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## **Brief Report of the 18th National Conference**

*Association of Retired Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts of India*

*Jaipur, Rajasthan | 25–26 April 2026*

The two-day 18th National Conference, along with the National Executive Committee Meeting and the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Retired Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts of India, was successfully held at Jaipur, Rajasthan, on 25–26 April 2026. The event was jointly organised in collaboration with the Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority.

The Conference was inaugurated by Hon’ble Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his inaugural address on the theme “*The Bench Beyond Retirement: The Role of Retired Judges in Advancement of ADR and Awareness of Laws for the Common Masses*,” he emphasized that former judges are reservoirs of knowledge and experience and can significantly contribute to Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), particularly in mediation, arbitration, conciliation, and Lok Adalats. He underlined that ADR mechanisms are not a secondary pathway but often the primary means of justice for millions. He also proposed the creation of a structured National Registry of former judges willing to serve in ADR and legal awareness initiatives, describing their continued engagement as a vital national service.

Hon’ble Shri Bhajan Lal Sharma, Chief Minister of Rajasthan, attended as the Special Guest and assured full support from the State Government in promoting such initiatives. He highlighted the influential role of judicial pronouncements in shaping society and fostering positive change.

Hon’ble Mr. Justice Sanjeev Prakash Sharma, Acting Chief Justice of Rajasthan, stressed the need for proactive adoption of innovative ADR

mechanisms to reduce case pendency and expedite justice delivery.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice K. L. Sharma, National President of the Association, welcomed the dignitaries and reaffirmed the readiness of retired judges to assist the judiciary in reducing its burden. Hon'ble Mr. Justice N. K. Jain, President of the Rajasthan Chapter, extended a welcome on behalf of the organising body and outlined the activities of the state chapter. Hon'ble Mr. Justice V. S. Dave, Patron of the Association, provided valuable insights into the formation and continued contributions of the Association towards legal awareness.

During the Conference, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Naveen Sinha, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ajay Rastogi, and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Bindal, former Judges of the Supreme Court, were felicitated for their distinguished service.

The first technical session, chaired by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ajay Rastogi, focused on "*Re-imagining Justice Delivery: Integrating ADR with Judicial Wisdom.*" Esteemed judges including Hon'ble Mr. Justice Puspendra Singh Bhati, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vinit Mathur, and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rajesh Tandon shared their perspectives. The session concluded with an interactive discussion involving law students and judicial officers.

The second technical session was chaired by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Mohd Rafiq and centered on "*Harnessing Judicial Experience: Strengthening ADR and Legal Access.*" Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ashok Kumar Jain, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjeet Purohit, and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Bhanwar Singh addressed the gathering, followed by an engaging question-and-answer session.

The evening featured a vibrant cultural programme with enthusiastic participation from judges and their spouses, adding a celebratory dimension to the event.

On 26 April 2026, the National Executive Committee Meeting was held under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Mr. Justice K. L. Sharma, followed by the Annual General Meeting. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Mahendra Dayal, Secretary General, presented the report on the Association's activities, and several resolutions were passed.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Dinesh Maheshwari, former Judge of the Supreme Court and Chairman of the Law Commission of India, was felicitated during the proceedings. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Bhanwar Singh, acting as Election/Returning Officer, conducted the elections and announced the newly elected team.

The Conference concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Shri Hari Om Attri, Member Secretary, Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority.

The event was attended by distinguished dignitaries, including Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Ms. Diya Kumari, judges from various states, judicial officers, law students, and officials of the State Government.

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*(Justice Jainendra Kumar Ranka)*

**Convenor – Conference**

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