



## THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

### PROFILE OF LAWYERS OF INDIA DAY AWARDEES - 2025



**MOHAN V. KATARKI**

Senior Advocate

Mohan V. Katarki is a highly distinguished Senior Advocate, designated by the Supreme Court of India, known for his expertise in International law, Inter State Water Law, Constitutional Law and Contract law.

Born on January 20, 1960, he is a third-generation lawyer who earned his BSc (1981) and LLB (1984) from Karnataka University, Dharwad.

Mr. Katarki began his practice in the Supreme Court of India in January 1985. He was chamber junior of Muralidhar C. Bhandare, Senior Advocate, who later served as the Governor of Odisha.

With over three decades of extensive experience, Mr. Katarki has focused on highly contentious federal litigations particularly concerning the sharing of India's Inter-State River Waters and enforcement of cross border decisions. He has represented the States of Karnataka, Punjab, Kerala, and Odisha, as well as the Union Territory of Delhi, in numerous high-profile interstate disputes.

He has advised States extensively on techno-legal issues arising in the planning of inter-State river water resources, and the construction, operation, and safety of significant high

dams. This includes the Krishna Raj Sagar dam, Hemavathy Dam, and Kabini dam in the Cauvery basin; the Almatti dam and Malaprabha dam in the Krishna basin; the Bhakra-Nangal dam in the Indus basin; the Hirakud dam in the Mahanadi basin; and the Mullaperiyar dam in the Periyar basin. His deep techno-legal expertise is further highlighted by his involvement in cross-examining renowned experts in fields such as water resources engineering, hydrology, hydraulics, dam safety, backwater effect, submergence, and agronomy.

His professional activities include serving as the Vice President of the Bar Association of India, New Delhi. He is also a Member of the Committee on Protection of People at Sea, constituted by the International Law Association, London, and has been a co-convener of the subgroup on Human Rights at Sea.

In the academic sphere, Mr. Katarki has held roles as a Member of the Academic Council of the National Law School of India University, Bangalore (2005-2008), and a Member of the Board of Management and Planning for the Karnataka State Law University, Hubli (2010-2021). Currently, he is a Distinguished Visiting Faculty at the University Law College, Bangalore University, Bangaluru, and an Honorary Professor at CMR Law School, Bangalore. He also contributes as a Member of the Editorial Advisory Boards for the Students Law Review and the Bangalore University Law Journal.

Mr. Katarki is a prolific speaker and writer on legal and constitutional issues. His lectures have been delivered at international conferences, including the International Water Law Conference at Colorado Law School, Boulder, U.S.A., and Lawasia Conferences in Sydney and Bengaluru. His publications cover a wide range of topics, such as judicial intervention, international liability for global harm, constitutional governance, and water federalism.



**Dr. ADITYA SONDHI**

Senior Advocate

DR ADITYA SONDHI is a Senior Advocate practising before the Supreme Court of India. He has served as Additional Advocate General for the State of Karnataka from April 2016 to April 2018 and has been appointed Amicus Curiae in several matters of public importance. He appears regularly before various High Courts in the country.

Dr Sondhi has taught constitutional law, arbitration and professional ethics at the National Law School of India University, from where he graduated in 1998. He has also taught a specially curated credit course on "Courts and National Security' and has contributed to the Oxford Handbook on the Indian Constitution. He was invited to appear before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs instituted in connection with criminal law reforms in 2023.

Dr Sondhi has lectured widely in India, as also in the UK at Oxford University, London School of Economics, SOAS, King's College London and Bristol University. He holds a PhD from Mysore University and has published three books of non-fiction with Penguin (India), including his most recent Poles Apart, which examines the relationship between military and democracy in India and Pakistan.

Dr Sondhi appears in matters of criminal and constitutional law, with a special interest in human rights advocacy. He has appeared pro bono in several death penalty cases before the Supreme Court of India including Munna Pandey v State of Bihar, which lays down cardinal principles of a fair trial. He has instituted the Beena Sondhi Scholarship for an LLM in Human Rights, Conflict and Justice at SOAS, University of London in memory of his late mother. He hosts Podcaste a podcast for conversations around caste.



**PRITI SURI**

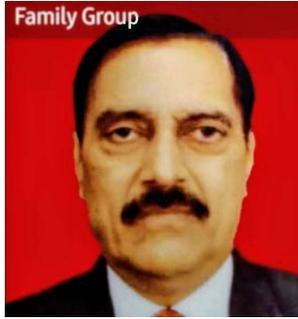
Founder and Managing Partner, PSA Legal Counsellors

Priti is the founder and managing partner of PSA, a business law firm in New Delhi. She is a seasoned lawyer with nearly four decades of experience spread across three continents.

Priti developed the firm and represents its international and domestic clients in the full range of cross-border transactions, including M&A, strategic investments and joint ventures. She also counsels public and private companies on a wide range of operational matters. A business lawyer, she has led numerous landmark cross-border complex transactions, earning recognition for her resilience and pragmatic ability to get the deal done. Her industry experience spans across varied industries including aerospace, automotive, chemicals, defense, energy, infrastructure, life sciences, pharmaceuticals, telecom and technology.

