NATIONAL CONFERENCE

on

50 YEARS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL DISSENT: REVISITING JUSTICE H.R. KHANNA'S LEGACY

DATES: 23rd - 24th January 2027
(*Mode: Hybrid)*

Organised by:

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW SOCIETY,
NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY ODISHA

in collaboration with

Dr. B.R. AMBEDKAR NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, SONEPAT

ABOUT NLUO

National Law University Odisha, Cuttack was established by Act 4 of 2008 by the Odisha State Legislature keeping in mind an enunciated vision of advancement of learning, teaching, research, diffusion of knowledge in the field of law and catering to the needs of society by developing the professional skills of those intending to take up the professions of Advocacy, Judicial Services, Legal services, and so on. National Law University, Odisha is committed to providing an atmosphere in which academic excellence is the foremost priority for students. Along the lines of this vision, NLUO has significantly catered to the needs of the research in various legal fields by paving way for various dedicated research centers and societies. Such endeavors enable students to pursue individual interests and take part in various literary and recreational activities throughout the academic year.

The Constitutional Law Society is one of such initiatives of NLUO which aims at promoting study, research, and informed deliberation in the field of Constitutional Laws, and its allied subjects with a policy and application-oriented purpose.

ABOUT CLS

The Constitutional Law Society of National Law University Odisha was established in 2018 with a vision to provide a platform for public discourse and deliberation vis-à-vis Constitutional Law. Constitutional Law Society NLUO seeks to supplement an accessible forum for intellectual discourse and shape the discussion of the most important and relevant issues of constitutional law through meticulous scholarship, public lectures and seminars, and research through independent projects, conferences, and co-operation with other institutions and individuals engaged in constitutional study. The Constitutional Law Society, National Law University Odisha endeavors through the course of its activities to foster awareness about the subject and its importance. The purpose behind the establishment of the Society is to generate debate and dialogue on various nuances of the subject of Constitutional Law. The activities undertaken by the committee are aimed at enabling the students to have a holistic understanding of constitutional principles and constitutional jurisprudence.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Dissenting opinions have played an important role in the development of Indian constitutional law. While a dissent does not form part of the binding judgment, several dissenting opinions have later influenced constitutional doctrine and the interpretation of fundamental rights. From Justice Fazl Ali's opinion in A.K. Gopalan and Justice Subba Rao's observations in Kharak Singh to R.C. Cooper, Maneka Gandhi and Puttaswamy, dissent has often offered an alternative understanding of the Constitution.

The Conference will examine dissent in relation to individual liberty and State power, with particular focus on Justice H.R. Khanna's dissent in ADM Jabalpur. Justice Khanna's opinion challenged the view that the right to life and personal liberty could be suspended during an Emergency and emphasised that the rule of law cannot be displaced by executive power. His dissent, later recognised as a significant constitutional statement on liberty, continues to shape discussions on judicial independence, individual rights and the limits of State authority.

Discussions will address the rule of law, preventive detention, political dissent, protest, sedition and its successor provisions, UAPA, bail and internet shutdowns. The Conference will further consider dissent in constitutional design, including judicial appointments, legislative procedure, executive power and the limits of judicial deference.

TIMELINE

Call for Abstracts

24th October 2026

Deadline for Submission of Abstracts

7th November 2026

Selection of Abstracts

20th November 2026

Deadline for Registration

30th November 2026

Deadline for Submission of Research Paper

10th January 2027

Dates of Conference

23rd - 24th January 2027

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel Discussions at the Conference will explore the following issues:

Panel I: 50 Years of Constitutional Dissent: Revisiting Justice H.R. Khanna's Legacy

Fifty years after one of the most significant dissents in Indian constitutional history, this panel discussion will revisit Justice H.R. Khanna's judgment in *ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla* and its place in the development of constitutional law. The discussion will examine the circumstances in which the judgment was delivered, its implications for the protection of individual liberty during the Emergency, and the responsibility of the judiciary when constitutional rights are under threat.

Panel II: Democracy, Dissent and Judicial Decisions

Dissent has long been an important part of constitutional democracy, providing space to question established interpretations of law and examine the exercise of State power. This panel discussion will explore the role of dissenting opinions in shaping constitutional jurisprudence and the contribution of judicial disagreement to the development of legal principles. It will also consider the relationship between judicial decisions, democratic accountability, and individual rights, with a focus on how courts respond to constitutional conflicts and questions of liberty. The discussion aims to reflect on the significance of dissent not only within the judiciary but also in sustaining a constitutional culture that allows competing interpretations and ideas to be examined.

THEMES

50 YEARS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL DISSENT: REVISITING JUSTICE H.R. KHANNA'S LEGACY

SUB-THEMES

I. Justice H.R. Khanna's Dissent and Liberty: The Citizen, the State, and the Right to Dissent

- ADM Jabalpur revisited: Executive emergency powers, Article 21, habeas corpus, and judicial independence during emergencies.
- The citizen's right to protest: Freedom of speech, assembly, internet shutdowns, and the test of reasonable restrictions under Article 19.
- Justice in times of state crises: Protection of personal liberty and human rights during emergencies, due process, pre-trial detention, sedition, and anti-terror law.

