

NATIONAL WORKSHOP FOR STATE JUDICIAL ACADEMIES

8TH & 9TH MARCH 2025

**(FOR THE JUDGES IN-CHARGE OF JUDICIAL EDUCATION & DIRECTORS OF
THE STATE JUDICIAL ACADEMIES)**

The National Judicial Academy (NJA) organized a two-day National Workshop for State Judicial Academies for the Judges-in charge & Directors of the State Judicial Academies on 8th & 9th March, 2025 at NJA, Bhopal. The workshop facilitated a discussion with the Judges-in-charge & the Directors of the State Judicial Academies on the continuing education of judicial officers of their respective states. The innovations, best practices and challenges in judicial education. The adoption of andragogical methods in judicial education, implementation of the 80:20 policy of the National Judicial Academic Council, formulation of need based- curriculum for judicial education and impact assessment of judicial education courses were focused upon in the workshop. The workshop also involved a discussion on the judicial education framework for 2025-26.

SESSION 1

Theme: Framework for Judicial Education

Panel:

Hon'ble Ms. Justice B.V. Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court Of India

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Aniruddha Bose, Director, National Judicial Academy

The Director NJA commenced the workshop stating that the workshop is a critical initiative for the judicial academies, serving as a precursor to calendar setting. The judicial education institutions are not set in a hierarchical system but rather work in synergy to ensure continued relevance. A fundamental question that arises in this context is the nature of the judicial academies' role — do we teach, train, or simply share knowledge? If the purpose is sharing, then it is essential to consider why an academy is necessary in the first place. In the past, particularly around 2005, there was a prevailing belief that judges did not require formal training. However, this perception has changed significantly over time. While judges continue to learn daily from each case and through interactions with lawyers, the question remains: what additional factors should be incorporated into their professional development? One of the key considerations today is the rapid advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), particularly artificial intelligence (AI). These developments make it increasingly necessary for judges to engage with

evolving technologies to enhance judicial processes and decision-making. The workshop was stated to be a forum to dwell on the areas of focus and the approaches to judicial education and capacity building.

Justice B.V. Nagarathna stated that a robust judiciary is the *sine qua non* of democracy, relying on the strength and integrity of its judges. With vast changes shaping the world, there is an increasing need for dynamic judicial activism to address the evolving needs of the people. This underscores the importance of continuing judicial education, ensuring that judges remain well-equipped to interpret and apply the law effectively. Judicial academies serve as crucial institutions for teaching, learning, and knowledge sharing, combining these elements to foster judicial excellence. To achieve this, it is essential to develop a well-structured training module or syllabus, guiding the judicial education process systematically. This meeting has been convened to set the training calendar for the year, emphasizing the two primary forms of judicial training: induction training for new judges and continuing education for serving judges. Both are vital in strengthening the judiciary and ensuring that it remains responsive to the demands of justice in a rapidly evolving world.

Judicial education is different from legal education. Judicial education is a process of professionalisation which may be likened to the apprenticeship system where skills and knowledge were provided through training. Further, judicial education also services to update the knowledge of judges to keep them abreast of the changes in law. The aim of judicial is twofold – the pursuit of competence and provision of skills to address the challenges in the justice delivery system. The role of judicial education is to Increase potential, capabilities, knowledge, and productivity of judges. Professionalization is essential for the evolution of judges, enabling them to effectively address judicial challenges, improve their performance, and enhance the overall efficiency of the judicial system. Judicial education plays a crucial role in transforming a judge, shaping their approach to justice beyond mere legal knowledge. To ensure meaningful impact, the syllabus must be directly relevant to the judicial function, aligning with the demands of daily adjudication and fostering a symbiotic relationship between training and judging. Mere knowledge of the law is not sufficient, as being a good lawyer does not necessarily translate to being a good judge. A judge must undergo a continuous process of learning, unlearning, and adapting, transitioning from the mindset of a lawyer to that of a fair and impartial adjudicator. This transformation is fundamental in strengthening the judiciary and upholding the principles of justice.

Judicial education must be guided by key principles to ensure that judges uphold the highest standards of justice and integrity. Foremost among these is the unwavering commitment to justice, which remains the primary expectation from both judges and the judicial system. Learning in the

judiciary is a continuous and dynamic process, evolving to address new and complex questions that arise in adjudication, particularly those concerning the needs and rights of litigants. Beyond legal knowledge, judicial education must focus on inculcating the values and qualities of an ideal judge, including judicial righteousness, fairness, and adherence to dharma. These principles not only strengthen the moral and ethical foundation of judges but also ensure that they dispense justice with wisdom, impartiality, and a deep sense of duty toward society.

The curriculum for judicial education must be designed to address the evolving nature of disputes that come before the courts, ensuring a focus on key substantive areas such as commercial law, social justice, child and law, and gender-related issues. It should also emphasize judicial leadership, with SJA leaders serving as role models, fostering a culture of learning by example. Understanding the social responsibility of judges is crucial, enabling them to comprehend the needs of litigants and provide relief within the framework of the law while maintaining the right temperament and attitude toward judging.

Beyond legal knowledge, the curriculum must incorporate judicial skills essential for fair and effective adjudication. Judges must also be equipped to tackle judicial challenges such as case pendency, rising litigation costs, adapting to technological advancements, ensuring access to justice for marginalized communities, maintaining public trust, and handling media scrutiny, including social media influence. Training should also focus on enhanced case management techniques, improving judicial efficiency, reducing unnecessary litigation, and developing a deeper understanding of complex litigation. A well-rounded curriculum will not only refine the technical and ethical aspects of judging but also strengthen the judiciary's ability to uphold justice in a rapidly evolving world. Pendency, as a major concern faced by the judiciary, must be a focus in judicial education.

