institution.

Justice Khanna stated that the responsibility entrusted to the Judiciary affirms our commitment as protectors of citizens' rights and as dispute resolvers. He stated that it was the constitutional duty of our Courts to ensure easy access to justice for all citizens of our great nation.

Addressing the challenges facing Indian Judiciary, Justice Khanna identified the need to tackle case backlogs, making litigation affordable and accessible, and simplifying complex legal procedures.

Justice Khanna adopted a citizen-centric agenda in his judicial functioning along with a self-evaluative approach which was receptive and responsive to feedback received from different quarters.

# The Road to Justice: Strategies for Unclogging Judicial Dockets

Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna entrusted the Centre for Research and Planning (CRP) with a crucial responsibility: to review the paperbooks of pending Supreme Court cases and identify those that were short, infructuous, or old matters, which had since long been lying dormant in the Supreme Court's docket.

*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with Secretary General, Shri Bharat Parashar; Officers from the Registry; and Team from Centre for Research and Planning*





*Justice BV Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India; Shri N Venkataraman, Additional Solicitor General of India; Justice V Giri, Former Judge and Senior Advocate; and Justice Mukta Gupta, Former Judge and Senior Advocate at the talk on 'Reducing Pendency at the Supreme Court: A Dialogue' organised by Centre for Research and Planning (CRP)*

It was his vision that the Supreme Court of India adopt a more calibrated, data-informed strategy for managing its docket and that the same be comprehensively documented.

### **Streamlining Case Backlog**

Between November 2024 and April 2025, the Centre for Research and Planning reviewed over 10,000 pending Supreme Court cases, identifying and classifying 3,374 main matters and 901 connected matters. Of these, 2,401 main and 850 connected matters were listed, resulting in the disposal of 1,342 main and 189 connected matters in just one or two hearings. The highest number of disposals (697) occurred in Miscellaneous No Coram After Notice matters, with notable disposals in Regular Criminal (358) and Civil (96) cases. CRP also reviewed 250 tax matters, helping withdraw 60 with tax incidence below ₹5 crores, and contributed to raising the criminal case disposal rate to 111.08%. Based on the work undertaken by CRP, a project report titled “Unclogging the Docket – Tackling Short, Infructuous and Old Cases”, has been prepared by CRP.

**Disposal of MACT Cases:** In April–May 2025, around 900 Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) cases were listed, clearing over 500 connected cases that had remained pending despite the main issues being adjudicated.

**Another Registrar Court:** To expedite procedural clearances, an additional Registrar Court was established under Chief Justice Khanna’s leadership in April 2025.

**Defect Management and Tech Reforms:** Reforms in defect management and tech enhancements—including expanded e-filing, digital cause lists, and AI deployment—are being implemented to boost consistency and efficiency in court operations. Collectively, these measures have yielded tangible results: in both 2024 and the first quarter of 2025 (January till March, 2025), the Case Clearance Rate of the Supreme Court has been 104.05%, signifying a measurable reduction in the overall pendency of matters.

**Establishment of Evening Courts:** To address case pendency, Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna proposed setting up Evening Courts in district courts for handling petty cases during the “National Conference on Addressing Issues faced by the State Judiciary” organised by the Supreme Court of India. Taking note of this suggested remedial measure the Union Ministry of Law and Justice has come up with a concept note for a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Evening Courts, which has been shared with all the High Courts as well as State Governments for their inputs. The said Scheme is likely to be implemented soon.

**Appointment of Adhoc Judges in the High Courts:** Vide order dated 30 January 2025, in case titled “*Lok Prabari v. Union of India*”, the three-Judge Bench comprising Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice BR Gavai, and Justice Surya Kant, relaxed the conditions for appointments of ad-hoc Judges in High Courts and directed that the High Courts can recommend the appointment of retired Judges on an ad-hoc basis to tackle pendency and clear the backlog of pending cases, which is mostly high in criminal matters. Further, the Bench also laid down that each High Court can appoint two to five Judges and in any case, the number should not exceed 10 percent of the sanctioned strength.

Chief Justice of India has already sent letters to the Chief Justices/Acting Chief Justices of High Courts to initiate the process for appointment of ad hoc Judges under Article 224-A of the Constitution of India and to constitute a Judges’ Committee for assessment of the judicial work done by the retired Judges whose names are proposed for such appointments.

# Listing with Precision: The Supreme Court's Approach to Case Scheduling

The listing mechanism at the Supreme Court of India is a critical component of the court's administrative framework, ensuring that cases are efficiently managed and heard in a timely manner. The mechanism involves the scheduling of cases for hearing, considering various factors such as the nature of the case, the urgency of the matter, and the availability of the judges.

Under the leadership of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the following practice directions were issued/ followed by the Listing department:

1. To reduce pendency of After Notice Miscellaneous Matters, Wednesdays and Thursdays, which were earlier Regular Hearing days, were declared Non-Miscellaneous Days w.e.f. 16 November 2024 and around 45 After Notice Miscellaneous Matters were listed before each Court on these days.



*Glimpses from the Listing Section of the Supreme Court of India*

2. From 9 January 2025 onwards, every Thursday was declared as a Regular Hearing Day for listing Regular Hearing matters.
3. Matters relating to MACT/compensation were listed before 3 dedicated Benches at the top of the list after matters were identified by CRP.
4. To dispose of long pending Death Reference matters, a dedicated Bench presided over by Justice Vikram Nath was constituted and it would sit on every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday to dispose of such cases.
5. The Registrar's Court has been demerged again and now, 100 matters are listed before each Registrar Court, every day, instead of the earlier practice of listing 160 matters before a single Registrar Court.
6. To accommodate more fresh matters, they are now being listed both on the miscellaneous days (i.e. Mondays and Fridays) and on Non-Miscellaneous days (including Thursdays), whenever there have been intervening Court holidays on otherwise working days.
7. Urgent Fresh matters, as and when mentioned, have also been directed to be listed on non-miscellaneous days, keeping in view the urgency involved in such matters.
8. Timely publication of supplementary lists has streamlined the process and has enabled smooth functioning of the Registry, thereby reducing the possibility of any inconvenience to the Judges.
9. To promote a culture of e-filing and streamline operations, Section IB has been equipped with high-tech computers and related peripherals, minimising delays for both staff and advocates. A professional team from IIM Bangalore visited the section to provide specialised training to the staff, ensuring smoother functioning. Additionally, deployment of extra personnel has been undertaken to expedite case processing and enhance overall efficiency.
10. Under the leadership of Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the Supreme Court adopted a new Case Categorization Framework on 21 April 2025, based on a report by Justice P.S. Narasimha. The framework introduces 48 categories and 182 sub-categories to streamline case listing, improve data accuracy, and enhance judicial efficiency.
11. A large number of defective matters which were pending for more than 90 days and where Advocates hadn't refiled them after removing defects, were put before the Chamber Judge for listing.

# Tech-Driven Transformation: Supreme Court's Digital Initiatives

The Supreme Court of India has been at the forefront of embracing technological innovations to enhance the administration of justice, improve access to courts, and promote transparency. Many notable technological innovations under the leadership of Justice Sanjiv Khanna have seen the light of day -

- The onboarding of eBill Module in the Public Financial Management System (PFMS) in the Registry with effect from 10 December 2024. This sophisticated digital platform enables seamless electronic submission, processing, and disbursement of payments. The system has significantly enhanced operational efficiency while ensuring robust financial governance through comprehensive audit trails and transparent transaction management.
- New formats for Office Reports (ORs) pertaining to fresh and after notice matters were made live for the Registry with effect from 21 January 2025.
- In February 2025, the Registry's computing capabilities were substantially upgraded through targeted IT infrastructure investment that has empowered Registry staff with enhanced processing capabilities, resulting in improvements in handling of day-to-day administrative and judicial tasks.
- The Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS) has been successfully integrated into the Court's personnel management framework.
- The migration process of the Supreme Court's NIC based email services is currently underway, transitioning to an enhanced platform.
- The e-Committee under the leadership of Justice Khanna, carried out coordinated monitoring and extended active support to High Courts to ensure that the allocated

