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Lifestyle Equities C.V. & Anr. Versus Amazon Technologies Inc.: 2025 INSC 1190-

Could the High Court grant an unconditional stay of a money decree under Order XLI Rule 5 CPC?-
HELD

The Supreme Court of India established significant guidelines regarding the stay of money decrees under the **Code of Civil Procedure (CPC)**.

The Court clarified that appellate courts possess the discretionary power to grant an **unconditional stay** on money decrees in "exceptional cases," affirming that the requirement to deposit the decretal amount is **directory**, not mandatory.

Key Rulings & Legal Principles

- **Discretion Over Deposit:** The Court ruled that the word "shall" in **Order XLI Rules 1(3) and 5(5)** of the CPC—which refers to depositing the decretal amount for a stay—is directory. While a deposit is the standard "rule of prudence," it is not an absolute legal mandate.
- **"Exceptional Cases" Doctrine:** An unconditional stay (without deposit) may be granted if the decree is:
 - **Egregiously perverse;**
 - **Riddled with patent illegalities;**
 - **Facially untenable;** or
 - Suffers from similar exceptional causes.
- **Separation from Arbitration Law:** The Court emphasized that the restrictive "no-stay-without-deposit" regime under **Section 36 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act** cannot be mechanically imported into ordinary civil litigation under the CPC.

Case Background & Context

1. **Original Suit:** Lifestyle Equities (proprietor of the **Beverly Hills Polo Club** mark) sued Amazon for infringing its logo with their private label "Symbol".
2. **Ex Parte Decree:** A Single Judge of the Delhi High Court awarded a massive **₹336 crore** (approx. \$38.8M) ex parte decree against Amazon.
3. **Procedural Flaws:** The Division Bench of the High Court granted an unconditional stay, noting that:
 - Summons were **never validly served** on Amazon.
 - The damages were unilaterally hiked from **₹2 crore to ₹336 crore** in final submissions without amending the plaint.

Final Outcome: The Supreme Court dismissed Lifestyle Equities' appeal, upholding the High Court's stay and directing that the judgment be circulated to all High Courts for uniform application.

These analyses break down the Supreme Court's judgment on granting unconditional stays of money decrees, highlighting the 'exceptional cases' doctrine and procedural irregularities:

Outcome: Hon'ble Supreme Court upheld the Delhi High Court's unconditional stay of the ₹336 crore decree. Held that this was an exceptional case due to major flaws in service and procedure. Amazon need not deposit any amount until the appeal is finally decided.

K. S. Shivappa vs Smt. K. Neelamma: 2025 INSC 1195-

Whether a minor, upon attaining majority, is mandatorily required to file a suit within the period of limitation to set aside a voidable transaction executed by his guardian (in contravention of Section 8 of Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956.), or whether the minor can repudiate by conduct (without instituting a suit) within the limitation period? –HELD

Facts: Land originally owned by Mahadevappa was sold to Rudrappa, who purchased it in the names of his minor sons. Rudrappa, as guardian, sold one plot (No. 57) in 1971 without court permission. Later, on attaining majority, the sons sold the same plot in 1989 to K.S. Shivappa. Meanwhile, the earlier purchaser's successor, Smt. Neelamma, claimed ownership through a later sale deed. Trial court favoured Shivappa; the High Court reversed, holding the guardian's sale valid as it wasn't challenged in time. Shivappa appealed to the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Ratio Decidendi: A transfer made by a natural guardian in violation of Section 8(2) of Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 is voidable at the option of the minor (under Section 8(3)), not void ab initio. The minor, on attaining majority, need not necessarily file a suit to repudiate that voidable transaction; unequivocal conduct may suffice to show repudiation, provided it is done within the prescribed time (limitation). The limitation period for such a suit or for repudiation begins from the date of majority (i.e. when the minor becomes an adult) under Article 60 of the Limitation Act.

