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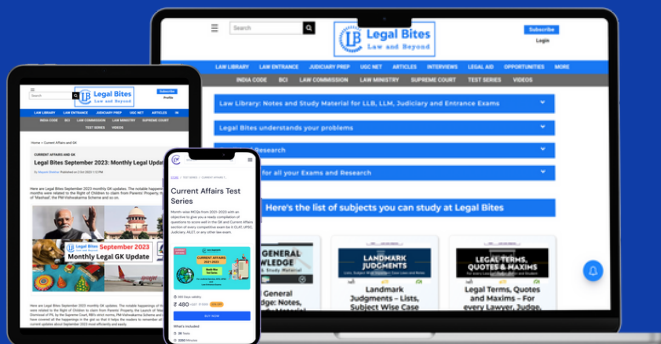
FEBRUARY 2024

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Monthly Updates Edition

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LEGAL CURRENT AFFAIRS 2024

FEBRUARY 2024 EDITION

Key Highlights: Legal Bites February 2024

1. Case Analysis: Vinod Kanjibhai Bhagora v. State of Gujarat & Anr., (2024)
2. Uniform Civil Code Bill, 2024: Uttarakhand
3. Obstacles Women Encounter in Professional Settings
4. How to Understand Case Laws?

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Legal Bites February 2024: Monthly Legal GK Updates

1. Union Cabinet Approved Interim Budget 2024 (February 1, 2024)

PM Narendra Modi, heading the Union Cabinet, has given the nod for the Interim Budget 2024, to be presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. As the Lok Sabha polls are on the horizon this year, this marks Sitharaman's 6th budget as the Finance Minister and her last in the 2nd term of the Modi government.

2. Union Cabinet, under PM Narendra Modi, Approved the Bilateral Investment

Treaty Between India and UAE (February 1, 2024)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at the helm of the Union Cabinet, has provided the green light for the endorsement and ratification of a bilateral investment treaty between the Government of India and the Government of the United Arab Emirates.

3. Champai Soren Took Oath as the 7th Chief Minister of Jharkhand (February 2, 2024)

Champai Soren, one of the senior leaders of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), took oath as the 7th Chief Minister of Jharkhand. He succeeded the party chairperson, Hemant Soren, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) just two days earlier.

4. Law Commission Led by Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi Advocates Retention of Criminal Defamation in New Criminal Laws (February 2, 2024)

The 22nd Law Commission of India, under the guidance of Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, has recommended the preservation of the criminal defamation offence in proposed new criminal laws. The Commission stated, “through the introduction of this punishment, the law has shown the most balanced approach in protecting one’s reputation and speech too.”

5. Justice P.S. Dinesh Kumar Appointed as the Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court (February 3, 2024)

Justice P.S. Dinesh Kumar was appointed as the Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court after being appointed as the Acting Chief Justice on January 25, 2024. He retires on February 24, 2024.

6. Retweeting Can Attract the Offence of Defamation: Delhi High Court (February 5, 2024)

Delhi High Court ruled that retweeting content accused of being defamatory constitutes publication, triggering liability under Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for defamation.

7. Bombay HC Confirms Interim Bail in ICICI-Videocon Loan Case (February 6, 2024)

On February 6, 2024, the Bombay High Court upheld the temporary bail granted to former ICICI Bank CEO Chanda Kochhar and her husband Deepak in a CBI case related to alleged loan irregularities with the Videocon Group. In its initial decision, the court stated that the Kochhars arrests did not align with legal provisions, necessitating their release based on the CrPC.

8. Uttarakhand UCC Bill Mandates Registration of Live-In Relationships (February 6, 2024)

Uttarakhand government introduces the Uniform Civil Code Bill, addressing live-in relationships with mandatory registration. The move aligns with judiciary rulings, requiring residents in such relationships outside Uttarakhand to submit a statement to the state Registrar.