The 80:20 policy of the National Judicial Academic Council relates to the lists in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India - 80% of judicial education curriculum in the State Judicial Academies is required to be on Union List laws and 20% curriculum is to be on State subjects.

The constraints in judging which need to be included in judicial education include integration of technology which is hampered by stakeholder reluctance and financial limits, familiarizing judges with special areas and subjects. Judicial Education programs are insufficiently tied to the needs of judges. The curriculum must not be purely academic and must be reality based, related to issues at the ground level based on empirical research and on what judges need. Academies can use a suggestion box for identifying needs of judges which can be addressed through judicial education. Judicial education cannot be a one-way traffic, it should be based on the expressed need of judges.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of the guidance of the Board of Governors (BOG) to assist in conducting sub-regional conferences, ensuring a more decentralized and effective approach to judicial education. Her Ladyship has also highlighted the need for careful selection of the President and members of the BOG, stressing that judges with a strong inclination toward education should be chosen. This is crucial for providing effective leadership in Judicial Academies, fostering meaningful learning experiences, and enhancing the overall quality of judicial training programs. The training program for judges places a strong emphasis on teaching core values enshrined in the Constitution and the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct, helping to instil a sense of responsibility, integrity, and ethical behaviour in judges. The inclusion of quasi-judicial officers in the training process is also seen as a positive move, with the potential to develop specialized modules in collaboration with administrative training institutes to enhance the skills of these officers. Additionally, the proposal to introduce stenography courses for court staff is an excellent initiative, aimed at improving the efficiency and accuracy of court proceedings, facilitating smooth and timely judicial processes.

Sharing of Best Practices by State Judicial Academies

Gujarat has implemented a best practice in judicial education by adopting a policy of percolation, ensuring that training benefits reach a wider audience. Recognizing that judicial academies cannot directly train all judges, the system mandates that a judge who has attended training must pass on their learnings to fellow judges in their district through sub-conferences. The cost of these sub-conferences is borne by the State Judicial Academies, making it a sustainable and scalable approach. This method enhances knowledge dissemination and ensures uniformity in judicial education across the state. However, the success of this model must be periodically evaluated to assess its effectiveness in improving judicial competence and addressing challenges in the legal system.

Uttar Pradesh has introduced a system that grants autonomy to District Judges for conducting weekly meetings, allowing discussions on legal topics and judicial issues. This initiative fosters continuous learning and collaboration among judges. Additionally, the state has implemented a mentorship program, which promotes bonding between senior and junior judges, providing guidance and support to newly appointed judges. While feedback on this program has been largely positive, some districts have shown reluctance in fully embracing the initiative, indicating the need for further encouragement and assessment.

Rajasthan follows a structured approach to judicial education by organizing seminars at the district level once every three months. High Court judges are assigned specific topics and travel to different districts to conduct these sessions, ensuring direct engagement between higher and lower judiciary. This practice not only enhances knowledge-sharing but also strengthens judicial coherence across different levels of the judicial system.

Himachal Pradesh has implemented a comprehensive judicial training program that extends beyond judges to include forest officers and quasi-judicial officers, ensuring a broader dissemination of legal knowledge and principles. The training curriculum covers the basics of judgment writing and the principles of natural justice, which are fundamental to fair and reasoned decision-making. Additionally, there is a call for the National Judicial Academy (NJA) to frame broad guidelines on key training topics, ensuring consistency and standardization in judicial education across different states.

In **Punjab & Haryana**, there are dedicated training programs for quasi-judicial officers and police officers, recognizing the need to equip them with a strong understanding of legal principles and procedural fairness. However, a significant challenge faced is the shortage of qualified judicial trainers, which hampers the effective delivery of training. Another challenge lies in determining the appropriate content for new judges, ensuring that their training is both comprehensive and relevant to the demands of their roles, while also aligning with evolving legal standards and societal needs. Addressing these challenges is crucial to strengthening the judicial system and enhancing the effectiveness of judicial education.

Maharashtra is undertaking judicial education programs with the assistance of High Court judges as resource persons.

Justice B.V. Nagarathna proposed several key improvements for the enhancement of judicial education. Her Ladyship suggested that each SJA should have a syllabus committee responsible for determining the courses and subjects for judicial education, ensuring the curriculum remains relevant and dynamic. When selecting resource persons, it is crucial to choose the right person for the right subject, ensuring a balance in the presentation of topics without personal biases—whether pro-employer, pro-worker, or otherwise. Her Ladyship also advocates for the Board of Governors (BOG) to observe the classes to monitor the quality of training and ensure it meets the required standards.

Addressing the issue of resource person shortages, Justice Nagarathna emphasizes the importance of treating resource persons with respect by the Director and facilitating proper interaction. It's essential to select the best trainers, not just from within the state but also from other states, and to use virtual conferencing (VC) as a way to broaden access to high-quality trainers. Additionally, Her Ladyship proposes that State Judicial Academies compile a list of qualified resource persons and share this information with the National Judicial Academy (NJA), which can then distribute the list to other state judicial academies, creating a network of well-qualified trainers across the country.