Outcome: Hon'ble Supreme Court allowed the appeal of K. S. Shivappa, setting aside the judgments of the High Court and the Appellate Court, and restored the judgment of the Trial Court (i.e. the suit filed by Neelamma was dismissed) in respect of plot 57. Hon'ble Court had held that the minors had repudiated the guardian's unauthorized sale via their conduct (by reselling within time) and hence Neelamma could not claim valid title over plot 57.

Dharmrao Sharanappa Shabadi & Others vs. Syeda Arifa Parveen: 2025 INSC 1187-

Validity of the Oral Gift-HELD

Case Summary

The dispute centered on 24 acres and 28 guntas of agricultural land in Gulbarga. The plaintiff (Syeda Arifa Parveen) claimed absolute ownership through an oral gift (Hiba) allegedly made by her mother in

1988 and through inheritance as the sole legal heir. The defendants, who were third-party purchasers, argued they were bona fide purchasers who had acquired the land via registered sale deeds in 1995.

Key Findings of the Supreme Court

Invalid Oral Gift (Hiba): The Court ruled that the alleged oral gift was not proved in law. It emphasized that under Muslim law, a valid *Hiba* requires clear evidence of delivery of possession, which was entirely missing in this case.

Barred by Limitation: The plaintiff filed her suit in 2013 to challenge sale deeds from 1995. The Court held the suit was clearly barred by limitation, as it was initiated nearly 18 years after the registered transactions.

Lack of Evidence on Relationship: The Court found that the plaintiff failed to provide objective proof of her familial relationship (status as the sole daughter) to the original owner.

Revenue Records: The Court noted the absence of mutation in the plaintiff's name. For over 25 years, the [Record of Rights \(ROR\)](#) consistently reflected the names of the defendants or their predecessors, contradicting the plaintiff's claims.

Legal Principles Reaffirmed

Section 50 of the Evidence Act: The Court clarified that general reputation alone is not enough to prove a relationship; it must be backed by specific conduct that witnesses personally observed.

Judicial Sympathy vs. Legal Proof: The judgment underscored that "judicial sympathy cannot substitute legal proof" and that the law aids the vigilant, not those who "slumber on their rights"

Ratio Decidendi: The Hon'ble Supreme Court elaborately discussed the principles of Hiba under Mohammedan Law and reiterated the three essentials of a valid Hiba: 1. A clear declaration by the donor. 2. Acceptance by the donee. 3. Delivery of possession (actual or constructive) to the donee. The Hon'ble Supreme Court held that plaintiff failed to prove the delivery of possession, a cornerstone of a valid Hiba. The oral gift and the Memorandum of Gift were not acted upon and could not be relied upon to transfer title.

Karam Singh vs Amarjit Singh & Ors.:2025 INSC 1238-

The principal legal issues considered by the Supreme Court include: 1. Whether the plaintiff's suit could be rejected at the threshold under Order 7 Rule 11(d) CPC on the ground of being barred by limitation, based on the averments in the plaint?

2. Whether the doctrine of former suit / prior litigation (Order 2 Rule 2 CPC) bars the present suit at the threshold?- HELD

Facts: Plaintiffs claimed title and possession of ancestral land, challenging a 1976 will and mutation entries. The suit was filed in 2019 after mutation proceedings concluded in 2017. Defendants sought rejection under Order 7 Rule 11(d) (barred by limitation) and Order 2 Rule 2 CPC (same cause of action

as 2012 suit). The trial court rejected the application under Order VII Rule 11 CPC. On revision, the High Court allowed the revision, holding the suit was barred, and hence ordered rejection of the plaint (Order dated 27.01.2022). Later, an application to recall that ex parte order was dismissed (04.07.2022). Hence, the appeal to the Supreme Court challenges the High Court's orders rejecting and refusing to recall.

the Supreme Court of India clarified critical procedural standards regarding the rejection of a plaint under [Order VII Rule 11 of the CPC](#).

Key Rulings & Principles

Sole Reliance on Plaintiff Averments: The Court reaffirmed that while deciding an application for rejection of a plaint, a court must look **only at the averments in the plaint**. The defendant's defense or any documents they produce cannot be considered at this threshold stage.