9. Judge Nawaf Salam Elected as the New President of the ICJ (February 6, 2024)

Lebanese Judge Nawaf Salam was elected as the President of the International Court of Justice, succeeding US Judge Joan Donoghue for a 3-year term. Salam, holding the highest judicial position globally, joined the ICJ in 2018.

10. \$146 Million Arbitral Award Against Reliance Infrastructure Upheld by SICC (February 7, 2024)

The Singapore International Commercial Court (SICC) upheld an arbitral award instructing Reliance Infrastructure Limited, led by Anil Ambani, to pay approximately \$146 million in dues and damages to Shanghai Electric Group, a Chinese company.

11. Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Bill, 2024 Passed by Parliament (February 9, 2024)

Parliament approves the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Bill, 2024, amending the 1974 Act. The legislation aims to decriminalize specific violations and enforce penalties, modifying the roles of central and state pollution control boards in preventing and controlling water pollution

12. Kerala HC Permits Queer Man to Attend Funeral Rites of Deceased Live-in Partner (February 8, 2024)

The Kerala High Court granted permission for a queer man to attend the funeral of his late partner. The court ordered the release of the remains of the deceased to his family, with the condition that his partner can participate in the funeral rites unless the family objects to it.

13. SC Reserves Judgment in Case Involving Questions on Legality of Sub-Classifications Among Reserved Communities (February 8, 2024)

The Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, deliberated the legality of sub-classifying Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for reservation in jobs and education.

The 7-judge bench reserved its judgment after a 3-day hearing, revisiting a 2004 ruling limiting sub-classification authority to Parliament, not state legislatures.

14. Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024 Passed by Parliament (February 9, 2024)

Parliament approved the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, addressing cheating in government recruitment exams. The legislation aims to ensure transparency, fairness, and credibility by preventing the use of “unfair means” in public examinations.

15. Parliament Passes Three Bills on JK Local Bodies’ Quota and SC/ST Lists (February 9, 2024)

Parliament passed bills recognizing Gadda Brahmin and Koli as Scheduled Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir. The approved bills include the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, along with The Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, and the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

16. Gujarat HC Grants 5-Day Parole to One Bilkis Bano Gang Rape Convict After Father-in-Law Expires (February 9, 2024)

A convict in the Bilkis Bano case received five days parole from the Gujarat High Court, following his surrender before the Supreme Court. The parole was granted due to his father-in-law's death, as stated by a police official.

17. “Project Vatsalya” Launched by JHALSA to Tackle Drug Addiction Among Street Children (February 11, 2024)

JHALSA initiates "Project Vatsalya" to address drug addiction in street children. Additionally, they launched "Legal Services for Road Accident Victims" to provide legal assistance for individuals affected by road accidents.

18. UPI and RuPay Card Rolled Out in Sri Lanka and Mauritius (February 12, 2024)

The Reserve Bank of India announced the establishment of RuPay cards and Unified Payments Interface (UPI) connectivity between India and Mauritius, along with UPI connectivity between India and Sri Lanka, enhancing financial integration and facilitating digital payments among citizens.

19. CCI Grants Approval to Adani Power and DAIT for Coastal Energen Acquisition (February 13, 2024)

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the acquisition bid by Adani Power Ltd. and Dickey Alternative Investment Trust for a complete stake of 100% in Coastal Energen Pvt. Ltd. Adani Power Ltd., a member of the diverse Adani Group, stands as India's foremost private-sector thermal power generator.

20. Drop of 28% in Death Sentences by Trial Courts in 2023, As Revealed by Project 39A (February 13, 2024)

In 2023, trial courts saw a 28% decrease in death sentences, as per Project 39A's report on Death Penalty in India. Only one death sentence was confirmed by a High Court, and the Supreme Court did not uphold any death penalty during the year.

21. Suggestion of Decentralization of Powers by the Law Commission of India to Tackle Future Pandemics (February 14, 2024)

The 22nd Law Commission of India recommends decentralizing powers between central and state governments for handling pandemics like COVID-19. Headed by President Ritu Raj Awasthi, the committee, initiated by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, reviews the current legal framework for epidemic diseases.

22. Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jain Takes Over the Charge of CMD of IRCTC (February 14, 2024)

Sanjay Kumar Jain has been named the Chairman and Managing Director of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), as announced by the company. Previously, he held the position of Principal Chief Commercial Manager (PCCM) at Northern Railway.

23. Termination of Women Nursing Officers From the Military Due to Their Marriage is Unconstitutional: SC (February 14, 2024)

The Supreme Court ordered the Ministry of Defence to compensate a former Military Nursing Service officer with Rs 60 lakh for her wrongful release in 1988 due to marriage. The court deemed it a case of gender discrimination and inequality.

24. Electoral Bonds Scheme Struck Down by SC (February 15, 2024)

The Supreme Court's five-judge Constitution Bench unanimously declared the Centre's electoral bond scheme unconstitutional, citing a violation of the right to information under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution due to anonymous political donations.

25. Greece Legalizes Same-Sex Marriage (February 15, 2024)

The Greek parliament approved a law that legalizes same-sex marriage, marking a significant milestone for human rights in Greece. With 176 lawmakers in favour and 76

against out of a total of 300, Greece becomes the first predominately Orthodox Christian country to establish marriage equality.

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26. Quad Bill Passed by US House (February 15, 2024)

The US House of Representatives passed the Strengthening the Quad Act, aiming to enhance collaboration among India, US, Japan, and Australia in the Indo-Pacific. It proposes a Quad Intra-Parliamentary Working Group and requests the Secretary of State to provide a status update and cooperation strategy to Congress within 180 days.

27. UK Cricketer Rizwan Javed Banned For Over 17 Years For Match-Fixing (February 15, 2024)

UK club cricketer Rizwan Javed received a 17 ½-year ban from all cricket for five breaches of the Emirates Cricket Board Anti-Corruption Code. He was among eight individuals charged by the ICC, acting for the ECB, regarding corruption attempts during the 2021 Abu Dhabi T10 Cricket League, which were disrupted.

28. “Right to Adopt Not a Fundamental Right”: Delhi HC (February 16, 2024)

The Delhi High Court ruled that the right to adopt is not a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution. Justice Subramonium Prasad upheld regulations restricting couples with two or more children to adopt only children with special needs, prioritizing children's welfare over prospective adoptive parents' rights.

29. Rs. 10 Lakhs Fine on Rajasthan by SC For Dragging Dispute With Labourer for 22 Years (February 16, 2024)

The Supreme Court directed the Rajasthan government to pay ₹10 lakh for unfairly treating a part-time labourer, denying him regular employment and work benefits for 22 years. The Court criticized the prolonged litigation caused by the State's failure to implement a labour court award from 2001.

30. 'Sagar Aankalan' Guidelines Launched by Shri Sarbananda Sonowal to Boost Port Efficiency (February 16, 2024)

The Indian government has unveiled the 'Sagar Aankalan' guidelines, a comprehensive initiative designed to boost efficiency and competitiveness across all seaports in the country. This strategic measure aims at fostering overall improvement in the functioning of Indian ports.

31. NLU Prayagraj Inaugurated by CJI; Urged the University to Employ Hindi as a Medium of Instruction (February 16, 2024)

Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud inaugurated Dr. Rajendra Prasad National Law University in Prayagraj, urging the use of Hindi as the medium of instruction. He noted the bias favouring English-speaking urban students in the current legal education system despite advancements.

32. Meghalaya Government's Challenge to the Ban Imposed on its Lottery by Various States Rejected by SC (February 19, 2024)

The Supreme Court rejected the Meghalaya government's plea against the lottery ban by other states, emphasizing that issues related to human liberty outweigh revenue-generating activities like lotteries.

33. Good Financial Status of Daughter Not a Ground to Deny Share in Father's Self-Acquired Property (February 19, 2024)

The Telangana High Court ruled that a daughter, regardless of her financial status, has the right to seek a share in her father's self-acquired properties. The judgment rejected a man's claim against a district court decision favouring his sister in their parent's assets partition.