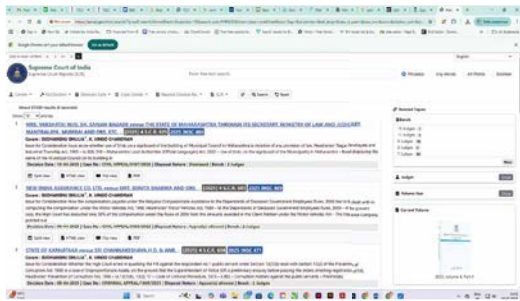
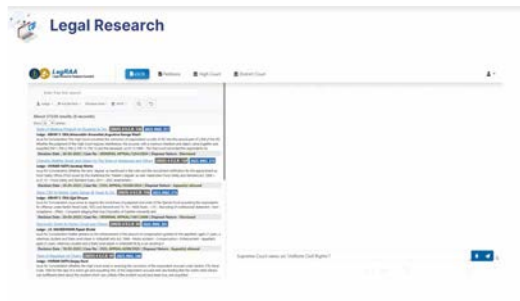
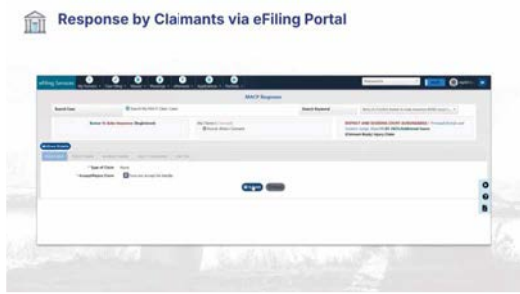


*A glimpse from the Command Control Centre of the Supreme Court of India, popularly known as the War Room*

budget could be optimally utilized within the short time frame. Justice Khanna held extensive consultation with the Chief Justices and Judges of IT Committees of High Courts, besides, separately reaching out to the High Courts offering support and impetus to achieve the goal. As a result, by the end of Financial Year 2024-25, a total of ₹1029.11 crores out of the allocated budget of ₹1200 crores [85.75%] could be utilized within less than 6 months.

- The rate of e-filing underwent a nationwide improvement across Courts of the country during the period between November, 2024 till April, 2025 due to initiatives taken by the High Courts under the aegis of the e-Committee headed by Justice Khanna.
- A novel platform viz. e-MACT (Electronic Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal) has been developed for implementation in Motor Accident Claims Tribunals to ensure speed and convenience for stakeholders particularly claimants (litigants) in managing their claim cases related in asynchronous mode. With streamlined processes, assisted calculations, and seamless information exchange with General Insurance Companies, e-MACT aims to achieve swift and hassle-free claim settlement of motor accident claims. Implementation of e-MACT commenced on a pilot basis at the MACT of Patiala House Court in Delhi on 7 May 2025.

- In taking further the drive of making High Courts and District Courts paperless, automated and strengthening the functioning of judges by use of technology, an upgraded version of Digital Courts platform was implemented. The platform is also equipped with voice-to-text feature [ASR – SHRUTI- Automatic Speech Recognition and text conversion software developed by NIC] and translation features which shall facilitate dictation of orders/judgments/witness deposition with ease, reducing dependency on support staff.
- A unified, secure and robust cloud architecture has been implemented, consisting of a National Cloud (hosting all centrally developed applications) and State Clouds (dedicated to hosting Case Information System, Periphery applications, and Judicial Trusted Digital Repository [JTDR]). All core applications—including eFiling, NJDG, ePay, JUSTIS, NSTEP, Virtual Courts, and Digital Courts etc have been successfully migrated to MeghRaj 2.0 (the upgraded National Government Cloud). Between November, 2024 and April 2025, significant progress was made in the State Cloud initiative [comprising State CIS Cloud, State Periphery Cloud and State JTDR Cloud].
- The facility of e-Summons to share summonses for criminal cases with police is provided in e-Courts. CIS (Case Information System) integrated with ICJS through NSTEP (National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes) to facilitate this sharing. e-Summons aims to reduce the delays in transfer of warrants/ summons from court to police and enable easy tracking of delivery status. During the period between November, 2024 and April, 2025 the e-Committee spearheaded implementation of the facility in coordination with Centre of Excellence for e-Courts, NIC Pune and High Courts as well as Police Departments in 09 new States, taking the total number of e-summons enabled States to 21.
- The e-Committee in coordination with the High Courts ensured increased presence of e-Sewa Kendras in Court Complexes. From November 2024 till April 2025, 544 new e-Sewa Kendras were established across different courts in India.
- Justice Khanna launched a legal research and analysis tool named ‘LeGRAA’, powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI) on 7 May 2025 to assist Judges and Judicial Officers in legal research and digital document analysis. As the first platform of its kind, it aims to help the judiciary across the country perform routine tasks more



*Visuals of SCR, e-MACT and LegRAA portals*

efficiently and effectively using AI. Its implementation has commenced on a pilot basis.

- From November 2024 to March 2025, e-Committee conducted 194 training and awareness programmes, covering nearly 41,837 stakeholders (including Advocates, Advocate Clerks, Judges, Court Staff, Master Trainers and Law students).
- e-Court's Capacity Building Programme on Cyber Security and Cyber Hygiene Awareness was conducted for the technical teams of High Courts through Rashtriya Raksha University, Gujarat which was a comprehensive 10 Days Training from 28 April 2025 to 7 May 2025.

# Commitment to Inclusive Justice

Justice Khanna's commitment to gender justice and accessibility has inspired a new generation of legal professionals to prioritize these values in their work. During his term as the Chief Justice of India, the Gender Sensitization and Internal Complaints Committee of the Supreme Court of India organised several gender sensitization workshops to create a workplace environment that is free from



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna  
with his better half  
Smt. Asha Khanna*



*15 February 2025, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, esteemed Member, GSICC alongwith Ms Sujata Singh, Member Secretary, GSICC; Ms Nina Gupta, GSICC Member; and Senior Advocate Ms Anindita Pujari during the Training programme on Gender Sensitisation for Junior Court Assistants, at Multipurpose Hall, Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India*

discrimination and harassment. These training programmes include interactive sessions, workshops, and discussions that encourage staff to engage with the topic of gender sensitization and share their perspectives. The training aims to build awareness about gender-related issues, including unconscious bias, stereotypes, and the impact of harassment on individuals and the workplace. The training also covers the GSICC policies and procedures for addressing complaints of harassment and ensuring a safe and supportive work environment.

Training programmes were held on 15 February 2025; 19 March 2025; 29 March 2025; and 19 April 2025 for Junior Court Assistants; Advocates of the Supreme Court



*Justice Khanna with other Judges of the Supreme Court of India and President, SCBA, Shri Kapil Sibbal on the Occasion of International Women's Day 2025*

Bar Association and Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association; Senior Court Assistants; and Branch Officers, respectively. GSICC disposed of 5 complaints out of 7 complaints received during the period from 11 November 2024 till May 2025.



*Glipms from GSCIC Training Session*

# Caring for Counsel: Lawyers' Welfare at the Forefront

With a view to improve aesthetics and make it convenient for counsels to file cases without hassles, 40 counters have been created in Section I-B, i.e., at Room No.22, Ground Floor, Block-B, Administrative Buildings Complex. Necessary infrastructure has been provided in the common area at Ground Floor, Block-B, Administrative Buildings Complex, to set up a help desk of Section I-B to facilitate Advocates and litigants to resolve their queries. Additional benches and racks have also been placed outside all Courtrooms to provide seating and space for keeping belongings for Advocates and Litigants.

Three Cell-on-Wheels (CoW) towers in the Main Campus of the Supreme Court of India are being installed to improve the signal strength/ mobile connectivity to facilitate all the users.



*Help Desk setup at Section I-B to facilitate lawyers and clerks in filing, etc.*



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with Justice B.R. Gavai; Justice Surya Kant; Shri R. Venkatramani, Attorney General for India; and Shri Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India on the Occasion of Release of the SCAORA Journal*

An Online Premise Payment Management System (PPMS) has been developed and launched on 24 January 2025, for digitising the process of payment of Licence Fee and other charges (for the Advocate Chambers, Canteen/Cafeterias and other areas allotted to Advocates, Contractors, Vendors, Licensees etc. in the Supreme Court premises).