Limitation as a Mixed Question: The Bench, comprising **Justice J.B. Pardiwala** and **Justice Manoj Misra**, held that the question of whether a suit is barred by limitation is often a **mixed question of law and fact**. A plaint can only be rejected if it is *ex facie* (on its face) barred by law based on its own statements.

Multiple Reliefs: The Court noted that if even **one of the reliefs** sought in the plaint is within the limitation period, the entire plaint cannot be rejected.

Adverse Possession: Claims regarding whether defendants perfected their title through adverse possession require evidence and cannot be decided at the [Order VII Rule 11](#) stage.

Case Context

The dispute involved a century-long [property battle](#) originating from 1924. The appellants filed a suit in 2019 seeking declaration of ownership and possession after mutation proceedings concluded in 2017. The High Court of Punjab and Haryana had previously rejected the plaint as time-barred, but the Supreme Court [set aside that order](#) and restored the suit for trial.

M/S Anvita Auto Tech Work Pvt. Ltd. Vs. M/S Aroush Motors &Anr.:2025 INSC 1202-

1. Whether the 120-day limit for filing a written statement applies when limitation stood suspended due to COVID-19 orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court?

2. Whether a defendant who has not filed a written statement loses the right to cross-examine the plaintiff's witnesses?-HELD

SC delivered a landmark judgment on October 08, 2025, emphasizing that procedural rigidity should not sacrifice substantial justice.

Key Rulings

Right to Cross-Examination: The Court held that a defendant's right to cross-examine the plaintiff's witnesses is **not forfeited** even if they fail to file a Written Statement (WS). Denying this right was termed "absolutely perverse".

COVID-19 Limitation Extension: The Bench ruled that the 120-day mandatory period for filing a WS in commercial suits must exclude the period from March 15, 2020, to February 28, 2022, as per the Court's Suo Motu COVID-19 orders.

Procedural Law Philosophy: Reaffirming Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer's principle, the Court stated that procedural law is the "**handmaid of justice and not its mistress**".

Case Summary & Outcome

Dispute: The case arose from a commercial suit for recovery of monies (approx. ₹1.78 Crore) after the ban on BS-IV vehicles stalled a motorcycle dealership business.

Trial Court Error: The lower court had rejected the defendant's WS for being late and subsequently marked their cross-examination as "Nil" solely because no WS was on record.

Final Directions: The Supreme Court set aside the High Court's order and the Trial Court's decree. It [remanded the matter](#) to the Trial Court with directions to:

1. Take the defendant's **Written Statement on record**, subject to a cost of **₹1,00,000**.
2. Allow the defendant to **cross-examine** the plaintiff's witnesses.
3. Dispose of the suit expeditiously, preferably within **six months**

CRIMINAL LAW

Komal Prasad Shakya v. Rajendra Singh: 2025 INSC1230 :

Facts The case arose from allegations that respondent, along with others, fraudulently obtained a false Scheduled Caste certificate to contest the 2008 Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections from a reserved constituency. The complaint, was filed by petitioner in 2014, asserting that respondent and his father who belonged to the general category, conspired with local officials and created forged documents to falsely claim SC status. The caste certificate was subsequently cancelled by the Caste Scrutiny Committee in 2011 after it was found that respondent's family did not meet residency requirements. Despite this, the High Court quashed the criminal proceedings.

Ratio The Supreme Court held that criminal proceedings could not be quashed at the threshold when the complaint disclosed specific, prima facie allegations of cheating, forgery, and conspiracy under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471, and 120B IPC. The Court criticized the High Court's —mini-triall approach and

restored the criminal case, clarifying that the trial must proceed uninfluenced by prior judicial findings, and the outcome should be based on evidence to be adduced.

Rahul Agarwal v. State of West Bengal: 2025 INSC 1223:

the Supreme Court of India delivered a significant ruling on the [constitutional validity of compelled voice samples](#).