Karnataka places emphasis formulation of problems on the topic of training. There is a need for shift from the knowledge of the resource person to the practical issues in judging. Further, it was opined that the reading material should be participant oriented rather than resource person oriented.

Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh opined that reading materials on various subjects can be shared between the judicial academies.

SESSION 2

Theme: Assessment of Judicial Education Needs

Panel:

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vikram Nath, Judge, Supreme Court Of India

Hon'ble Mr. Justice D.K. Upadhyaya, Chief Justice, High Court Of Delhi

Justice Vikram Nath commenced the discussion focussing on contemporary challenges in judging which should be addressed through judicial education. The biggest challenge for the judiciary is pendency and delay in disposal of cases. Pendency can be addressed by enhancing efficiency in case management, docket management, and implementing case flow techniques, which help prioritize and focus on older cases. The adoption of technology is seen as a key enabler in this process, aiding in streamlining procedures and ensuring better tracking of cases. Additionally, setting strict timelines and minimizing adjournments can contribute significantly to reducing delays. Further proactive court management skills are necessary to minimise delays and court management tools including technological tools can be utilised to monitor the progress of cases. Another area of concern is appropriate judicial conduct and ethical challenges in judging. These

subjects are requisite needs of judges which requires judicial education programs to equip judges with the skills and knowledge to effectively tackle these challenges.

As the legal landscape evolves, there are several newer areas that judges need to be familiarized with in order to effectively handle contemporary issues. These areas include climate change, cybersecurity, and technology, among others. Specialized training modules must be developed to equip judges with the necessary knowledge to address topics like smart contracts, cryptocurrency transactions, cyber frauds, digital forensics, digital evidence, and the use of AI in courts. Additionally, issues related to data privacy, the IT Act, and emerging challenges in cyber law need to be addressed through focused training sessions. Moreover, as LGBTQ rights and disability rights continue to gain prominence, judges must be familiarized with these evolving legal concepts. Sensitivity training can be an important part of this, helping judges understand the rights of LGBTQ individuals and issues such as the treatment of physically challenged individuals in prisons. Mental health and mental capacity also require attention, with judges needing to be equipped to handle cases involving these sensitive topics. In parallel, judges' well-being and stress management should be a critical part of judicial education to ensure their mental and emotional resilience in the face of the demands of the job. There is an urgent need to create modules to familiarize judges with these newer areas, helping them to handle complex and emerging legal issues with competence, sensitivity, and awareness. Refresher courses are required to accrete judicial knowledge and skills on recent development in law as well as technology. Mentorship programs should also be incorporated for sharing of experience between judges.

It was suggested by the Director NJA that induction/orientation training for newly appointed judges can include a training at NJA.

Justice D.K. Upadhyaya emphasized the importance of first identifying contemporary challenges before taking steps to address them. While there are pan-India challenges, every state has its own unique challenges, and State Judicial Academies should focus on identifying the specific judicial needs of their regions. Some of the key challenges identified include:

1. Hesitation from Resource Persons: There is difficulty in sourcing resource persons for training programs. Justice Upadhyaya suggests creating a national pool of resource persons to mitigate this issue and address the problem of repetition. Expanding the pool would ensure fresh perspectives and diverse expertise.

2. Lack of Enthusiasm from Participants: There is often a lack of engagement from participants, which needs to be addressed by the State Judicial Academies. This could be achieved by making the training more interactive and relevant to judges' day-to-day challenges.

3. Post-Training Assessment: Justice Upadhyaya advocates for a post-training assessment at the state level to evaluate the effectiveness of training and identify areas of improvement.

To identify challenges, Justice Upadhyaya suggested observing from above and seeking feedback from judges about the areas where they need more training or are facing challenges in their roles.

Training needs for judges should include:

- Mastery of core legal concepts.
- Sensitization on pertinent issues such as LGBTQ rights, disability rights, and mental health.
- Efforts to remove bias from the mindset of judges to ensure fair and impartial judgment.

Key litigation areas to focus on in judicial training include:

- Intellectual Property (IP)
- POCSO Act
- Cyber Laws and Digital Evidence
- Commercial Law
- ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution), especially Sections 34 & 37 of the Arbitration Act
- Goods and Services Tax (GST)

In terms of updating and accreting judicial knowledge and skills, Justice Upadhyaya proposes various methods:

- Benchbooks to aid in quick reference.
- Study materials and circulation of important judgments to keep judges updated on current developments.
- Ready reckoners for quick access to critical information.
- The creation of a help desk by all judicial academies to provide support and address challenges judges face in real time.

By addressing these challenges and focusing on these areas of judicial education, the judiciary can improve its responsiveness, efficiency, and fairness in dealing with contemporary legal issues.

Sharing of Best Practices by State Judicial Academies

In **Allahabad**, a significant concern for new judges is the language barrier, which is addressed during the orientation/induction training. This ensures that judges are equipped to effectively communicate and understand the nuances of legal language. Additionally, a mentorship initiative is undertaken to foster synergy between judges, promoting the sharing of experiences and offering guidance on common practical issues faced in judicial proceedings. This initiative helps build a supportive network and aids in the professional development of judges.

In **Andhra Pradesh**, the focus of judicial training is placed on several key subjects to enhance the competency and efficiency of judges. These subjects include:

- Court management, ensuring judges are well-versed in efficient case handling and courtroom procedures.
- Court ethics, reinforcing the importance of integrity and ethical behaviour in judicial proceedings.
- Handling the bar, preparing judges to manage interactions with lawyers and ensuring a smooth judicial process.
- Cyber laws, equipping judges with the knowledge to address the growing challenges related to digital crimes and online regulations.