34. Plea by Reebok Seeking Conversion from Unlimited Liability Company to LLC Rejected by Delhi HC (February 20, 2024)

The Delhi High Court upheld the Registrar of Companies' decision to deny Reebok India's conversion from an Unlimited Liability Company to a Limited Liability Company. The rejection was based on Reebok's significant financial losses and a net deficit exceeding ₹2,100 crore.

35. Apple Cannot be Expected to Trace Stolen iPhone Using Unique Identity Number: SC (February 20, 2024)

The Supreme Court dismissed the Odisha State Consumer Commission's notion that Apple India must trace a stolen iPhone using its unique identity number. The Court deemed the Commission's observation as "unwarranted."

36. Export Ban on Onions to Continue Till March 31: Centre (February 20, 2024)

The government decided to extend the ban on onion exports until the initial deadline of March 31, 2024. This move aims to stabilize onion prices and ensure sufficient domestic availability. The export ban was initially imposed on December 8, 2023.

37. Fali S Nariman, Senior Supreme Court Lawyer, Passes Away (February 21, 2024)

Renowned legal luminary and seasoned advocate Fali S. Nariman passed away at the age of 95. He had been battling several health issues, including cardiac ailments.

38. BCI Applauds Centre for Three New Criminal Bills (February 21, 2024)

The Bar Council of India has committed support to legal practitioners for implementing three new criminal codes enacted last year. These codes will replace the Indian Penal Code of 1860, the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1973, and the Indian Evidence Act of 1872. Bar Council Chief Manan Kumar Mishra praised them as 'seminal.'

39. Ayush Wellness Centre Inaugurated by CJI Chandrachud at SC (February 22, 2024)

Chief Justice of India, Justice DY Chandrachud, inaugurated the “Ayush Holistic Wellness Centre” at the Supreme Court. During the ceremony, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Supreme Court and the All-India Institute of Ayurveda to establish, operationalize, and deliver expert services at the Ayush Holistic Wellness Centre.

40. LOC Issued Against Rhea Chakraborty By CBI Quashed by Bombay HC (February 22, 2024)

The Bombay High Court dismissed the CBI's lookout circulars (LOCs) against actor Rhea Chakraborty and her family in the Sushant Singh Rajput case, citing a lack of reasons, as required, and only providing a summary of the FIR instead.

41. India's Three New Criminal Laws to Come Into Force From July 1, 2024 (February 24, 2024)

New criminal justice laws, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Act, will be effective from July 1, 2024, after Parliament's approval on December 21, 2023, and President Droupadi Murmu's assent on December 25.

42. Civil Judge Accused of Sexually Harassing Rape Survivor Transferred by Tripura HC (February 24, 2024)

A civil judge in Dhalai, accused of sexually assaulting a rape survivor during her statement recording, has been transferred to the High Court of Tripura and placed on "compulsory waiting" for posting. The judge is instructed to report to the High Court immediately.

43. Kerala HC Sentences All 12 Convicts to Life Imprisonment in TP Chandrasekharan Murder Case (February 26, 2024)

The Kerala High Court on Monday sentenced all twelve men found guilty in the political murder of TP Chandrasekharan to rigorous life imprisonment. The Court deemed a simple life imprisonment inadequate considering the brutal nature of the crime.

44. PIL Against Three New Criminal Laws Rejected by SC (February 26, 2024)

On Monday, the Supreme Court rejected a PIL challenging the introduction of three new criminal laws to replace the IPC, CrPC, and Indian Evidence Act. The Court noted the laws are not yet in force so the petitioner has no locus standi to challenge them.

45. Justice AM Khanwilkar, Former SC Judge, Appointed as Lokpal Chairperson (February 27, 2024)

Former Supreme Court judge A M Khanwilkar appointed Lokpal chairperson on Tuesday, filling the post vacant for nearly two years after Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose's term ended on May 27, 2022.