The Court held that a Judicial Magistrate has the authority to direct **any person**—whether an [accused or a witness](#)—to provide a voice sample during a criminal investigation.

Key Highlights of the Judgment

- **Magistrate's Authority:** The Court reaffirmed the principle from *Ritesh Sinha v. State of Uttar Pradesh (2019)*, stating that even without explicit provisions in the old Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), Magistrates have the power to order voice samples.
- **Article 20(3) Compliance:** The Bench ruled that a voice sample is [material/physical evidence](#) (similar to fingerprints or DNA) rather than "testimonial evidence". Therefore, compelling a person to provide it does **not** violate the fundamental right against [self-incrimination](#).
- **Legislative Recognition:** The Court noted that this power is now explicitly codified under [Section 349 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita \(BNSS\), 2023](#).
- **High Court Reversal:** The Supreme Court criticized the Calcutta High Court for setting aside the Magistrate's order based on a pending larger bench reference, noting that binding precedents must be followed until formally overturned.

Case Background

The matter arose from the 2021 death of a 25-year-old woman, leading to cross-allegations of harassment and misappropriation. During the investigation, the police sought a [voice sample from a key witness](#) accused of threatening another witness; the Supreme Court ultimately [restored the Magistrate's order](#) for this collection

G. Prasad Raghavan v. Union Territory of Puducherry:2025 INSC 1221:

Facts: The petitioner was arrayed as an accused in an FIR regarding an alleged fraud in a 2015 land transaction at Puducherry. The primary allegation was that the co accused had induced the informant to pay money based on a false representation regarding a plot of land, with the petitioner alleged to be a party to the conspiracy. However, the record showed that petitioner was a minor at the time of the transaction, and there was no evidence suggesting that he made any representation or inducement to the informant. The trial court and the High Court had refused petitioner's discharge application, and the matter reached the Supreme Court on appeal.

Ratio: The Supreme Court held that a person who was a minor at the time of the alleged offence could not be held criminally liable for acts committed during minority, especially when there was no material

indicating his participation or mens rea in the purported offence. It was observed that the concerned trial court as well as the High Court have committed an error while dismissing the discharge application filed by the present appellant. The Court noted that the essential ingredients of cheating, inducement, and conspiracy under the IPC were not satisfied as far as petitioner was concerned. Consequently, the charges against him were quashed, with an explicit direction that continuation of proceedings would be an abuse of the process of law, as there was no prima facie case against the appellant.

Sankar Padam Thapa v. Vijaykumar Dineshchandra Agarwal: 2025 INSC1210 :

Facts: The case involved a complaint under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 (NI Act), for dishonor of a cheque issued by a trust, where legal proceedings were initiated against the trustee (Chairman) who signed the cheque, but not against the trust itself as an entity. The core dispute concerned whether prosecution under Section 138/141 NI Act required both the trust and its signatory trustee to be made parties to the proceedings. The High Court had quashed the complaint, relying on precedents applicable to companies, notably *Aneeta Hada v. Godfather Travels*, emphasizing that non impleadment of the principal entity (trust) rendered the prosecution unsustainable. The complainant appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing that the law relating to companies should not be mechanically extended to trusts, which function differently.

The Supreme Court of India clarified the legal status of a Trust in the context of cheque dishonour cases.

Key Highlights of the Judgment

- **Trust is Not a Legal Entity:** The Court ruled that a Trust is an **obligation** annexed to the ownership of property and does not possess a separate legal personality like a company. It is neither a "body corporate" nor an "association of individuals" as defined under the [Negotiable Instruments \(NI\) Act](#).
- **Maintainability of Complaint:** A complaint under **Section 138 of the NI Act** is maintainable against a **Trustee** who has signed the cheque, even if the Trust itself is not arrayed as an accused.
- **Distinction from Companies:** The Court held that the legal principle from *Aneeta Hada v. Godfather Travels*, which requires a company to be a party to the suit, does **not** apply to Trusts.
- **Outcome:** The Supreme Court set aside the [Meghalaya High Court's order](#) which had quashed the criminal proceedings, and restored the complaint before the trial court