Bombay

- Mental health is a focus, with sessions conducted by psychiatrists on stress management.
- Training also include session on practical issues including dealing with threats in court.

Calcutta

- Training focuses on handling transfers and inculcating adaptability in judges to handle issues when posted to new places.
- Mental well-being of judges is emphasized in training programs.

Chhattisgarh

- Solution to the challenge faced in finding Resource Persons has been addressed by creating a pool of resource persons.

Delhi

- Feedback from participants is taken as to the topics they need training in.
- Formation of committees at the district level to identify challenges.
- Some training sessions, like computer skills, are done at the district level due to the short duration at the State Judicial Academies.
- Mental health and well-being are prioritized.
- A quiz on mandatory Supreme Court directions and discussion methods are used.

Gauhati

- Training on NDPS Act as a major issue.
- Induction training for new recruits mainly focussed on familiarizing fresh law graduates with court processes and handling the bar.

Gujarat

- Language issues for judges are addressed through online training, with positive reviews and marked improvement.
- Training on new criminal laws and creating modules for recording evidence in vernacular languages.

Himachal Pradesh

- The SJA is facing challenges in identifying suitable Resource Persons.
- The SJA faces infrastructural limitations due to paucity of funds
- Pendency is not a major concern in Himachal Pradesh.
- Focus in training is given to NDPS Act due to the high incidence of drug related crimes.

Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh

- Feedback is taken from judges undergoing induction training as to the subjects they require training.
- Training are needed to enable the judges to adapt and shift from Ranbir Penal Code to IPC to the New Criminal Laws.
- The newly appointed judges are not familiar with court processes. Trainings are undertaken to familiarize new judges with court processes and to inculcate sensitivity and empathy in court behavior.
- Mental health is a focus in training.
- The SJA undertakes outreach programs for advocates and clerks.

- The SJA has created compendiums on certain subjects.

Jharkhand

- Availability of Resource Persons is a challenge faced by the SJA
- Notably there is not existing mechanism to assess stress among judges. This poses an issue in addressing the same in training
- Cyber lab is currently not available at the SJA, however, a request for establishing the same has been made

Karnataka

- Induction training lacks interaction in the sessions on procedural laws. This is because the new judges are not familiar with procedural laws.
- Language problems faced by judges are addressed through language training in collaboration with the British Council.
- ODR (Online Dispute Resolution) training has been introduced.
- Personality development for judges is undertaken in trainings at the SJA.
- A help desk at the SJA is available for supporting judges.

Kerala

- The concentration levels of new inductees are a concern. This issue is sought to be addressed with training methods like scenario-based and simulation exercises to maintain interest.
- Mentorship programs are a part of judicial education.
- The SJA fosters participant autonomy in selecting training topics.
- Mindfulness training is provided with the help of psychiatrists and psychologists.

Madhya Pradesh

- Language issues for new judges are addressed through training.

Madras

- Resource Persons are often busy, especially for long-duration induction programs.
- Family courts are working on Saturdays, which results in reluctance to attend training.
- A Library of recordings from past seminars has been created for sharing with judges.
- Best practices of special courts have been compiled and circulated.

Manipur

- Interaction programs are organised for judges to share experiences.
- A WhatsApp group is used for sharing the latest judgments to judges.
- Case management programs are held quarterly.
- 30% of judicial officers can't attend physical training, so video conferencing is used.

Meghalaya

- Challenges in Resource Person availability, with collaboration between State Judicial Academies and the Police Academy.
- Training includes Cyber, AI, Tech, Mental Health, and Handling vulnerable witnesses.
- Multidisciplinary programs have been conducted on investigation loopholes.

Orissa

- Inductee judges face challenges in transitioning from the classroom to the courtroom.
- Training on AI focuses on technical aspects, but evidentiary issues require further training.
- Stress management is a significant area for training.
- Help desks are available for support.

Patna

- Emerging technology like cyber law and forensics is included in training.
- Trainings are undertaken on new criminal laws, and bail focusing on Supreme Court directions.
- Arrears and backlog issues and behavioural sciences are also included in trainings.

Punjab & Haryana

- Language barrier is addressed with the appointment of an English language teacher.
- Soft skills and communication training are regular components.
- Study circles at the district level, with monthly paper presentations.
- YouTube broadcasts of training sessions.

Rajasthan

- Training not only focuses on laws but also includes topics like stress management and psychology.

Sikkim

- The request for setting up a Computer lab has been sent.
- Feedback from judges is gathered, with efforts to include topics suggested by them.
- Lack of enthusiasm is addressed through deliberation-based sessions where participants actively engage in discussing issues.

Telangana

- Participation is good, with an icebreaker session after the second phase of training to discuss challenges faced on the bench.
- Consultation meets every Saturday with 2-3 districts to address problems.
- A questionnaire box on the SJA website receives 70-80 questions a month.
- Women Judicial Officers feel more comfortable when women are in leadership roles in State Judicial Academies.

Tripura

- Getting Resource Persons are a challenge, but NJA and Delhi High Court are assisting in this regard
- Judicial officers are encouraged to act as Resource Persons to provide practical solutions.

Uttarakhand

- There's a need for training of trainers and a research wing at State Judicial Academies.
- Requests for study materials from the NJA.