II. Vindicated Dissents and the Evolution of Constitutional Doctrine

- From dissent to doctrine: Evolution of judicial dissents into binding legal precedents
- The road to Kesavananda Bharati: Early judicial doubts in Sajjan Singh, Golak Nath, and the scope of amending power.
- Fundamental Rights vs. Directive Principles: Judicial dissents on Article 31C and constitutional balance.
- Dynamics of judicial precedent: Factors and conditions under which minority opinions overrule or reshape established doctrine over time.

SUB-THEMES

III. Dissent in Constitutional Thought: Who Dissenters Are, Where Dissent Lives, and What It Means

- Dissent in the making of the Constitution: the Constituent Assembly debates, minority voices on rights, federalism, and emergency powers.
- Civil disobedience and constitutional order: Gandhian satyagraha, the line between lawful protest and unlawful resistance.
- Dissent within the legislature: The role of the Opposition, and suspension of Members and disruption of Parliament.
- Theorising dissent: Agonistic and deliberative democracy, the role of dissent in democratic legitimacy, and the idea of "constitutional patriotism."

Note: These are only suggestive sub-themes and indicative topics. Participants have the discretion to opt for a different sub-theme, so long as it falls under the ambit of dissent and co-relates to the broader theme of the Conference.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Abstract Submission

The abstract should not exceed 250-350 words and must be submitted on or before **11:59 pm, 7th November 2026**. The abstract must contain maximum five relevant keywords. All submissions must be submitted in .doc/.docx format via the Google form. The abstract must highlight the structure and essence of the paper.

Style Guidelines:

- Font: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12
- Line Spacing: 1.15
- Alignment: Justified

Mode of Participation

The conference will be conducted in a **hybrid format**, allowing participants to present their research both in person and online.

RESEARCH PAPER SUBMISSION

The following guidelines must be followed while submitting the research paper:

- The word limit of the paper shall be between 4000-8000 words (exclusive of footnotes).
- The citations must strictly conform to the standards laid down in the Oxford University Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (5th ed., 2026).
- Speaking or substantive footnotes are permitted.
- There is no limit on number of authors.
- When using acronyms and short forms, the full phrase must be spelled out in the first instance and the short form must be mentioned in parentheses. For example: K.S. Puttuswamy v. Union of India ("Puttuswamy case"). These acronyms or short forms must be uniformly followed at all further instances in the paper.
- The research paper must be submitted in .doc/.docx format via Google form. The deadline for the submission of the paper is **11:59 pm, 10th January 2027**.
- The file must be named in the following format: Participant Code_Title of Paper
- The similarity index of the paper must not exceed 15%.
- Please refer to the NLUO Law Journal Policy on Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies.
- All submissions should be original and should not have been submitted for publication/published elsewhere in any form.

Style Guidelines:

Main Body

- Font: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12
- Line Spacing: 1.5
- Alignment: Justified

Footnotes

- Font: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 10
- Line Spacing: 1
- Alignment: Justified

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Eligibility

We invite students from undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral qualifications, practitioners, academicians, policymakers, and scholars to participate in our conference to share valuable insights on the subject and start a dialogue on issues not discussed before.

Registration Fees - Presentation

After confirmation of selection of abstract, the participants are required to make the requisite payment for registration. The participants must fill the **Google form** for registration and upload the fee receipt for confirmation of registration.

REGISTRATION FEES (PER PERSON)	
CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Academicians and Practitioners	1500
Research Scholars and Students	1000
Students of NLUO and DBRANLU	750

Note: The fee mentioned is not for the entire presenting team but the **per person fee**. Registration fee includes registration kits, lunch and refreshments for both days of the conference. Participants presenting offline must **secure their own accommodation**.

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Registration Fees - Attendee

All those who want to attend the conference only for the purpose of participation will be provided with a certificate of participation. The attendees will **only** be allowed **offline**, All such students. professionals, academicians or research scholars are **not allowed to make any type of submission or presentation** at the Conference. The attendees will have access to attend the panel discussions on both days. All those wishing to participate as attendees must complete the requisite payment and fill the Google form for attendees.

REGISTRATION FEES (PER PERSON)	
CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Attendee (Participants)	500
Attendees (NLUO and DBRANLU)	250

Note: Registration fee includes lunch and refreshments for both days of the conference. Participants attending offline **must secure their own accommodation.**

REGISTRATION DETAILS

How to Register?

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How to Register?

All participants are requested to pay the registration fee in the following way:

- Visit https://eazypay.icicibank.com
- Enter Institution Name as 'National Law University' and click on 'Go'.
- Fill the details:

a) Email id
b) Mobile No.
c) Amount
d) Student Name (Enter your name)
e) Roll or Enrolment No. (Enter your Roll / Enrolment number for NLUO students and enter 131 for others)
f) Semester (Enter your Semester number for NLUO students and enter 11 for others)
g) Year
h) Payment Date
i) Purpose (Mention CLS Conference)

REGISTRATION DETAILS

- Once the required data is furnished, click on ‘Submit’ after entering the captcha and OTP.
- After the payment you will get the auto generated payment receipt, which must be uploaded in the registration form.

CONTACT DETAILS

For further queries and details regarding the conference, please reach out to us at: cls@nluo.ac.in.

Faculty Coordinators

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