Pursuant to directions of the Chief Justice of India, the office rooms allotted to SCAORA in the main building are being renovated. The existing facilities of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee and the Supreme Court Mediation Centre at First Floor, Block-B, Administrative Buildings Complex have been upgraded. With effect from 30 January 2025, Gate 'B', Main Building Campus, has been open on all days from 6.00 AM to 10.00 PM to facilitate the members of the Bar. Similarly, the Advocates' tunnel has been opened from 07.00 AM to 09.30 PM on all working days as well as on Sundays and Holidays to facilitate the members of the Bar.

# Empowering the Unsung Heroes: Welfare Measures for the Court Staff

Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna has time and again acknowledged the critical role played by the court staff in ensuring that justice delivery remains unimpeded. He has spoken about the need for a supportive environment that recognises the contributions of court personnel, who are essential for the smooth operation of the judicial system. During his tenure as the Chief Justice of India, Justice Khanna has introduced several staff-centric initiatives so that the Court staff feels respected and valued, thereby enhancing the overall functioning of the judiciary.

Under the leadership of Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna, significant administrative progress has been made, especially in the field of human resource management. A total of 316 officials were promoted, 213 probationers confirmed in service, and two compassionate appointments were made. Additionally, 10 new posts were created across various branches, and 91 officers received benefits under the Modified Assured Career Progression (MACP) policy.

Further, under the considerate leadership of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the Supreme Court of India in collaboration with AIIMS, successfully organised a Blood Donation Camp on 28 January 2025 at Supreme Court of India.

Consultative talks have been initiated with the Director of Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya National Institute for Persons with Physical Disabilities, Department of DEPD, Ministry of Social Justice, to chart out a roadmap for establishing a dedicated Physiotherapy Unit with state-of-the-art infrastructure in a portion of the CGHS Wellness Centre located on the First Floor of the Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India. Talks are underway with the Director General, CGHS to revamp the CGHS Wellness Centre located at the Ground Floor of Main Building Complex and at the



*Glimpses from the Blood Donation Camp organised on 28th January 2025 to commemorate the 75th Establishment Day of the Supreme Court of India*

First Floor of Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India. Regular infrastructural and logistical support to the staff and the Registry was ensured under the leadership of the Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna.

# Capacity Building Initiatives

During the tenure of Justice Sanjiv Khanna as the Chief Justice of India, Supreme Court's Training Cell has organised 16 Training programmes, wherein around 881 Registry Officers/Officials/Advocates and other personnel participated. The Training Cell has also prepared an Annual Training Calendar for the staff members of the Registry after receiving suggestions from different Branches of the Registry. The Training Cell also organised two training programmes for members of Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association (SCAORA), Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and Supreme Court Women Lawyers Association (SCWLA) on Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and use of Automated External Defibrillators (AED).

In continuation of the First Batch of 5 days Team Building and Leadership Adventure Camp at the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) in Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand, two batches of the said Adventure Camp were organised at NIM, Uttarkashi for around 150 participants.



*Glimpses from a Training Session organised by the Training Cell, Supreme Court of India*



*Team Building and Leadership Adventure Camp for Supreme Court Registry*

The Chief Justice of India inspired the Editorial Team of the Supreme Court’s official newsletter, ‘Supreme Court Chronicle’, to make the publication more inclusive and participative. In line with this vision, a new section titled “Beyond the Court” was introduced, featuring theme-based contributions from staff members in the form of photographs, paintings, poetry, and write-ups. Similarly the “Bid Adieu” section was introduced where superannuating employees share their memories and experiences of working at the topmost court of the country.

# Accountability in Action: Supreme Court's Commitment to Transparency

Justice Sanjiv Khanna's commitment to transparency and accountability is not rooted in rhetoric, but in resolute action and principled thought. Through his judgments, his administrative vision, and his personal ethics, he exemplifies what it means to be a custodian of constitutional values.

During his tenure as the Chief Justice of India, Justice Khanna lent his voice to broader discussions on judicial reforms, particularly in areas like judicial appointments, case management, and performance review systems for Judges, both of Constitutional Courts as well as District Courts. He has acknowledged the need for evolving systems that measure efficiency without compromising the quality of justice. He has advocated for a Bell-Curve approach to be adopted by High Courts while evaluating performance of Judicial Officers.

While upholding the sanctity of judicial independence, Justice Khanna has also stressed that judicial independence must not be used as a shield against accountability. He has



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna administering oath to Justice Manmohan on his elevation to the Supreme Court*

stressed the importance of internal mechanisms of review, peer oversight, and ethical self-regulation within the judiciary. His approach encourages a culture of introspection and ethical responsibility among judges, where transparency is embraced not as an obligation but as a principle of judicial dignity.

Justice Khanna has consistently supported measures aimed at making the judiciary more accessible and open to public scrutiny. He recognises that the legitimacy of judicial institutions is derived not only from the soundness of their judgments but also from their perceived fairness, impartiality, and openness. Under his leadership, the Supreme Court of India has placed the complete process of appointments to the High Courts and Supreme Court including the role assigned to the High Court Collegium, inputs received from the State Governments, Government of India, and consideration by the Supreme Court Collegium, on its website for knowledge and awareness of the public.

As part of the collegium—a constitutional mechanism designed to uphold the independence of the judiciary—Justice Khanna has actively participated in the deliberation and vetting process for appointing judges to the higher judiciary. His contributions in these decisions are marked by his emphasis on judicial competence, professional ethics, and a balanced regional representation. During his term as the Chief Justice of India, the Collegium carefully scrutinized the judgments, records of judicial officers and advocates being considered for elevation and then also had lengthy personal interaction with each of the candidates to assess their legal knowledge and judicial acumen. Acknowledging the need for a judiciary that reflects the pluralistic fabric of India, Justice Khanna has shown support for greater inclusion of women, minorities, and underrepresented communities in the High Courts. This approach



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna administering oath to Justice Joymalya Bagchi on his elevation to the Supreme Court*

strengthens the legitimacy and social responsiveness of the judiciary. During his term as the Chief Justice of India, the Collegium has made timely recommendations for filling judicial vacancies, addressing the serious issue of backlog and pendency in courts. While respecting the principle of seniority where applicable, Justice Khanna also values exceptional talent and domain expertise, when considering advocates and judicial officers for elevation. This helps in building a more capable and dynamic judiciary.

The Collegium headed by CJI recommended 3 names for appointment as Judges of the Supreme Court and also recommended 3 names for appointment as Chief Justices of different High Courts. 51 candidates (including 06 women) were recommended for elevation as High Court Judges. The Collegium also recommended transfer of 15 High Court Judges including two Chief Justices of High Courts. The proposals approved by the Supreme Court Collegium for appointments as High Court Judges during the period from 9 November 2022 to 5 May 2025, including the names, High Court, source – whether from Service or Bar, date of recommendation by the Supreme Court Collegium, date of notification by Department of Justice, date of appointment, special category (SC/ST/OBC/Minority/Woman), and whether the candidate is related to any sitting or retired High Court/Supreme Court Judge, have also been uploaded on the Supreme Court website.

The following judges of the Supreme Court have submitted their declarations of assets:

DISCLOSURE OF ASSETS (in terms of Resolution of the Full Court dated 1st April, 2025)		
Assets		
S.No.	Name	Assets
1	Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Khanna, Chief Justice of India	<a href="#">View</a>
2	Hon'ble Mr. Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai	<a href="#">View</a>
3	Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant	<a href="#">View</a>
4	Hon'ble Mr. Justice Abhay S. Oka	<a href="#">View</a>
5	Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vikram Nath	<a href="#">View</a>
6	Hon'ble Mr. Justice J. K. Maheshwari	

The Full Court of the Supreme Court of India has on 1 April 2025 decided that the statement of assets of the Judges of this Court, be placed in the public domain by uploading them on the website of this Court. Statements of assets of Judges already received have been uploaded.

# The Face of Justice: Chief Justice's Commitment to NALSA's Mission

Justice Sanjiv Khanna is known not only for his profound legal acumen and measured judicial temperament but also for his deep commitment to social justice and legal aid.