Rajasthan

- 20 judiciaries worldwide are using AI in their courts, and there is a need to explore how and the extent to which AI can be integrated into judicial systems.

Himachal Pradesh

- Lack of judges puts pressure on the judiciary to resolve pendency.

Telangana

- Focus on mainstreaming the knowledge of fresh inductees.

Justice Aniruddha Bose highlighted several key areas that require attention in judicial training:

1. Language Issues: The language barrier faced by newly appointed judges is a concern that needs to be addressed during induction training. Ensuring that judges are proficient in the language used in court proceedings is crucial for effective communication and decision-making.
2. ICT and Technology: Judges need to be introduced to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and their skills and capacity in handling modern technology must be a focus in training. This will enable them to manage digital evidence, understand technological advancements, and incorporate ICT tools into their daily judicial processes.
3. Integrating ADR with Litigation: Training should also focus on how to integrate Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods with traditional litigation processes. Judges must be equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively use ADR as a tool to reduce case backlogs and promote efficient dispute resolution.
4. Dealing with Media: Judges must receive training on how to deal with the media, ensuring they maintain judicial independence and integrity while managing media coverage and public scrutiny of their decisions.
5. Dealing with the Bar: Effective interaction with the Bar is another crucial aspect of judicial training. Judges must be trained on how to manage relationships with lawyers, ensuring fairness, transparency, and efficiency in courtroom proceedings.

These focus areas aim to equip judges with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the evolving judicial landscape, ensuring they remain effective, impartial, and well-prepared for modern challenges.

Justice Vikram Nath noted the common concerns across all SJAs –

1. Most SJAs are noting language issues in Judges. It was suggested that the SJA may consider setting up a language lab.
2. Lawyers can be called as resource persons as they can share domain expertise on specific areas of law.
3. There is need for soft skills training for judicial officers especially on judicial conduct and ethics

4. Most SJAs are reporting low levels of enthusiasm in participants. This can be addressed by making trainings interesting and interactive.
5. The challenge in identifying resource persons can be addressed by creating a common resource pool.

SESSION 3

Theme: Methodologies for Addressing Judicial Education Needs

Panel:

Hon'ble Ms. Justice B.V. Nagarathna, Judge, Supreme Court of India

Hon'ble Mr. Justice D.K. Upadhyaya, Chief Justice, High Court of Delhi

Justice B.V. Nagarathna emphasized the importance of ensuring that Judicial Academies remained useful for judges. Her Ladyship stated that judges were more interested in discussions regarding the application of the law rather than passive lectures. The training programs needed to address crucial issues such as solving the problem of docket explosion and improving court administration.

Her Ladyship advocated for learning activities that were problem-centric and based on real-life issues, ensuring that the knowledge acquired had immediate practical application. The training programs focused on two primary groups: new inductees and experienced judges. Although the syllabus varied for each group, the overall objective remained the same—to refine judicial sensitivity, enhance legal knowledge, and perfect the necessary skills.

Apart from classroom sessions, Justice Nagarathna suggested incorporating dialogues with experienced legal professionals and peer discussions. Her Ladyship emphasized that learning should not be confined to the SJA alone. Instead, judicial training needed to be a blend of classroom learning, self-learning, and direct experience.

Her Ladyship also recommended adopting good practices such as mock court sessions, observation of proceedings, and practical training on drafting judgments, decrees, framing charges, and recording evidence. Additionally, the case law method, which involved circulating and discussing important case laws, was deemed essential. A combination of macro and micro learning,

along with hands-on training in technology, was necessary to keep judges well-equipped for contemporary legal challenges.

Justice D.K. Upadhyaya referenced the principles outlined by the International Organization for Judicial Training in its Declaration of Judicial Training Principles, specifically principles 1 and 2. His Lordship highlighted the relevance of andragogy in judicial education, pointing out that Judicial Academies were not training raw minds. While law school graduates were new to the profession, Higher Judicial Service recruits were new to the judicial system itself. Given that adult learners already possessed some level of knowledge, careful consideration was necessary when designing training programs.

Justice Upadhyaya identified a significant challenge in transforming lawyers and new inductees into judges. His Lordship stressed that Judicial Academies played a crucial role in this evolution. His Lordship advocated for continuously evolving training methods and incorporating the latest techniques to enhance judicial education.

His Lordship suggested various methods to improve learning outcomes, including conducting interactive quiz sessions such as Amiquiz, engaging participants in discussions based on hypothetical legal problems, and using audio-visual media like documentaries and films to sensitize judges. Additionally, panel discussions among participants were encouraged to foster knowledge exchange.

Beyond legal education, Justice Upadhyaya proposed that judges should also be trained in ancillary subjects such as economics and psychology. Inviting experts from these fields would help in shaping the overall personality of judges. His Lordship reiterated that a judge needed more than just legal knowledge; the ability to apply the law effectively was equally important.

Sharing of Best Practices by State Judicial Academies

Uttar Pradesh

- Decided cases were shown and explained with actual files to help Judicial Officers understand how case files were maintained. Similarly, samples of actual pleadings were shown for reference.
- Interactive sessions are organized with the police.

- Additionally visits are organized for the judges to child care institutions, forensic labs, and science centers.
- A helpline was established for officers posted in the district to provide support.

Telangana

- The SJA has organized a talk show with a judge to discuss pertinent issues. This build confidence in the judicial officers. The SJA also organizes regular interactions with sitting and retired judges.
- The SJA also includes docket writing exercises and mock court in training programs.