Shivkumar @ Baleshwar Yadav v. The State Of Chhattisgarh: 2025 INSC 1231

Facts: In May 2018, petitioner, a local labourer in Chhattisgarh, was accused of abducting and raping a 14-year-old girl who belonged to a Scheduled Caste. The incident was reported by the victim's father after the girl went missing from her home. Petitioner lured the minor with a false promise of marriage and then committed sexual assault. The trial court convicted him under IPC Sections 363, 366, 376, and 506, Section 4 of the POCSO Act, and Section 3(2)(v) of the SC/ST Act, sentencing him to life imprisonment. The conviction was affirmed by the High Court.

Ratio: The Supreme Court upheld the concurrent findings of both the lower courts, affirming the life sentence. The Court emphasized that the victim's consistent and credible testimony, corroborated by medical evidence, sufficed for conviction. It clarified that mere knowledge of the victim's SC/ST status is enough for Section 3(2)(v) liability. The Court also criticized the practice of casually declaring witnesses hostile due to minor inconsistencies, instructing that cross-examination of one's own witness should be permitted only in cases of material deviation, not for insignificant omissions.

Nazim & Others. v. The State of Uttarakhand: Criminal Appeal No. 715 of 2018

The Supreme Court [acquitted three appellants](#) who had been convicted for the 2007 murder of a 10-year-old boy.

Case Summary

The case against Nazim, Aftab, and Arman Ali was based entirely on **circumstantial evidence**. While the Trial Court and the Uttarakhand High Court had upheld their life sentences, the Supreme Court set aside these judgments after identifying significant gaps in the prosecution's chain of evidence.

Key Findings for Acquittal

- **Omissions in FIR:** The appellants, Nazim and Aftab, were [not named in the initial FIR](#), even though they were known to the complainant. This omission cast serious doubt on their later implication.
- **Unreliable Witness Testimony:**
 - **Conspiracy:** A witness (PW-2) claimed to have overheard the murder plot at a wedding feast. The Court [found this testimony improbable](#), noting that conspiracies are rarely discussed openly and that the witness had stayed silent for days after the incident.
 - **Last-Seen Evidence:** The time gap between the alleged sightings and the recovery of the body was too wide to exclude other possibilities.
- **Lack of Identification:** Key witnesses identified the accused for the first time in court. The Court ruled this [dock identification unreliable](#) as no **Test Identification Parade (TIP)** had been conducted.
- **Neutral Forensic Evidence:** Scientific reports on DNA and fingerprints were [inconclusive](#) and failed to link the appellants to the crime scene or the weapon.
- **Motive:** The alleged motive of revenge for an insult to a relative was deemed [speculative and unproven](#).

Legal Principles Reaffirmed

The judgment, authored by **Justice Satish Chandra Sharma**, reinforced the ["Panchsheel" principles of circumstantial evidence](#) established in *Sharad Birdhichand Sarda v. State of Maharashtra*, emphasizing that **suspicion, however strong, cannot take the place of proof.**

ARBITRATION AND CONCILIATION ACT

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation v. G & T Beckfield Drilling Services Pvt. Ltd :2025 INSC 1066-

Whether a contractual clause barring interest on —delayed payment/disputed claim| also bars the arbitral tribunal from awarding pendente lite interest under Section 31(7)(b) of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996- HELD

The Supreme Court of India clarified the extent to which a contract can limit an arbitral tribunal's power to award interest.

Key Ruling

The Court held that an arbitral tribunal possesses the statutory power to grant **pendente lite interest** (interest during the pendency of arbitration) under Section 31(7)(a) of the [Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996](#), unless the contract **expressly or by necessary implication** bars it.