Initially as Executive Chairman, NALSA and later as Patron-in- Chief of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) he continued to lay emphasis on the outreach activities of the Legal Services Institutions and on strengthening mechanisms for free legal aid. Justice Khanna has continuously emphasised the need to reach out to sections of society that are often left voiceless—migrant workers, persons with disabilities,



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna at a State Conference of the DLSAs of Odisha*

transgender persons, and those living in remote rural areas. He has been advocating for more inclusive legal services that consider the specific challenges faced by these groups.

Recognising the sensitivity and significance of matters involving children, Justice Khanna has pushed for child-friendly procedures and capacity-building programs for legal aid providers in the Juvenile Justice system. He has strongly supported Lok Adalats and mediation as effective tools to reduce litigation burden and ensure amicable resolution of disputes, particularly for economically weaker sections. His approach to legal aid is deeply rooted in the constitutional vision of justice—social, economic, and political—for all. His efforts at NALSA have helped bridge the gap between law and the people it serves, reaffirming the judiciary’s role not just as an adjudicator, but as an enabler of justice.

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) celebrated National Legal Services Day on 9 November 2024 at the Supreme Court. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna commended the dedication and hard work of legal aid functionaries, including panel lawyers, legal aid defense counsels (Nyaya Rakshaks), and paralegal volunteers (Adhikar Mitrs), and shared the vision for NALSA’s future.

Several notable releases were made during the event, including booklets on the NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024, and the NALSA (Legal

*Justice Sanjiv Khanna releasing the NALSA Special Newsletter on the Occasion of Legal Services Day 2024*





*Justice Sanjiv Khanna at the launch of Special Campaign for Old Prisoner and Terminally-ill Prisoners, organised by NALSA*

Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024. A Training Module on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 was also released.

During the celebrations of the “International Human Rights Day”, organised by NALSA on 10 December 2025, Justice Khanna termed human rights, the bedrock of human society, which were imperative for ensuring global peace. Citing the need to counter the “Blackcoat System,” which arises because of a deep-seated fear and a sense of alienation among the common man towards the criminal justice system, he called for a compassionate and humane justice system by simplification of laws and decolonisation of laws. He also stressed the critical need to reimagine our justice system through the lens of marginalised communities. He further emphasised a human-centric approach to permeate every aspect of our legal ecosystem. He called for a collective resolve to



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna at the Felicitation Ceremony of the PAN India Zonal Reel Making and Short Film Competition for Law Students, organised by NALSA*

persist with an even deeper commitment to reaching those who remain untouched by our legal aid system.

Addressing law students from across the country during the Felicitation Ceremony for Nation-wide Reel and Short Film Making Competition for Law Students, organised by NALSA on 30 April 2025, Justice Khanna said that justice in its true sense was only possible when everyone, regardless of their background, had equal access to the legal system. He lauded NALSA for organising such competitions which leverage modern technology to create a more informed and engaged citizenry, which is essential for a healthy and robust democracy. He also emphasised the importance of collaboration with other government agencies, civil society organisations and influential personalities/ influencers to expand its outreach and impact.

# Mediating Justice: Chief Justice's Vision for MCPC and SCLSC

Under the visionary leadership of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the Chief Justice of India and Patron-in-Chief, Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee (MCPC) and Justice B.R. Gavai, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Chairman, MCPC has been instrumental in promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in the country. Their commitment to the ADR mechanism has enabled MCPC to play a pivotal role in reducing the burden on courts and providing speedy justice to litigants.



*Mediation training programmes organised by the Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee in collaboration with NALSA*



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna  
at the First National  
Mediation Conference at  
Bharat Mandapam on 3  
May 2025*

“It is said, a mediator is like a psychologist, who must be trained to listen deeply, and to understand patiently. A skilled mediator senses not only what is being said, but also what lies beneath the words. In this way, they equip the parties with the right tools to arrive at their own solution.”

— Chief Justice Khanna

An Online Mediation Training Module developed by NALSA in association with MCPC was launched in September 2024 and currently 8 Batches are undergoing Mediation Training. Since November 2024, many 40-hours Mediation Training Programmes have been approved by MCPC and around 2,200 advocates/judges/mediators have undergone the exhaustive training. MCPC has also approved a 40- hours Mediation Training Schedule for about 800 Advocates practising in the Supreme Court of India. Their training commenced in December 2024 and shall continue till December 2025. The training module is designed to accommodate 30 Advocates in each batch and is hybrid in nature (i.e. 30-hours online training and 10-hours offline training). MCPC also issued Accreditation Certificates to more than 1,000 mediators in the last few months.

The Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC), under the able leadership of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Chief Justice of India and Patron-in-Chief, SCLSC and Justice Surya Kant, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Chairman, SCLSC, has been a beacon of hope for the marginalised and vulnerable sections of society. SCLSC has been



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu and Justice B.R. Gavai during the Inaugural Ceremony of the First Mediation Conference*

providing legal aid and assistance to those who cannot afford it, ensuring that justice is accessible to all, even when they approach the highest court of the land for relief.

SCLSC has continued with its relentless pursuit to provide legal aid to all prison inmates whose conviction has been upheld by the High Court or whose acquittal has been reversed by the High Court or who have remained in jail for more than half of his period of sentence and whose bail application has been rejected by the High Court or whose application for remission or premature release has been rejected by the State Sentence Review Board. From November 2024 to May 2025, around 4,200 inmates were identified by the Prison officials in coordination with the Legal Services Institutions and legal assistance was provided to them by SCLSC. SCLSC in collaboration with prison authorities has also undertaken a massive outreach campaign across Indian prisons to spread legal awareness in the prison inmates and to address the trust deficit qua legal aid counsels. Recently, SCLSC also reconstituted its panels of Senior Advocates, Advocates-on-Record, Non-Advocates-on-Record and Assisting Counsel, after more than three years.

# The Supreme Court's Engagement with the Nation: Conferences and Events

**D**uring the tenure of Justice Sanjiv Khanna as the Chief Justice of India, Supreme Court of India organised several events. One such events was the celebration of the Constitution Day on 26 November 2024. The occasion was graced by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Chief Justice of India, Justice B.R. Gavai, Justice Surya Kant, Sh. Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi during the Constitution Day Celebrations on 26 November 2024*



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna during the release of a paper titled “Rethinking Judicial Education: A Detailed Study of Curriculum and Learning Methodologies in Judicial Academies”*

of Law and Justice, Sh. R. Venkataramani, Attorney General of India, Mr. Manan Mishra, Chairman Bar Council of India, and Mr. Kapil Sibal, President, Supreme Court Bar Association, present and former judges of the Supreme Court, judges of the High Court, and other dignitaries. During the event, PM Narendra Modi unveiled the Indian Judiciary Annual Report (2023-24) of the Supreme Court.

On 18 December 2024, the Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, accompanied by other Judges of the Supreme Court, unveiled a paper titled “Rethinking Judicial Education: A Detailed Study of Curriculum and Learning Methodologies in Judicial Academies”.

As the Supreme Court marked 75 years of its establishment on 28 January 2025, a Ceremonial Bench of the Supreme Court, comprising all 33 Judges, was convened. During the proceedings of the Ceremonial Bench held to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Supreme Court’s first sitting, Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna said each decade of the apex court’s jurisprudence serves as a mirror to the



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with other Judges of the Supreme Court of India during the Ceremonial Bench held on 28 January 2025*

nation's challenges. He further stated that the Indian Supreme Court is a “true people’s court”, which sets it apart on the global stage. Starting from the 1950s till present day, he listed out several significant judgments passed by the top court. He said that ‘Like rings in a mature tree that reflect its journey through different seasons, these judgments reflect not just legal evolution, but our country’s very pulse’.