Kerala

- Trainings are organized at the SJA for prosecutors.
- The SJA uses interactive methods including visual method, mock courts, and case dissection.
- Dissenting judgments should also be included in case law methodology and discussion.

Andhra Pradesh

- The SJA organizes practical trainings for new recruits in the Higher Judicial Services and Civil Judge Junior Division.
- Interactive methods are adopted in training including moot courts, role plays, and case analysis. Additionally hands on training is given on survey of land to familiarize judges with issues in land laws.

Punjab & Haryana

- Mentorship and guidance is provided to new judges to support their professional development.
- Training programs include compulsory yoga sessions to promote well-being and stress management.
- Additionally, language training is offered to help new judges improve their communication skills.

Karnataka

- SJA is adopting the role-play method to enhance judicial training.
- Practical sessions on judgment writing, order sheet writing, and interim order writing are being conducted, ensuring they are interlinked with the topics being taught.

- MCQ method is being used to assess understanding, while book reading sessions are helping improve language, presentation skills, and confidence.
- Wellness and yoga sessions are being conducted to promote overall well-being. Language skills training is being provided, along with survey training to offer hands-on experience.
- Evaluation of judgments of new recruits is taking place to provide constructive feedback.
- Peer discussions and presentations on various problems or cases are being encouraged to foster collaborative learning.
- Additionally, training on the effective use of ICT is being conducted to enhance technological proficiency.
- Formulation of issue/question of law should be part of training.

Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh - The training include sessions on stress management, and capacity building of judges to counter media trial.

Himachal Pradesh - Trainings require to emphasize on the issue of implicit bias and to train judges to decide only on the materials before the court.

Justice D.K. Upadhyaya emphasized that judging requires a strong mind. While it is easy to say that judges should not be affected by the media, there is a strong need for judicial academies to build judges' ability to remain unaffected. Justice Upadhyaya highlighted that judicial academies should develop methods to help new recruits evolve into strong judges with the capability to effectively conduct court proceedings, engage with stakeholders, and deliver justice.

Justice Aniruddha Bose emphasized that bias and prejudice were important aspects that required the sanitization of the mind. He highlighted the need for these issues to be effectively addressed in judicial training programs. He also stressed that judges should avoid making observations in court that could sensationalize a case or reflect bias.

Justice B.V. Nagarathna emphasized that training programs should focus on gender law, issues related to gender justice, environmental and climate change concerns, and advancements in technology. Experiential learning methods should be adopted, including visits to forensic labs, police stations, and courtrooms. Additionally, shadow sitting should be encouraged to allow participants to observe court proceedings. Training should also include the observation of agricultural land surveys and guidance on reading and interpreting a commissioner's report. Furthermore, the assessment of judgments and providing feedback to judges to help them improve

should be an integral part of the training. Practical aspects of the administration of justice must also be included, such as the maintenance of records, drafting order sheets, and visits to child care institutions. The methodology in the paper on judicial education by the Centre for Research and Planning can be adopted in the SJAs. Further, the methods of heutagogy can be explored in judicial education to promote self –learning. Language training should be undertaken at the SJAs. Trainings should be staggered and interspersed with classroom training and court experience. Trainings should also include sessions on identification of ratio and obiter. Case law methodology can be included in training, and this can be undertaken with prior planning and selection of suitable case for discussion.

SESSION 4

Theme: Impact Assessment of Judicial Education

Panel:

Hon’ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, Supreme Court of India

Hon’ble Mr. Justice Atul Sreedharan, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh

Justice Rajesh Bindal emphasized that the idea of judicial education was to bridge the gap between the ideal judiciary and the reality, which was the primary role of Judicial Academies. He outlined the goals of judicial education as achieving ICEE—Impartiality, Competence, Efficiency, and Effectiveness. He highlighted that the ultimate objective of judicial education was to enhance public trust and confidence in the judiciary.

Regarding assessment, he stressed the importance of understanding what judges needed from training programs, linking this to the effectiveness of Judicial Academies. He insisted that training must be practical to address real challenges faced by judges. He also pointed out that frivolous cases constituted a significant portion of case pendency and emphasized the need to sensitize Judicial Officers on handling uncontested cases. Additionally, he addressed concerns about maintaining quality in judgments despite the high workload, noting that judges often disposed of smaller matters but struggled to find time for voluminous cases.

On the subject of adult education, he noted that while fresh learners were easier to teach, adult learners already had prior knowledge, making it a challenge to ensure they remained receptive to

new content. He also raised concerns about the current approach to feedback, stating that it was being collected mechanically. He stressed that feedback was necessary to assess the effectiveness of training and ensure that its results benefited both the judge and the judiciary.

Justice Bindal also highlighted the potential of AI and data analysis in judicial education. He suggested that AI could be used to track litigation trends and identify areas where judicial orders were frequently appealed, allowing targeted training for judges in those areas.

Justice Atul Sreedharan emphasized that the attention span of an adult learner was approximately 20 minutes, making it essential for judicial training programs to capture and sustain learners' interest through well-devised methodologies. He highlighted the relationship between the High Court and the District Judiciary, stressing that equality in status should not only exist but also be reflected in conduct. He asserted that resource persons must "walk the talk" by practicing what they teach or advocate. He also underscored the need to instill courage in the District Judiciary, encouraging them to be bold, impartial, and courageous in their decision-making. However, he pointed out that it was equally important for the High Court to provide the District Judiciary with the necessary space to implement their learnings effectively. To enhance judicial education, he suggested incorporating interviews with experienced judges to provide practical insights. He also emphasized the importance of developing skills for crisp and effective presentations. Additionally, he advocated for immediate assessment of training effectiveness, based on responses and interactions during the sessions and immediately after the training.