A globally respected and active member of international bar organizations, Priti is currently the President-Elect of the Inter-Pacific Bar Association and will chair the next annual conference in New Delhi in Feb 2026. She was also on the Board of the International Technology Law Association from 2018 to 2022.

Priti has numerous accolades to her credit. She was named as “Woman Lawyer of the Year – India & Middle East” at Thomson Reuters ALB Women in Law Awards, 2023. She is the only Asian to receive the prestigious “Mayre Rasmussen Award” by ABA for promoting gender equality for women practicing international law. Additionally, she has been rated among India’s top 100 lawyers by IBLJ for 9 consecutive years since 2016. Her career reflects consistent excellence in navigating diverse jurisdictions and delivering results. Known for her global perspective, she remains passionate about encouraging women to pursue careers in international law, both through mentorship and global engagement. Recognized for her role in building bridges across legal communities worldwide, she continues to contribute to thought leadership at international forums.



**Dr. H. C. UPADHYAY**  
**Advocate**

Dr. H. C. Upadhyay is a distinguished legal professional and academician with an extensive career spanning over five decades. Born on 28 September 1946, Dr. Upadhyay possesses an exceptional academic background, holding degrees of M.Com, M.A., LL.M. (Osmania University), Ph.D. (University of Bombay), and D.Litt. (Ranchi University). He began his professional journey in academia, serving as a faculty member at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the constituent and affiliated colleges of Osmania University, Hyderabad, from 1972 to 1985. His commitment to education enriched generations of students in commerce, law, and allied disciplines. He later transitioned into legal practice while also working as a Business Management Consultant between 1986 and 1991, before fully dedicating himself to the legal profession.

Since 1991, Dr. Upadhyay has been a practicing Advocate, handling diverse matters with a focus on commercial, civil, and international legal issues. His professional stature earned him an international appointment as the Principal State Counsel for the Government of Kenya, Nairobi, where he served from 1997 to 1998, representing the State in complex legal matters. A committed member of the legal fraternity, he has been a Life Member of the Bar Association of India and has served as its Joint General Secretary. He is also the Founder Secretary of the Association's Andhra Pradesh Chapter, established in 2005, contributing actively to institutional development and professional outreach.

An accomplished scholar, Dr. Upadhyay has authored four books on contemporary legal issues and published twelve research papers in reputed journals. He has guided nine Ph.D. scholars and served as an examiner and paper-setter for postgraduate academic programmes, reflecting his deep engagement with legal research and higher education. Beyond academia and practice, he has been a respected columnist for leading national dailies including *The Hindu Business Line*, *Deccan Chronicle*, *The Indian Express*, and *The Hans India*, where his writings on law, policy, and socio-economic issues received wide readership. Dr. Upadhyay is widely travelled across India and abroad, adding a global perspective to his scholarship and professional work. His career reflects a rare blend of academic excellence, professional competence, public service, and intellectual contribution to the field of law.



**PROF. RAJIV KHANNA**

Professor of Law, University of Delhi

Prof. Rajiv Khanna is an eminent legal academician whose teaching career spans more than five decades. He began his academic journey at the University of Delhi, completing his LL.B. in 1971 and LL.M. in 1973, after graduating in History (Hons.) from Hindu College. Coming from a family with a strong legal tradition on both his paternal and maternal sides, and inspired by his father's flourishing legal practice, he initially pursued law with the intention of entering the profession. However, a call from the Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, inviting him to teach, marked the beginning of a lifelong association with legal education.

Prof. Khanna began teaching at the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi in 1973 and soon established himself as an outstanding teacher of a wide range of subjects. He devoted many years to teaching Labour Law at the Indian Law Institute in the prestigious evening Diploma Programme, where the subject was divided into four papers covering industrial relations, compensation, management-related aspects and essay writing. He was also invited by the Delhi School of Economics to teach Industrial Relations Law and Consumer Law. He also enjoyed teaching Property Law and Rent Law, which included the principles of mortgages and other core doctrines, as well as Family Law, particularly marriage and divorce. He retired as the Head and Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, on 30 November 2012, after an illustrious 39-year career at the University.

Prof. Khanna's contributions to legal education extend beyond India. He was invited to Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS), Seoul, South Korea, where he spent two years as a Professor of Law teaching Law and also advising HUFS during a major national reform on legal education. At that time, South Korea was transitioning from a fragmented system in which short teaching capsules could qualify an individual to seek enrolment with the Bar, to a structured model that required a full degree in law. With nearly 500 institutions competing for only 20 positions as accredited law schools, his guidance played an important role in helping a leading university secure recognition from the Korean Bar Council and the Ministry of Education culminating in shaping the legal education in South

Korea. His command of English and academic leadership were particularly valued during this competitive and transformative phase.

Upon returning to India, Prof. Khanna played a key role in establishing yet another Law School i.e. the Faculty of Law at SGT University in Gurugram in 2014. Building a law school from its foundation was a challenging task, but one that he undertook with characteristic dedication. In recognition of his outstanding service, SGT University conferred upon him the title of Professor Emeritus. He continues to inspire generation of Lawyers, Law Academicians and Students through his extensive contribution in delivering lecture on wide varieties of subject.