The Supreme Court of India, under the visionary leadership and guidance of the Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, organised a “National Conference on Addressing Issues Faced by the State Judiciary” on 1 February 2025 at the Multi-purpose Hall, Administrative Buildings Complex, Supreme Court of India. The idea behind this Conference was to engage in a meaningful dialogue with different stakeholders and functionaries in the State Judiciary, especially the District Courts, to first understand the challenges being faced by them and thereafter, chalk out a plan to address the same. The Conference was a resounding success, with all the participants engaging in thought-provoking discussions, debates, and deliberations on critical issues affecting the State



*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with other Judges of the Supreme Court of India during the National Conference on Addressing Issues Faced by the State Judiciary*

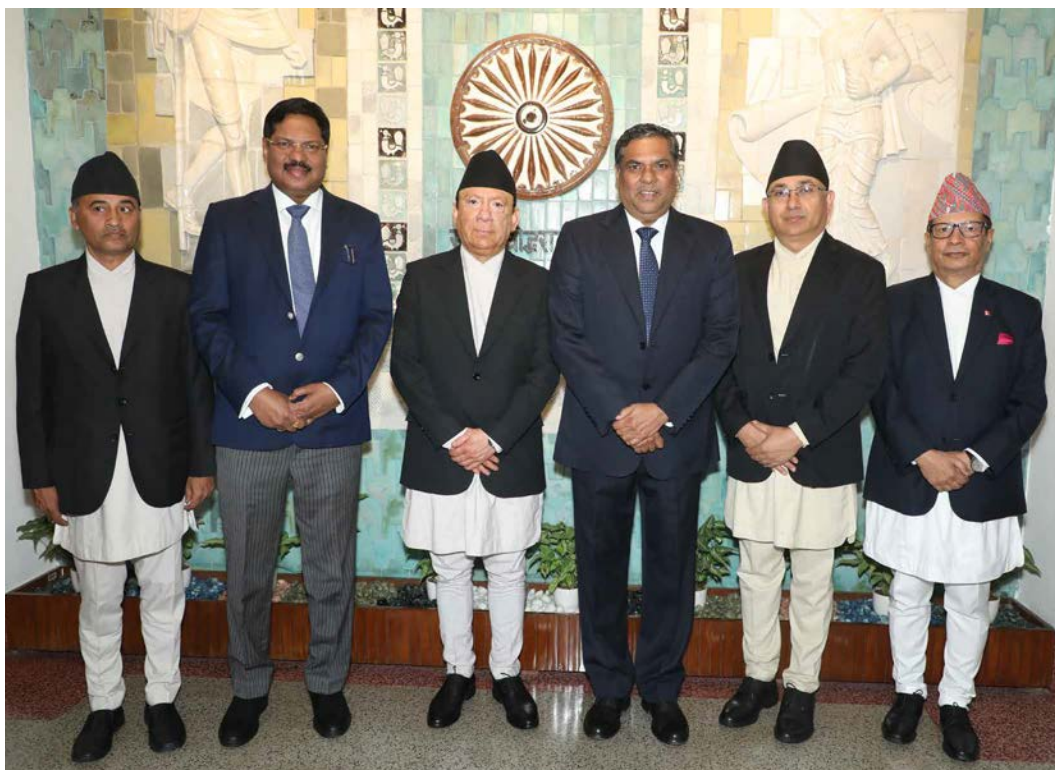
judiciary, especially the District Judiciary. The event provided a unique platform for Judges and Judicial Officers from different States to converge, share perspectives, and explore innovative solutions to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and accessibility of justice delivery at the district level.

# Global Footprints: Chief Justice's International Engagements

On 12 December 2024, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Chief Justice of India, spoke on the topic “Recent Trends of the Supreme Court of India and the United States Supreme Court” at an event organised by the Society for Democratic Rights, New Delhi, in collaboration with Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, DC. The event was moderated by senior advocate Vibha Datta Makhija and saw participation from key speakers, such as the Executive Vice-President of Georgetown University and

*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with the Chief Justice of Nepal, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Prakash Man Singh Raut; Other Judges of the Supreme Court of India; and Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister for Law and Justice*





*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with the delegation from Nepal*

Dean of the Law Center, William M. Treanor, and the Associate Dean of Georgetown University Law Center, Carlos M. Vázquez.

The Supreme Court of India on 7 April 2025, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Supreme Court of Nepal to develop, promote and strengthen the judicial cooperation between the two countries.

Chief Justice of India Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar participated in the 20th Meeting of Chief Justices of Supreme Courts of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Member States held in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou.

The e-Courts International Capacity Building Programme was held in Singapore. The first batch comprising 27 participants were imparted training from 17 March 2025 to 21 March 2025 and the second Batch comprising 26 participants were imparted training from 21 April 2025 to 25 April 2025 wherein participants representing each High Court were covered. This program was conducted by the e-Committee of the Supreme Court of India to



*Glimpses from the visit of Justice Gerard W. Hogan, Judge, Supreme Court of Ireland*

provide insights into Singapore's digital transformation, their advanced judicial system, and its integration of technology in court processes. The participants included representatives from each High Court across the country which included Technical Court Staff (System Officers, Software Programmers, System Analysts) and Judicial Officers (CPC; Registrar IT) from District judiciary. The participants attended a series of sessions and visited the Courts in Singapore; Offices of different Ministries etc. to understand Singapore's best practices in judicial technology, artificial intelligence and digital governance.

*Glimpse from the 20th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Meeting of Chief Justices at Hangzhou, China in April 2025*





Landmark Judgments  
penned by  
**Justice Khanna**



**CENTRAL PUBLIC  
INFORMATION  
OFFICER, SUPREME  
COURT OF INDIA v.  
SUBASH CHANDRA  
AGARWAL**

**2019 INSC 1233**

One of Justice Khanna's most influential decisions came in 2019 when he authored a key ruling on the Right to Information (RTI) Act. In this judgment, he said that the Office of the Chief Justice of India (OCJ) could be subject to RTI requests while emphasising the need to balance judicial transparency with judges' right to privacy. His stance reinforced the idea that judicial independence and transparency can coexist without undermining the judiciary's integrity. He held that the RTI requests should be adjudicated based on the weighing competing claims of public interest. In his judgment, Justice Khanna provided general guidelines on how the Competent Authority must weigh competing public interest claims. The Competent Authority must consider the factors in favour of disclosure, factors against disclosure and the irrelevant factors and it must refrain from using an utilitarian calculus to weigh the claims.



**NEVADA PROPERTIES  
PRIVATE LIMITED  
A THROUGH ITS  
DIRECTOR v. STATE  
OF MAHARASHTRA  
AND ANR.**

**2019 INSC 1077**

In this judgment, the Supreme Court of India decided the question whether a police officer investigating a criminal case can or cannot take custody of and seize any immovable property that may be found under circumstances that create suspicion of the commission of any offence provided under S. 102 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973? Justice Khanna (as he was then), authored the judgment and held that the power of a police officer u/s. 102 to seize any property would not include the power to attach, seize and seal an immovable property, by giving the term 'property' used in a particular section a narrow meaning i.e. only that type of property in respect of which the offence contemplated in that section has been allegedly committed. The Court warned against the potential for abuse if police were

granted broad powers to seize immovable property based merely on suspicion, which could encroach upon civil rights and property laws. The court underscored that immovable property seizures were better governed under specific sections of the Cr.P.C., such as Sections 145, 146, and 165, which provide tailored procedures for attachment and restoration of possession of immovable assets. This judgment had profound implications for law enforcement agencies and judicial proceedings. Powers of the Police officers have been channelised and regulated to seizing only movable property under Section 102, ensuring adherence to procedural norms and preventing overreach. This judgment also provided definitive guidance on the interpretation of “any property” in Section 102, reducing ambiguity and aligning judicial practices with legislative intent, It also strengthened the safeguards around immovable property, ensuring that such assets are not subject to arbitrary seizure without specific legal provisions. It also reinforced the importance of distinct legal frameworks for different types of property, upholding the separation between criminal and civil law procedures.