Telangana - The reluctance in judges undergoing training to give honest feedback was noted.

Kerala – It was suggested that AI can be used in the feedback and impact assessment mechanism to assess the gain from training. Further, true feedback will only be possible if independence is nurtured, and this independence must be achieved top-down in the judicial hierarchy.

Allahabad – Impact Assessment is undertaken by evaluation of judgments and orders

Delhi – The impact of training programs is undertaken by SJA officer/faculty's observation of the session and his/her review of the success of the training.

Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh - Anonymity in the feedback mechanism is necessary for honest feedback.

Gujarat – Feedback can be undertaken through a portal and the name of the participant can be masked to ensure anonymity.

Kerala – Feedback can be taken through Google Forms and anonymity in feedback can be ensured by doing away with the requirement of disclosing any details identifying the person.

Punjab & Haryana – There is need to create a common pool of resource persons. Training should be organized for capacity building of the faculty of the SJAs.

Justice Rajesh Bindal emphasized that the evaluation of judgments required additional manpower and resources to be effective. He also highlighted the importance of performance reviews, suggesting that tracking the number of judgments overturned could serve as an indicator of areas where judicial officers needed further training. Impact assessment of trainings can also be undertaken through informal interactions with the participants. Justice Bindal made the following suggestions -

- Measures to ensure attentiveness must be adopted in training
- Modern and participative methods of training should be included
- NJA is organizing a training program for the faculty of SJAs. The number of these programs should be increased.
- Creation of modules, checklists etc. should also be undertaken
- Judgment writing skills also need to be a focus of training.

Justice Atul Sreedharan discussed the practice of listing judicial officers' judgments before an administrative judge as a measure to assess their performance. He noted that this practice was currently followed in Andhra Pradesh and had previously been implemented in Punjab and Haryana. He stressed the importance of an effective feedback mechanism in judicial training. They suggested that feedback forms should be provided daily, allowing participants adequate time for reflection and response. Additionally, distributing feedback forms after each session would ensure that trainers and academics received timely and meaningful input to improve the training process.

Sharing of Experience and Best Practices by the Directors of the State Judicial Academies

Karnataka

- A committee has been constituted to evaluate orders, which is followed by a one to one discussion with the judge. This is done both before and after training
- Discussions are undertaken with the trainees to get feedback after the sessions.

Madras

- The trainings methods include use of fact pattern, video clipping etc. to retain attention.
- In case of POCSO and JJB trainings, a committee is constituted to evaluates the judgments
- Feedback is taken through Google forms which the judges fill after they return to their stations

Kerala

- Impact assessment is undertaken through regular evaluation of judgments to identify the common mistakes. This evaluation is followed by a discussion with the judge.
- Feedback of participants is taken through anonymized Google Forms.

Telangana – Impact assessment is undertaken through post training evaluation and through vigilance inputs.

Allahabad – Impact Assessment is undertaken through assessment of judgments and orders.

Uttarakhand

- Feedback is sought from the judicial officers in advance to ensure need based training.
- Post training feedback is undertaken to evaluate effectiveness of the training.
- Evaluation of judgments is not feasible due to workload and paucity of time.

Rajasthan

- The faculty of the SJA takes feedback informally in the training
- Post session feedback is taken on Google Form

Orissa - Feedback is taken in the course of the program to assess effectiveness of the program and the individual sessions.

Jharkhand

- Impact assessment is undertaken by evaluation of judgments.
- The SJA circulates recent case laws to judges to keep them updated.

Punjab & Haryana

- Feedback is taken from the trainee judicial officers in course of training
- Pre and post training evaluation of judgements can be undertaken in case of trainings for POCSO Courts and JJBs.

Madhya Pradesh – Feedback is taken through informal interaction with participants

Gujarat - Impact assessment can be done through evaluation of judgments and orders including framing of charge, issues, examination of witness etc. and delay if any in passing orders. However, it must be considered whether this exercise should have negative implications.

Sikkim – The impact assessment of training is a challenge in feedback as multiple stakeholders are involved in the program.

Meghalaya – Impact assessment and feedback is undertaken by informal feedback from the participants and observation by faculty of participant interaction and response in the program/

Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh - Impact assessment and feedback is undertaken by feedback forms and observation of participant interaction and response in the course of the session. Feedback can also be taken by installing a suggestion box. Anonymity in the feedback form will ensure honest response. It is necessary to ensure that feedback or impact assessment does not have adverse consequences or negative implications. Pre-training feedback from the participants and resource persons can be taken.

West Bengal

- The SJA takes pre-program feedback from the judges as to the topics they require training on and the program is designed accordingly. Further, orders and judgments are evaluated and the discussion is based on the common issues noted in evaluation. Post training, the orders and judgments are called and evaluated to assess impact of training.
- A training diary is maintained for every trainee

SESSION 5

Theme: Framework for Judicial Education 2025-26

Panel:

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal, Judge, Supreme Court of India

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh, Chief Justice, High Court of Tripura

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Atul Sreedharan, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh

Justice Rajesh Bindal emphasized the importance of gathering inputs from Judicial Officers. His Lordship emphasized on the importance of gathering inputs from Judicial Officers regarding their

training needs. Justice Bindal stressed that judicial academies must address the practical challenges faced in courtrooms to ensure effective training. Justice Bindal outlined the features of effective courses, highlighting the “SMART” approach—training objectives must be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timebound. His Lordship also pointed out a key practical issue: the capacity of training must be linked with the recruitment process, as well as with court infrastructure and staff availability. Without this alignment, both effective training and judicial functioning would be compromised.