46. Temporary Ban on Patanjali Medicine Ads by SC For Misleading (February 27, 2024)

The Supreme Court criticized Patanjali Ayurveda for 'misleading' advertisements and imposed a ban on the company from advertising products related to diseases or medical conditions. The Court expressed concern that the misleading ads were deceiving the entire country.

47. Former Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren Denied Permission to Take Part in State Budget Session by Jharkhand HC (February 28, 2024)

The Jharkhand High Court denied former CM Hemant Soren permission to attend the State Budget session. Given his current incarceration following an ED arrest, the Court ruled that he must waive his right to participate in the legislature's proceedings.

48. Kerala High Court Acknowledges That Men Too Can be Victims of Sexual Assault (February 28, 2024)

The Kerala High Court noted that sexual assault is not limited to women but also affects men. Justice Devan Ramachandran emphasized the rise in cases of boys being victims of child sexual assault.

49. Bombay High Court Rejects CBI's Plea Seeking Stay on Release of Netflix Series on Indrani Mukerjea (February 29, 2024)

The Bombay High Court denied the CBI's request to halt the release of the documentary series "The Indrani Mukerjea Story: Buried Truth." Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Manjusha Deshpande, after watching the show, found nothing prejudicial to the ongoing Sheena Bora murder trial.

50. CSI Open to Writ Jurisdiction Under Article 226: Madras HC Full Bench (February 29, 2024)

The Madras High Court's Full Bench ruled that the Church of South India (CSI), despite being a private religious body, falls under the writ jurisdiction of Article 226. The judgment stated that, as the CSI oversees various educational institutes and hospitals, it engages in public duty, making writ petitions related to these duties maintainable.

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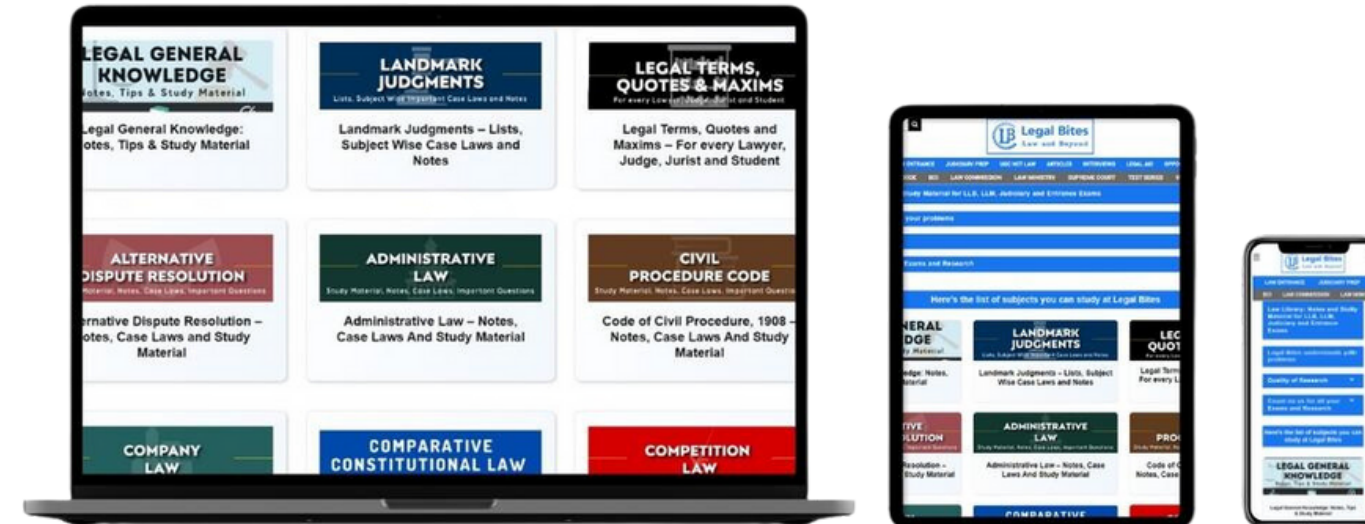
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