**AMISH DEVGAN v.  
UNION OF INDIA  
AND OTHERS**

**2020 INSC 682**

In this case, when the petitioner, who was a writer, sought the quashing of multiple FIRs registered against him for hate speech given during a television debate, Justice Sanjiv Khanna (as he was then), authored the judgment whereby he declined to quash the FIRs registered against the petitioner but directed the transfer of all the related FIRs to Ajmer, where the first FIR was registered. While directing so, the Court stressed on the need to balance the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution against the right to life with dignity

and the right to equality under Article 21 and 14 of the Indian Constitution. Justice Khanna had observed that the right to free speech cannot be invoked to infringe upon the fundamental right to life enshrined in Article 21. He clarified that in the event of conflict between religious sentiments and the fundamental principles of human dignity, liberty and equality, the latter must take precedence. He ruled that for an offence of hate speech, the content should be more than a mere thought and preparation and the intent should be reasonably proximate to the consummation of the offence. He ruled that in a polity committed to pluralism, hate speech cannot conceivably contribute in any legitimate way to democracy and, in fact, repudiates the right to equality. In his lucid judgment, Justice Khanna drew a distinction between ‘free speech’ which includes the right to comment, favour or criticise government policies; and ‘hate speech’ which creates or spreads hatred against a targeted community or group. He culled out three tests to identify hate speech i.e. test of content-based element, test of intent-based element and test of harm-based element (or impact-based element). He further held that the effect of the words must be judged from the standard of reasonable, strong-minded, firm and courageous man and not by one who is weak, with a vacillating mind, and who scents danger in every hostile point of view.



**THE STATE OF  
RAJASTHAN v. NEMI  
CHAND MAHELA  
AND OTHERS**

**2019 INSC 588**

The litigants, including Nemi Chand Mahela and others, challenged the Rajasthan High Court’s decisions that struck down the bonus marks system as unconstitutional. Vide this judgment, a Division Bench of the Supreme Court sought to resolve conflicting High Court opinions, to ensure the application of prospective overruling, and provide clarity on the legitimacy of

past and future appointments under the contested guidelines. In the judgment authored by Justice Khanna (as he was then), the Court delved into the question of implementation of the principle of prospective overruling, as initially outlined in the *Kailash Chand Sharma v. State of Rajasthan* case. In this judgment, the Supreme Court upheld the principles laid down in the earlier *Kailash Chand Sharma* case and in *Manmohan Sharma v. State of Rajasthan* case, affirming that awarding bonus marks based on factors like residence and place of birth constituted impermissible discrimination with no rational basis. The Court employed the doctrine of prospective overruling to balance competing claims, ensuring that appointments made before a specific cutoff date (18-11-1999) remained unaffected, while those made afterward would be subject to the new legal standards. The Court dismissed numerous Special Leave Petitions (SLPs) that aimed to challenge or overturn the High Court's directives post-18-11-1999, emphasising adherence to established precedents and judicial consistency. Furthermore, the judgment clarified the limited scope of relief to only those petitioners who had acted within the stipulated timelines, effectively closing the door on prolonged litigation over the bonus marks issue. The Court directed that all pending writ petitions and appeals in the High Court must be decided in accordance with the principles articulated in *Kailash Chand Sharma*, *Manmohan Sharma*, and this present judgment, subject to any justified condonation of delay. Justice Khanna in his beautifully crafted judgment further clarified the distinction between the universal applicability of legal precedent and the case-specific nature of the doctrine of *res judicata*. He held that while a final, unchallenged order in favor of a particular candidate might be binding in that individual instance, it did not establish a precedent for other similarly

situated individuals who did not pursue timely legal action. This judgment had profound implications for public employment procedures in India. By solidifying the doctrine of prospective overruling, the Supreme Court ensured that changes in legal interpretations do not disrupt existing appointments, thereby promoting stability and predictability in public service recruitment. Future cases involving discriminatory selection criteria have referenced this decision to argue against retrospective applications of new legal principles. Additionally, the clear categorization of petitions based on filing dates set a precedent for how courts may handle similar litigations where widespread administrative or judicial actions have led to prolonged disputes. In the broader legal context, this case underscored the judiciary's role in balancing individual rights with administrative stability, ensuring that legal reforms are implemented justly and systematically.



**VIDYA DROLIA  
& OTHERS v.  
DURGA TRADING  
CORPORATION**

**2020 INSC 697**

A three- Judge Bench of the Supreme Court decided on the question of non-arbitrability of subject matter of dispute, and the conundrum between the Court and the Arbitral Tribunal as to who is the competent authority to decide upon the question of non-arbitrability. In this case, the Court laid down the contours of arbitrability. While analysing the arbitrability of Landlord-Tenant disputes governed by the Transfer of Property Act, 1882, the Supreme Court elucidated that the mere existence of a special statute dealing with certain disputes does not *ipso facto* render them non-arbitrable, thereby widening the scope of arbitrability and increasing the access to arbitration in complex legal contexts. A fourfold test to determine non-arbitrability of disputes was laid down by the three-judge bench, which are as follows:

- *When cause of action and subject matter of the dispute relates to actions in rem, that do not pertain to subordinate rights in personam that arise from rights in rem.*
- *When cause of action and subject matter of the dispute affects third party rights; have erga omnes effect; require centralized adjudication, and mutual adjudication would not be appropriate and enforceable;*
- *When cause of action and subject matter of the dispute relates to inalienable sovereign and public interest functions of the State and hence mutual adjudication would be unenforceable; and*
- *When the subject matter of the dispute is expressly or by necessary implication non-arbitrable as per mandatory statute(s).*

The Supreme Court stated that land tenancy matters governed by the TPA are subordinate rights *in personam* arising from rights *in rem*, which do not have an *erga omnes* effect and, therefore, are amenable to arbitration. It also stated that insolvency disputes, grant and registration of patents and trademarks, and matters relating to probate, testamentary matter, etc., confer monopoly rights having an *erga omnes* effect and are not amenable to arbitration. On the other hand, criminal offences that are offences against the State and matrimonial disputes also fall within the ambit of sovereign functions and are non-arbitrable. The fourfold test laid down in this case presents and promotes arbitration as a resilient mechanism for expeditious and effective dispute resolution, guided by fundamental principles of party autonomy, fairness, and enforceability. Unless a dispute necessitates judicial intervention for adjudication, it shall be amenable to resolution through arbitration and

shall be decided on the facts and circumstances of each case. The court further held that despite the deletion, Section 11(6A) of the 1996 Act continues to guide a court's jurisdiction at the referral stage. The court's role is limited to examining an arbitration agreement when it is manifestly and *ex facie* certain that the arbitration agreement was non-existent or invalid, reinforcing the principle of *kompetenz-kompetenz*.



**RAJEEV SURI v.  
DELHI  
DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY & ORS**

**2021 INSC 4**

A group of individuals had challenged the Central Vista Project in late 2019, claiming that the Union Government had rushed in obtaining regulatory clearances, circumvented scrutiny in monetary and environmental matters and failed to consult the public. They called for heightened judicial scrutiny of the permissibility of the Project. They argued that the challenge was premised not just on statutory provisions but on the principles of participatory democracy. The majority judgment held that the Court cannot step into the shoes of policymakers and examine the validity of a policy decision. The majority judgment also upheld the legality of the Central Vista Project holding that the Government had sought the necessary approvals and no constitutional principles had been violated. Justice Sanjiv Khanna (as he was then), partly concurring and partly dissenting with the majority view, also dismissed the PIL. In his dissent, Justice Khanna said that while policy-making lies within the Government's ken, the Government in this situation had violated the legislative framework requiring public consultation. The dissenting view was based primarily on the aspects of citizen's right to participation and consultation in Government's decision-making process, alleged failure to take prior approval of Heritage Conservation Committee and the order passed by the Expert Appraisal Committee. Justice

Khanna emphatically held that in a democracy, elected Government should take decisions on behalf of the citizens and that indirect participation of the citizens was critical to democracy. He held that the citizens had the right to know the grounds on which the government's policy decision was based. He held that the power of modification of the Master Plan of DDA was subject to the conditions of public hearing as required by Act and Rules. Justice Sanjiv Khanna held that transparency and receptiveness were key components in a robust democracy as even the most competent and honest decision-makers require information regarding the needs of the constituency as well as feedback on how the extant policies and decisions are operating in practice.