Identifying key areas of training, Justice Bindal highlighted the need to equip judges with skills to manage legitimately pending cases efficiently. Training should also focus on specific litigation areas and familiarize judges with new criminal laws, particularly the challenge of navigating both old and new legal provisions simultaneously. His Lordship emphasized the need to address sensitive issues in PMLA, especially related to bail, as even a small percentage of cases could have a significant impact. Other important areas included Motor Accident Claims Tribunals (MACT) and Family Matters, which often had the potential for resolution, and guidance on passing interim orders effectively.

Justice Bindal stressed the need for flexibility in judicial training programs, recognizing that each state had unique realities. Additionally, Justice Bindal advocated for collaboration with interdisciplinary fields to bring practical insights into judicial education and enhance its effectiveness.

Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh emphasized that judicial academies were not being utilized optimally, partly because Judicial Officers could not be called for training on weekdays, limiting sessions to weekends. His Lordship pointed out that recurrent mistakes by court staff were affecting efficiency and suggested incorporating staff training into the SJA calendar. Conducting such training on weekdays would not only improve court efficiency but also ensure better utilization of SJA resources. Additionally, His Lordship stressed the need for induction training for ministerial staff to enhance their understanding of court procedures. Regarding induction training for new judicial recruits, His Lordship noted that while the module and schedule were well-defined, training should be curated to meet the specific needs of Judicial Officers. His Lordship advocated for incorporating life skills training and including activities such as movies to keep participants engaged. His Lordship emphasized the importance of developing a broader perspective that aligned with national judicial objectives. His Lordship also discussed the importance of andragogy (adult learning methods) in judicial education. His Lordship suggested circulating reading materials

in advance and encouraging questions from participants. His Lordship proposed the creation of a portal where Judicial Officers could submit legal queries, which could then be addressed by research associates. His Lordship also highlighted the issue of bias among judicial officers regarding their colleagues, stressing that evaluation of judgments and orders must be objective and free from personal bias. Recognizing the significance of emerging laws, His Lordship underscored the need for specialized courses in collaboration with National Law Universities to keep Judicial Officers updated with evolving legal frameworks.

Justice Atul Sreedharan emphasized that collaboration with the Federal Judicial Centre, USA had been beneficial in introducing andragogy (adult learning methodologies) into judicial training. His Lordship highlighted key focus areas for judicial education, particularly the need for judges to have a basic understanding of forensic medicine, ballistics, and toxicology. His Lordship stressed that judges must be equipped to appreciate evidence and expert testimony effectively. To achieve this, judicial academies could collaborate with medical organizations to provide specialized training in these fields. Additionally, His Lordship underscored the importance of taxation law as another critical area that required focused training for Judicial Officers.

Sharing of Best Practices by State Judicial Academies

Kerala

- New subjects have been added to judicial training programs to enhance the knowledge and skills of Judicial Officers. Bias has been introduced as a key topic, with training to be conducted in collaboration with experts to ensure a comprehensive understanding of implicit and explicit biases in judicial decision-making.
- Another important addition is the examination of child witnesses, recognizing the need for sensitivity and specialized techniques when dealing with minors in legal proceedings.
- Furthermore, collaboration with UNICEF has been established for the training of Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) to strengthen the handling of cases involving children in conflict with the law.
- To improve accessibility and continuous learning, videos of training sessions will be uploaded on the Learning Management System (LMS), allowing Judicial Officers to revisit and reinforce their understanding of key concepts at their convenience.

Bombay – It was opined that training should not be a spoon feeding exercise to just provide basic training on law; rather it should be aimed at capacity building of judges.

Himachal Pradesh – The SJA is undertaking training for multiple stakeholders including ministerial staff.

Karnataka – The SJA is organizing training for staff of all cadres. Stenography training is also being provided.

Punjab & Haryana - Training of staff who are differently abled must be undertaken and equipment must be provided to enable them to work and to make them feel empowered.

Justice Singh underscored the need for creating compilation of important judgments on varied subjects relevant for judges as a guide.

Justice Rajesh Bindal emphasized that obtaining feedback in advance was a beneficial approach to improving judicial training programs. His Lordship highlighted that judicial conduct in court should be a key focus area, ensuring that judges maintain professionalism, impartiality, and decorum in their courtrooms. His Lordship also stressed the importance of sensitivity training to help Judicial Officers handle cases involving vulnerable groups with greater awareness and empathy. Additionally, His Lordship suggested that feedback forms should invite suggestions from participants to make the training more relevant and responsive to their needs. On the issue of judicial data security, His Lordship pointed out that State Judicial Academies should take up the responsibility of training judges on safeguarding sensitive legal data. Justice Bindal emphasized on the need for training on special laws and for judges presiding over special courts. With the increasing use of ICT in judicial processes, His Lordship noted that several challenges were emerging regarding the uploading of content online, particularly concerning:

- Privacy concerns,
- The right to be forgotten, and
- Protection of information related to vulnerable persons.

His Lordship underscored the need to address these issues through proper training and policy implementation to ensure the secure and ethical use of technology in the judiciary.