Core Principles Established

- **Insufficiency of Generic Clauses:** A general clause stating that "no interest" is payable on delayed payments or disputed claims (like Clause 18.1 in this case) does not automatically strip a tribunal of its power to award interest during the arbitration proceedings.
- **Specific Language Required:** To effectively bar pendente lite interest, parties must use comprehensive language that explicitly excludes interest "in any respect whatsoever" or "under any circumstances".
- **Statutory Nature of Post-Award Interest:** The Court reaffirmed that post-award interest under Section 31(7)(b) is a statutory right that parties **cannot waive** by contract.
- **Tripartite Structure of Interest:** The judgment clarifies that interest can be awarded for three distinct stages:
 - **Pre-reference:** From the cause of action to the start of arbitration.
 - **Pendente lite:** From the start of arbitration to the date of the award.
 - **Post-award:** From the date of the award until the payment is made.

Case Outcome

The Supreme Court dismissed ONGC's appeal and upheld the [Gauhati High Court's decision](#) to restore the original arbitral award. The tribunal had awarded **12% per annum** interest from the date the statement of claim was filed until recovery, which the Court deemed reasonable and within the tribunal's jurisdiction.

Chakardhari Sureka v. Prem Lata Sureka: 2025 LiveLaw (SC) 919-

Whether the execution of an arbitral award can be stayed merely because an appeal under Section 37 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 is pending-HELD

Facts: After an arbitral award was passed, the award-debtor filed an appeal under Section 37 and sought to prevent execution of the award during the pendency of that appeal. The courts below differed on whether execution proceedings should continue in such circumstances.

Ratio Decendi: The Supreme Court held that the pendency of a Section 37 appeal does not, by itself, operate as a stay against the execution of an arbitral award. The Court emphasized that execution can only be halted if a competent court has passed an explicit interim order staying enforcement of the award. In the absence of such an order, the award-holder retains the statutory right to proceed with execution. The execution court, however, may consider any specific objections raised to the executability of the award but cannot defer consideration merely because an appeal is pending. Thus, the award remains enforceable unless an express stay is granted, reaffirming the legislative intent to ensure finality and expedition in arbitration.

HLV Limited v. PBSAMP Projects Pvt. Ltd.: 2025 INSC 1148-:

Whether an arbitral award that specifies a composite simple rate of interest precludes the award-holder from claiming additional or compound interest under Section 31(7) of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996- HELD

The Supreme Court of India reinforced the principle of **party autonomy** in arbitration, specifically regarding the award of interest under Section 31(7) of the [Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996](#).

Core Ruling

The Court held that if an arbitral tribunal specifies a rate and period of interest "until repayment" based on the parties' agreement, the award creditor **cannot claim additional or compound interest** during execution proceedings. The [executing court](#) cannot "rewrite or enlarge" the award beyond what was determined by the tribunal.

Key Facts

- **The Dispute:** Originated from a 2014 [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) for a ₹85 crore land sale in Hyderabad.
- **Arbitral Award:** The tribunal directed HLV to refund an advance of ₹15.5 crores with **21% simple interest per annum** from the date of disbursement until repayment, as stipulated in the MoU.
- **Execution Claim:** After HLV paid approximately **₹44.42 crores** (fulfilling the simple interest requirement), PBSAMP sought an additional **₹13 crores**, claiming entitlement to compound/post-award interest under Section 31(7)(b).

Legal Principles Applied

- **Section 31(7) Interplay:** The Court clarified that [Section 31\(7\)\(b\)](#)—which defaults to 18% interest if an award is silent—does not apply when the tribunal has already exercised its discretion to set a specific interest regime covering the period up to repayment.

- **Precedents:** The judgment referred to *Morgan Securities v. Videocon Industries* and *Delhi Airport Metro Express v. DMRC*, emphasizing that party autonomy is the predominant principle in commercial arbitration.

Outcome

The Supreme Court **set aside** the Telangana High Court's order (which had remanded the matter for reconsideration of interest) and **restored the executing court's decision**, confirming that HLV's payment had fully satisfied the award.

These legal analyses clarify how arbitral tribunals' interest awards under Section 31(7) interact with party autonomy