**OIL AND NATURAL  
GAS CORPORATION  
LTD. v.  
AFCONS GUNANUSA  
JV**

**2022 INSC 884**

The 3-judge bench of Dr. Justice DY Chandrachud, Justice Surya Kant and Justice Sanjiv Khanna, held that arbitrators do not have the power to unilaterally issue binding and enforceable orders determining their own fees. While Justice Chandrachud, wrote the majority opinion for Justice Surya Kant, and himself, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, wrote a separate opinion where he agreed with the majority opinion of certain parts but disagreed on some. Justice Khanna agreed with the majority opinion holding that party autonomy and arbitration agreement are the foundation of the arbitral process, and therefore, when the parties fix the fee payable to the arbitral tribunal, the law does not permit the arbitral tribunal to derogate and ask for additional or higher fee. He also reaffirmed the majority view that where the court while appointing an arbitrator fixes the fee, the arbitral tribunal cannot ask for supplementary or higher fee and, in both cases, the fee payable to the arbitral tribunal may be enhanced either by a written agreement between the parties or by a court order. Justice Khanna

however, disagreed on the point that in the absence of any agreement between the parties, or the parties and the arbitral tribunal, or a court order fixing the fee, the arbitral tribunal is not entitled to fix the fee. He opined that by the implied terms of the contract and as per the provisions of the Arbitration Act, an arbitral tribunal can fix a reasonable fee, which an aggrieved party, who is not a signatory to the written agreement, can question under sub-section (3) of Section 39 of the Arbitration Act during the pendency of the arbitration proceedings, or in case the arbitral tribunal claims lien on the award in terms of sub-section (2) to Section 39 of the Arbitration Act. He observed that arbitral tribunals, since time immemorial, have been fixing arbitration fee, and the legislature has not intervened or barred them from doing so even by the 2016 Amendment. Additionally, there is no provision in the Arbitration Act which states that the parties can move the court for fixation of fee of the arbitral tribunal when the arbitration agreement is silent or the parties are unable to agree on the quantum of fee or where the court, while making reference, has not fixed the fee and has left it to the arbitral tribunal to decide upon its own fee.



**IN RE: INTERPLAY  
BETWEEN  
ARBITRATION  
AGREEMENTS UNDER  
THE ARBITRATION  
AND CONCILIATION  
ACT 1996 AND THE  
INDIAN STAMP ACT  
1899**

**2023 INSC 1066**

In a matter concerning the validity of unstamped arbitration agreement, a 7-Judge bench comprising of Dr. Justice DY Chandrachud, Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice BR Gavai, Justice Surya Kant, Justice J.B. Pardiwala, and Justice Manoj Misra, gave a unanimous judgment, holding that the unstamped agreement is inadmissible under the Stamp Act, but cannot be rendered void ab initio. Thus, arbitration clauses in unstamped or inadequately stamped agreements are enforceable. Justice Khanna wrote the concurring judgment wherein he reiterated

the majority opinion that unstamped documents were inadmissible but that didn't *per se* not negate the existence of arbitration clause. He held that that stamping issues do not impede the *prima facie* test of existence under Sections 8 and 11 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 and the same must be decided by the arbitrators. Justice Khanna held that issues relating to insufficient or non-stamping of the underlying contract can be addressed by the arbitral tribunal itself. He further clarified that the Arbitration Act, being a self-contained code, does not prescribe stamping as a precondition for a valid arbitration agreement, and the absence of any such requirement indicates a legislative intent to insulate arbitration proceedings from the technicalities of stamp law.



**SHILPA SAILESH v.  
VARUN SREENIVASAN**

**2023 INSC 468**

A Constitution Bench comprising of Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice A.S. Oka, Justice Vikram Nath, and Justice J.K. Maheshwari, held that that the mandatory waiting period of six months for divorce by mutual consent can be dispensed with subject to the requirements and conditions laid down in *Amardeep Singh v. Harveen Kaur*, (2017) 8 SCC 746 and *Amit Kumar v. Suman Beniwal*, 2021 SCC OnLine SC 1270. Further, it was held that it is possible for the Court to dissolve the marriage on the ground of irretrievable breakdown of marriage. Justice Khanna, who authored the judgment held that the Supreme Court can directly grant a divorce on grounds of 'irretrievable breakdown of marriage' under Article 142 of the Constitution. However, while drawing a distinction between the existence of a power and the exercise of a power, he cautioned that this power must be exercised cautiously and was subject to fundamental

principles of public policy, and not every statutory requirement can be overridden. He reasoned that where the marital union had been irretrievably broken with no possibility of reconciliation, the cooling-off period may become an obstacle to achieving justice. Whether a marriage had irretrievably broken down was to be decided on circumstances such as the duration of cohabitation upon marriage, the last cohabitation, nature of allegations between the parties, attempts at resolution of the dispute, and reasonable period of separation etc. The judgment is quite significant as irretrievable breakdown of marriage is not yet a ground for divorce under the Hindu Marriage Act, of 1955. The judgment is also exceptional for the reason that the Supreme Court has clarified herein that a party cannot file a writ petition under Article 32 or Article 226 of the Constitution of India to seek divorce on the ground of irrevocable breakdown of marriage.



**MANISH SISODIA V.  
CENTRAL BUREAU  
OF INVESTIGATION**

**2023 INSC 956**

In this landmark judgment, delivered by a Division Bench of the Supreme Court and authored by Justice Khanna, a dynamic interpretation was given to the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 and its interplay with other legal provisions such as the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and the Indian Penal Code, 1860. Manish Sisodia, the former Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, sought bail in multiple prosecutions initiated by the CBI and the Directorate of Enforcement under allegations of corruption and money laundering connected to changes in the Delhi Excise Policy. The core issues revolve around the scope of constitutional protections under Articles 74 and 163, the interpretation of Section 3 of the PML Act concerning the ‘generation’ of proceeds of crime,

and the applicability of bail provisions under the PML and PoC Acts amid complex accusations of corruption and illicit financial activities. The Bench granted leave to appeal but dismissed the bail petitions at this stage. The court acknowledged the severity of economic offenses like money laundering and the prolonged custody of the appellant. However, it emphasised the fundamental right to a speedy trial under Article 21 of the Constitution, allowing for potential reapplication for bail under specific circumstances, such as delays beyond the anticipated trial period or medical emergencies. The Court delved deep into the legislative intent and textual interpretation of Section 3 of the PML Act, questioning whether ‘generation’ of proceeds of crime aligns with ‘possession’, ‘use’, or other enumerated activities under the same section. The jurisprudence cited suggests that the PML Act is designed to address distinct offenses related to the proceeds of crime, separate from the predicates themselves. Furthermore, the Court examined the applicability of bail provisions, particularly under Rule 45 of the PML Act and Section 436A of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973. It acknowledged the CBI and DoE’s assertions of grave economic offenses but balanced them against the constitutional mandate for a speedy trial and the presumption of innocence. The judgment also touched upon procedural aspects, such as the nature of evidence (hearsay, coerced statements), the proportionality of detention periods, and the potential for misuse of prosecutorial power—all pivotal in determining bail eligibility. In his judgment, Justice Khanna underscored the delicate balance between enforcing stringent measures against economic offenses like money laundering and upholding fundamental constitutional rights. By meticulously dissecting the provisions of the PML Act and referencing pivotal precedents, the Court ensured that legal interpretations

neither overreach nor undermine individual liberties. The decision elucidated the boundaries of ‘generation’ within money laundering and set a precedent for future cases involving complex economic transactions and high-profile defendants.



**STATE OF ANDHRA  
PRADESH & OTHERS  
v. DR. RAO V.B.J.  
CHELIKANI &  
OTHERS**

**2024 INSC 894**

The Division Bench of the Supreme Court quashed the preferential allotment of lands to the housing societies of MPs, MLAs, civil servants, Judges, defence personnel, journalists etc and enlisted the important parameters in determining arbitrariness in legal challenges under Article 14. The main issue for consideration by the Bench was “Can the Government, like any private individual, have the absolute discretion to frame policy, distribute resources and enter into a contract with whomsoever it pleases, on any terms and conditions it so desires?”. The Court held that when the Government is engaging in public trade, it cannot act as an private individual and exhibit discretion at his/her will but instead ensure that the principles of equality and non-arbitrariness under Article 14 are complied with.

The Supreme Court noted that the core framework of the policies suffered from “the malaise of unreasonableness and arbitrariness. It reeked of colourable exercise of power whereby the policymakers are bestowing valuable resources to their peers and ilk, triggering a cycle of illegal distribution of State resources. The Bench clarified that the State holds all its resources in trust for its citizens, to be utilised in larger public and social interest. Therefore, the Bench held that the allotment policy failed to satisfy the requirements of the two-pronged classification test coupled with arbitrariness. The Court held that the jurisprudence surrounding equality law has evolved beyond a purely technical analysis, embracing

an approach that considers not only the intent behind legislation or policy but also its real-world impact.



**ASSOCIATION FOR  
DEMOCRATIC  
REFORMS & ANR. v.  
UNION OF INDIA &  
ORS.**

**2024 INSC 113**

The five- Judge Bench comprising Dr. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice Bhushan R. Gavai, Justice J.B. Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra examined the constitutional validity of the Electoral Bonds Scheme. It held various provisions of enactments, viz. amendment to Section 31 of the RBI Act (through Section 135 of the Finance Act, 2017) and the corresponding amendment to Section 29-C of the RP Act (through Section 137 of the Finance Act, 2017) and the corresponding amendment to Section 13-A of the IT Act (through Section 11 of the Finance Act, 2017 and the corresponding amendment), amendment to Section 182 of the Companies Act (through Section 154 of the Finance Act, 2017), to be unconstitutional. Justice Sanjiv Khanna, concurring with the conclusion arrived at by the majority, penned his own separate opinion though reaching the same conclusion. He applied the four-pronged test of the doctrine of proportionality to hold the electoral bond scheme unconstitutional. He held that in a democracy, a voter's right to know is far too important and neither the right to privacy nor the purpose of incentivising donations through banking channels can overshadow the same. The confidentiality of the voting process cannot be extended to anonymity in contributions to political parties and transparency in such funding is essential for free and fair elections. He held that as a person moves into communal relations and business interactions, the scope of personal space shrinks contextually and the right to privacy must yield when dissemination of information is legitimate and in public interest. He held that the claim of privacy by a

company would be restricted to the extent of protecting the privacy of individuals responsible for conducting the business of the company and not on a wide range of other grounds. He in his concurring opinion directed the ECI to disclose in full the details of the donor and the amount donated and collected through EBs in compliance of the interim order passed earlier by the Supreme Court.



**SHARIF AHMED  
AND ANOTHER v.  
STATE OF UTTAR  
PRADESH AND  
ANOTHER**

**2024 INSC 363**

The Division Bench comprising Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice S.V.N. Bhati elaborated on the necessary contents of a chargesheet, stating that it shall be considered complete only when it includes sufficient material and evidence for the Court to take cognizance and proceed with trial. The Court further stressed the importance of chargesheets containing detailed facts of the offence and the relevant evidence, as mandated by Section 173(2) of the CrPC. The Court also clarified the meaning of “taking cognizance of an offence” in relation to Sections 190 and 204 of the CrPC. It explained that “cognizance” under Section 190 refers to the judicial act of a Court or Magistrate in taking notice of an offence, and deciding to initiate legal proceedings. The court held that this stage required the Magistrate to assess the contents of the complaint or police report to determine if there are sufficient grounds to proceed.



**RADHIKA AGARWAL  
v. UNION OF INDIA**

**2025 INSC 272**

The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the power to arrest under the Customs Act, 1962 and the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017. The Court observed that legislative amendments, namely those enacted in 2012, 2013, and 2019, have specifically designated certain offences under the Customs Act as

cognizable under Section 104(4), while also making some of these cognizable offences non-bailable under Section 104(6). All remaining offences under the Act, unless explicitly covered by Section 104(4), are considered non-cognizable and bailable. The Court affirmed that Section 41-D of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 applied to offences under the Customs Act, entitling individuals arrested by customs authorities to meet with a lawyer of their choice during interrogation, albeit not continuously throughout its duration. The Court reiterated that legal counsel may remain present within visual range during questioning but must stay out of hearing distance and may not engage in consultation during the interrogation itself. The Court dismissed challenges to the validity of the relevant provisions and amendments of the Customs Act, holding that they contain sufficient safeguards to prevent misuse or arbitrary arrests. Regarding the GST framework, the Court clarified that a person summoned under Section 70 of the GST Acts does not automatically assume the status of an accused entitled to protection under Article 20(3) of the Constitution, as that protection does not extend to the stage of inquiry or interrogation. It held that Article 246-A grants Parliament the authority to legislate on GST, including provisions aimed at preventing tax evasion. The Court emphasised that the GST enactments fall squarely within the scope of Article 246-A, with powers of summons, arrest, and prosecution serving as legitimate tools to ensure effective tax administration. Consequently, the challenge to Sections 69 and 70 of the GST Acts was rejected.

**ARVIND KEJRIWAL  
v. DIRECTORATE OF  
ENFORCEMENT**

**2024 INSC 512**

In the judgment authored by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the Supreme Court examined whether the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by the Enforcement Directorate complied with Section 19 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, and what legal conditions must be satisfied for an arrest under this provision. The Court clarified that for an arrest to be valid under PMLA, the arresting officer must possess material justifying a belief in the person's guilt, record those reasons in writing, and communicate the grounds of arrest to the accused. It held that courts have the power to judicially review the legality of such arrests to safeguard personal liberty, though not to assess the merits of the ED's belief. The Court emphasised that "*reasons to believe*" must be based on relevant, objective material and not selectively chosen evidence, and the accused must be given a copy of the recorded reasons. While acknowledging that the ED had documented its belief regarding Mr. Kejriwal's involvement in money laundering, the Court noted that the necessity of arrest needed further examination. This specific issue was referred to a larger bench for authoritative determination. Considering Mr. Kejriwal's 90-day incarceration and the importance of the constitutional right to liberty, the Court granted him interim bail with conditions, including restrictions on official duties and non-interference with the investigation.



**THE STATE OF WEST  
BENGAL v. BAISHAKI  
BHATTACHARAYA**

**2025 INSC 437**

The Supreme Court in the judgment authored by the Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna while upholding the decision of cancellation of examination conducted by the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) for a large-scale recruitment process for Assistant Teachers (Classes IX-X, Classes XI-

XII) and Non-teaching staff (Group C and Group D) in 2016, observed that the segregation of tainted and untainted candidates in the present case was impossible due to WBSSC's failure to retain OMR sheets and discrepancies in recovered data. Therefore, the service of tainted candidates were to be terminated with salary refunds @ 12 % where the service of candidates not specifically found to be tainted, were axed without any restitution of payments. Further, the Court held that the appointed candidates previously appointed in State departments will have the right to apply to their posts with continuity of service but without back wages associated with the period of disputed employment. The differently abled candidates were permitted to continue until fresh selection process.



**GAYATRI BALASAMY  
v. M/S ISG NOVASOFT  
TECHNOLOGIES  
LIMITED**

**2025 INSC 605**

Following years of uncertainty over whether courts in India could alter arbitral awards, a five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court held that Appellate Courts have limited powers to modify arbitral awards while exercising powers under either Section 34 or 37 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996. The decision came while answering a Reference as earlier the Court was confronted with diametrically opposite strands of precedent –one line holding that Section 34 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 only allows an award to be *set aside* or remitted; while the other, without much analysis, routinely “modified” awards, especially interest components. The Bench, led by CJI Sanjiv Khanna, settled the debate by carving out a narrow – yet important – power of “limited judicial modification” while affirming the core philosophy of minimal court intervention. The Supreme Court held

that the Courts have a limited power under Sections 34 and 37 to modify arbitral awards. This limited power can be exercised in the following circumstances: a. When the award is severable by separating the invalid portion from the valid portion of the award; b. To correct any clerical, computation or typographical errors which appear erroneous on the face of the record; c. To modify post-award interest in some circumstances; d. The special powers of the Supreme Court under Article 142 of the Constitution can be applied to modify awards. Justice Khanna however, cautioned that this power must be exercised with great caution within the limits of the Constitution.







*Justice Sanjiv Khanna with his father Justice D.R. Khanna*

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